

**2001 BIENNIAL MEETING  
(PROGRAM AND MINUTES)**

Donald Shuler  
Co-Chair  
2001 ABC Biennial Program Committee

Phillip Brown  
Co-Chair  
2001 ABC Biennial Program Committee

H. A. “Hank” Pedersen  
Chair  
Local Arrangements Committee

**2001 ABC BIENNIAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

Donald Shuler, *Co-Chair*  
Phillip Brown, *Co-Chair*  
Brandon Birdfaraway  
Loris Coletta  
James H. Evans  
James C. Foster  
Anatalys González-Ortiz  
José Guerra  
Lauren Ng  
Randolph Palada  
Mary Robinson  
Suzanne Snyder  
Ella Washington

*Ex-Officio*

David G. Hunt  
Trinette V. McCray  
H.A. “Hank” Pedersen  
Donald Rasmussen  
Robert H. Roberts  
Daniel E. Weiss  
Barbara A. Williams

*Consultants*

Paul Baker, *Music*  
David Greenfield, *Production Director*  
Chris Ross, *Production Coordinator*

*Staff Advisory Group*

Linda Bonn, General Ministries, *Chair*  
Laura Alden, National Ministries

Beverlee E. Everett, General Ministries  
Perry J. Hopper, Ministers & Missionaries  
Benefit Board  
Karen Mason, International Ministries  
Kristy Arnesen Pullen, Educational Ministries  
Richard W. Schramm, General Ministries

*Production Team*

Paul Baker  
James Bonn  
David Chandler  
Heather Daniels  
David Greenfield  
Chris Kearns  
Chris Ross  
Tedd Szeto

**AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF RHODE ISLAND  
LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE**

H.A. "Hank" Pedersen, *Chair*

Nancy Bancroft  
George Barclay  
Clyde Bennett  
Beth Berry  
Harry Bronkar  
Judith Brown  
David Chhange  
Lenore Dorson  
Joyce Duerr  
Bob Hollis  
Peggy Johnson  
Kevin Lowe  
Carolyn Lynch  
Ken Marrocco  
Linda Martin  
Ann McGloshen  
Russ Osborne  
Nancy Phelan  
Donald Rasmussen  
Janna Schnell  
Vivian Searle  
Matha Sobaje  
Priscilla Suennen  
Rod Suennen  
Bettye William

**Staff:**

Donald Rasmussen  
*Executive Minister*

**STATEMENTS OF CONCERN**

## **COMMITTEE**

Paul Hayes, *Chair*  
Karen Boyden Mendes  
John Burns  
Peter Clark  
Loris Coletta  
Doris Hastings  
Helen Phillips  
John Polite  
Daniel Ramirez  
Dianne Steelman  
Mylion Waite  
Sheridan Harding Whitehouse  
J. Terry Wingate (deceased)

### **Ex-officio:**

Trinette V. McCray  
David G. Hunt

### **Staff:**

Dwight Lundgren

## **THE 2001 BIENNIAL MEETING PROGRAM AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A. JUNE 22-25, 2001**

*Rhode Island Convention Center*

### **Theme: “PROVIDENCE!”**

*Paul Bake and Martha Sobaje, Biennial Organists*  
*James Bonn, Keyboardist*

### **Friday, June 22, 2001 - Evening**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PLACE*

*“...Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses..”*

6:30 pm – 6:50 pm

Pre-Gathering Prayer in the Upper Room

6:50 pm - 9:00 pm

### **OPENING GATHERING**

God’s Story – Our Song: Ten Historic Hymns Cherished by Baptists, congregational singing led by Ella Washington, Calvary Baptist Church, Milwaukee, WI and Nancy Hall, First Baptist Church, Berkeley, CA

Opening Business and Presentation of the Slate of Officers for the 2002-2003 Biennium  
Celebration of the ministry of Daniel E. Weiss, general secretary, ABC/USA, 1988-2000

**PREACHER:** TRINETTE MCCRAY, PRESIDENT, ABC/USA

**MUSIC:** Paul Baker, organ and harp, James Bonn, keyboards; More Than Conquerors, Iglesia Bautista Hispanoamericana de Union City, Union City, N.J., Raquel Ruiz, director

9:00 pm

Reception honoring Dan and Rachel Weiss  
Post-Gathering prayer in the Upper Room

**Saturday, June 23 – Morning Gathering**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PLACE*

*“...Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses..”*

8:45 am - Noon

WORSHIP, BIBLE STUDY led by Nancy Ammerman, statements of concern,  
DENOMINATIONAL BUSINESS including election of officers and Statements of Concern  
Committee and recommendation regarding number of representatives to the ABC/USA General  
Board for 2002-2003; Celebration of 100 years of Hispanic Ministry in the U.S., presentation of  
Dahlberg Peace and Sparrowk President’s Awards  
MUSIC: Anthony Greene, pianist, Olney Street Baptist Church, Providence, RI, Alliance of  
Haitian Baptist Churches Massed Choir, Anne Petit-Frere, director, Dorchester Temple Baptist  
Youth Group Dancers

**Saturday, June 23 - Afternoon**

Afternoon Opportunities

Statements of Concern Hearings

2:30-4:45 pm

On-Site Workshops – 3:00-4:30 pm :

Nurturing Faith in Children

Spiritual Formation for Christian Leaders

A vision for Church Planning

The ALPHA Program – An Evangelism Tool for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

How Can My Church Become Involved in NEW LIFE 2010?

The Many Faces of Volunteerism

Clergy Self-Care

NUEVA VIDA 2010

Mission with American Native People

How to Build an African American Congregation

Widening Your Ministries with Community Children and Youth

Off-Site – 2:45-4:45 pm:

Music Showcase: T. Wyatt Watkins, Rainbow Acres Ranchers Choir, Kol Echad: “In One Voice”

Preaching: Meg Hess, Daniel Florés, George Cummings

South Providence Neighborhood Ministries – Tour

Roger Williams Memorial Park – Tour

**Saturday, June 23 – Evening**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PRESENT*

*“...let us lay aside every weight and the sun that clings so closely...”*

6:30 pm – 6:50 pm

Pre-Gathering Prayer in the Upper Room

6:50 pm - 9:00 pm

EVENING CELEBRATION - NEW LIFE 2010

LEADER: Robert H. Roberts, Interim General Secretary, ABC/USA

MUSIC: Kim and Reggie Harris

CONCERT by Ginny Owens, Dove Award Winner for New Artist of the Year

WATERFIRE at Waterplace Park, courtesy of the city of Providence.

9:00 pm

Post-Gathering Prayer in the Upper Room

**Sunday, June 24 - Morning**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PROCESS*

*"...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us..."*

8:45 am - Noon

MORNING GATHERING

DEVOTIONS led by Robert H. Roberts, Thomas Roberts & Kerianne Roberts

BIBLE STUDY led by Bernadette Glover-Williams, Celebration of Mission of the National Program Boards

MORNING WORSHIP, Jenny Quey, preaching

MUSIC: The West Virginians, Alderson Broaddus College, Philippi, WV, Michael Engelhardt, director, Kim and Reggie Harris

**Sunday, June 24 - Afternoon**

Afternoon Opportunities

Statements of Concern Hearings

- 2:30-4:45 pm

On-site Workshops – 3:00-4:30 pm

Go Global

Discerning the Call to Ministry

Becoming a Faithful Leader

Congregational Transformation & Renewal

Is There Justice in Juvenile Justice?

Meet Your Missionaries

Innovative Worship

Sharing the Good News in the New Millennium

Doing Multi-Cultural Ministries with Asian Americans

Haitian Ministry in the U.S.

Active Young Adult Ministry

Women's Life Transitions

Off-Site – 2:45 – 4:45 pm

The First Baptist Church in America – Tour

Music Showcase: Adelante Singers from Ottawa U., Bethany Socia, Kol Echad: “In One Voice”,  
Rainy Mountain American Native Singers  
South Providence Neighborhood Ministries – Tour  
Roger Williams Memorial Park – Tour

**Sunday, June 24 – Evening**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PROCESS*

*“...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us...”*

6:50 pm - 9:00 pm

EVENING WORSHIP

PREACHER: BILLY KIM, President, Baptist World Alliance

MUSIC: James Bonn, keyboards, All Biennial Massed Choir, directed by Martha Sobaje, Associate in Music and Education at Phillips Memorial Baptist Church, Cranston, RI, FEBC Korean Childrens Choir, Seoul, Korea, Jan-Mae Ho, director, J. Thomas Son and Bethany Socia, duet, Jessica Sehested, dancer

9:00 pm

Post-Gathering Prayer in the Upper Room

**Monday, June 25 – Morning**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PRESENCE*

*..looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...”*

8:45 am - Noon

MORNING GATHERING

WORSHIP, BIBLE STUDY led by Thomas Moore, statements of concern, ABC/USA town meeting, celebration of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of American Baptist Women’s Ministries

MUSIC: The Chapel Choir and Senior High Handbell Ensemble, First Baptist Church, Gaithersburg, MD, Matt Gaines, director, The King’s Kids Dancers, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Twin Oaks, PA, Rotelia Waller, coordinator

**Monday, June 25 - Afternoon**

2:45 pm - 4:30 pm

Statements of Concern

6:30 pm - 6:50 pm

Pre-Gathering Prayer in the Upper Room, Room 557

**Monday, June 25, 2001 – Evening**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PRESENCE*

*“...looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...”*

6:50 pm - 9:00 pm

CLOSING EVENING WORSHIP

PREACHER: LUIS PALAU, President, Luis Palau Evangelistic Association

MUSIC: Martha Sobaje, organist, Ambassador Chorale, Florida Memorial College, Lloyd Brockington, director, Youth Choir, Slavic Baptist Church, Providence, RI, Tamara Kinenok, director, Signs of Light, Union Baptist Church, E. Killingly, CT, Sandra Pelc, director

**MINUTES  
OF THE 2001 BIENNIAL MEETING OF THE  
AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.  
June 22-25, 2001  
Providence, Rhode Island**

**FIRST SESSION, Friday , June 22, 2001 – 6:50 P.M.**

*Evening Gathering*

**PROVIDENCE IS A PLACE**

*“...Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses..”*

1. As people entered the hall, the prelude was played by Paul Baker and James Bonn
2. Following the prelude, the congregation was led by Nancy Hall, First Baptist Church, Berkeley, CA and Ella Washington, Calvary Baptist Church, Milwaukee, WI in singing ten historic hymns cherished by Baptists: *“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”*; *“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”*; *“Marching to Zion”*; *“My Country ‘Tis of Thee”*; *“I Need Thee Every Hour”*; *“Blessed Assurance”*; *“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”*; *“Lift Every Voice and Sing”*; *“O Sing to the Lord”*; and *“God of Grace and God of Glory”*.
3. ABC President Trinette V. McCray welcomed the delegates and visitors and introduced Paul Baker, Biennial Organist, James Bonn, Keyboardist, and Ella Washington, song leader for several of the plenary sessions.
4. President McCray called attention to the presence of official regional youth representatives, AB Girls and AB Boys & Young Men who are present for the second time at a Biennial meeting.
5. President McCray next called the 2001 Biennial Meeting of American Baptist Churches (ABC/USA) to order. Noting that the ABC/USA By-laws, Art. IV, Sec. 3-b, provides that: *“one third of the Delegates registered with the General Secretary prior to convening the Delegates for the first order of business of the Biennial Meeting, present in person, shall constitute a quorum....”* President McCray announced that as of 6:30 p.m., June 22, 2001, 1724 Delegates had registered. Therefore, for this Biennial Meeting, 575 delegates (one-third of the registered delegates) is the quorum.
6. President McCray referred the delegates to a document included in their packets entitled *“Rules of Procedure for the Conduct of the 2001 Biennial Meeting of Delegates”* which describes *“a fair and orderly procedure for the conduct of business which comes before this meeting,”* including the Statements of Concern. The Rules also note that the current edition of *Roberts’ Rules of Order* will govern the conduct of any business to come before this meeting, except where inconsistent with the rules of procedure voted by the delegates to the 2001 Biennial meeting, the ABC By-laws or Standing Rules. President McCray introduced the Rev. Donald Shuler of Hudson Falls, New York, and Phillip Brown, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, co-chairpersons of the 2001 Biennial Program Committee.
7. Phillip Brown welcomed the Biennial attendees. Since the 2001 Biennial Program Committee had completed its work, Donald Shuler and Phillip Brown became co-chairpersons of the Order of Business Committee. In this capacity, Phillip Brown moved adoption of the *“Rules of Procedure...”*. After voice vote, President McCray declared the motion carried after observing that there appeared to have been a two-thirds majority.
8. In his capacity as co-chairperson of the 2001 Biennial Program Committee, Donald Shuler moved adoption of the provisional program. On his motion, it was voted that the provisional program be adopted, subject to such changes as the Order of Business Committee might recommend. (See copy of program preceding these minutes.) After a voice vote, President McCray declared the motion carried.

9. President McCray introduced ABC Vice-President, David G. Hunt, Executive Director of the Columbia River Channel Coalition. Vice-President Hunt introduced the Biennial Parliamentarian, Loyd Starrett, Esquire of Rockport, Massachusetts, and noted that the Celebration of Mission to be presented during the morning gatherings of the Biennial would constitute the reports from program boards required in the ABC/USA By-laws.
10. Vice President Hunt next called attention to the report of the ABC Nominating Committee, mailed to each cooperating ABC congregation in January 2001 and also included in the 2001 Biennial Meeting packet. He then read Standing Rule 4.3.5 which deals with procedures for receiving nominations from the floor and also announced that Notices of Intent to Move to Amend the procedures for the Biennial meeting would be received until 10:00 p.m. that evening in the ABC/USA office at the Convention Center.
11. Vice President Hunt introduced the Chairperson of the ABC/USA Nominating Committee, Sarah Greenfield Culp, of Rochester, New York, who indicated that nominations from the floor would be accepted in the ABC/USA office at the Convention Center until 10:00 p.m.
12. Vice President Hunt then gave an introduction of the evening's preacher. Dr. McCray, first clergywoman to serve as ABC President, is Associate Minister at Calvary Baptist Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as well as Campus Minister and Director of Multicultural Relations and faculty member at Cardinal Stritch University in that city.
13. Roger Williams (Peter Stine) led a journey through Baptist history as told through the lives of Baptist personalities: Ann Hasseltine Judson (Carol Austin); Adoniram Judson (Phillip Austin); Ioleta Hunt McElhaney Tiger (Susan Nahwooksy); Jitsuo Morikawa (Tedd Szeto); Ruth Maldonado (Sheila Rivera); Martin Luther King, Jr. (Albert Paul Brinson).
14. Ella Washington led the congregation in singing "We Praise You, O God"
15. Following an invocation by Beverly Davison of Madison, Wisconsin, president of the American Baptist Historical Society, musical selections were sung by the group More Than Conquerors, Iglesia Bautista Hispanoamericana de Union City, New Jersey, Raquel Ruiz, director.
16. Carole Dieciedue, Director of Volunteers in Mission, National Ministries, ABC/USA, was joined by John Grisham of Chatham, Illinois, to introduce the evening offering which was dedicated to the support of volunteers in mission, both nationally and internationally. (Total Received: \$5,918)
17. The offertory was played by Paul Baker on the harp and James Bonn keyboards.
18. Harold Davis, former ABC President from Oakland, California, led a time of thanksgiving for the ministry and witness of Daniel E. Weiss, recently retired General Secretary. Video clips from several addresses by Dr. Weiss over his tenure as General Secretary were played. Dr. Weiss gave a short response.
19. Following a congregational hymn, President Trinette V. McCray brought the sermon for the evening, addressing the legacy of commitment, courage and "exposure" that American Baptists have received.
20. Ella Washington led the congregation in singing "For All the Saints.
21. Following a benediction, President McCray invited all those present to a reception honoring Daniel and Rachel Weiss.
22. James Bonn played the postlude.

**SECOND SESSION, Saturday, June 23, 2001 - 8:45 A.M.**

***Morning Gathering***

***PROVIDENCE IS A PLACE***

*"...Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses..."*

23. Anthony Greene, Olney Street Baptist Church, Providence R.I., played the piano prelude.
24. Kim and Reggie Harris, singer-songwriters from Castle Rock, Colorado led a time of



- congregational praise.
25. President McCray welcomed those present and introduced Nancy Ammerman, professor of sociology of religion, Hartford Theological Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut, who led the morning's Bible study.
  26. Eddie Cruz, director, Hispanic and Portuguese-speaking Ministries, National Ministries introduced a Celebration of 100 years of Hispanic Ministries in the United States.
  27. Kim and Reggie Harris taught the congregation the NEW LIFE 2010 song.
  28. The Alliance of Haitian Baptist Churches Massed Choir, Anne Petit-Frere, director, sang selections.
  29. President McCray called the session to order for the conduct of business. After indicating where people could register to speak on issues brought before the session, she reminded the delegates that the minutes of the 1999 Biennial Meeting, held in Des Moines, Iowa, are recorded on pages 183 through 206 of the 1999 Yearbook of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. The minutes were reviewed and adopted by the Biennial Program Committee.
  30. President McCray next introduced Sarah Greenfield Culp, Chairperson of the ABC Nominating Committee, who announced that no nominations had been made from the floor and the delegates were now to vote on ballots they received as they entered the hall. Ushers collected the ballots for counting, with results to be reported at the evening session.
  31. President McCray called upon Vice President Hunt to move the Resolution from the General Board concerning the number of Representatives to be elected for the 2002-2003 biennium. This resolution was seconded by Stephen Hasper, president of the Board of International Ministries. The text of the resolution is as follows :

**RESOLUTION OF GENERAL BOARD RECOMMENDING NUMBERS OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR NEXT BIENNIUM 2002-2003**

WHEREAS, as amended at the 1991 Biennial in Charleston, West Virginia, Article III, Section 2(i) of the ABC/USA By-laws states that "there shall be sufficient numbers of Representatives, as determined by the Biennial Meeting upon recommendation of the General Board, to perform the functions of the General Board";

WHEREAS, as research by numerous scholars has demonstrated conclusively, a smaller board functions much more effectively and also produces much greater satisfaction and sense of accomplishment; and Representatives have confirmed that research by reporting that their work in smaller bodies is more satisfying, more productive in setting policy, and more effective in holding staff accountable;

WHEREAS, each Representative can participate more fully in work of smaller boards, and smaller plenaries will make debate more manageable, enabling a larger proportion of the membership to speak and facilitating shorter meeting times;

WHEREAS, smaller boards are more cost efficient in that travel, food and lodging expenses are reduced both directly because fewer people travel and indirectly because smaller, less expensive meeting sites become feasible and because shorter meetings reduce the demand for food and lodging;

WHEREAS, the Representative Process Review Commission (RPRC) concluded, after extensive investigation and study, that a smaller General Board and therefore smaller national program boards (because the membership of each national program board is approximately one-third of the General Board) would be more effective and efficient, would constitute better stewardship of the Denomination's resources and would not impair representation or communication; and the General Board, after thorough consideration, approved the RPRC Report;

WHEREAS, as costs continue to increase and revenues continue to decrease, better stewardship of the Representative Process Budget becomes more and more imperative;

WHEREAS, the RPRC recommended that the General Board be reduced by attrition

from approximately 210 to 160, comprised of 111 Election District or Regionally Nominated Representatives, 37 at Large or Nationally Nominated Representatives, and 12 ex officio or designated Representatives, and the General Board approved that recommendation;

WHEREAS the 1995 Biennial in Syracuse voted to begin the process of reducing the size of the General Board as recommended by the RPRC and therefore to fix the number of Regionally Nominated Representatives at 143 for 1996 and 130 for 1997 and the number of Nationally Nominated Representatives at 46 for both 1996 and 1997, producing a total General Board of 201 in 1996 and 188 in 1997;

WHEREAS, by a continuing process of attrition, the General Board was reduced in 1998 and 1999, producing a total General Board of 174 in 1998 and 173 in 1999;

NOW THEREFORE the General Board recommends to the 2001 Biennial Meeting that the numbers of Regionally Nominated Representatives be fixed at 111 for 2002 and 111 for 2003 and that the number of Nationally Nominated Representatives be fixed at 37 for both 2002 and 2003, producing a total General Board of 160 in both 2002 and 2003. The motion was passed by a simple majority through a rising vote.

32. Kim and Reggie Harris led a time of congregational singing.
33. Paul Hayes from Suffield, Connecticut, chairperson of the Statements of Concern Committee, and committee member Helen Phillips of Fairbanks, Alaska, presented the first Statement of Concern on Restorative Justice.

THE STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE follows:  
(1064 Affirm; 50 Not Affirm)

According to the Bureau of Prison Statistics, the United States had two million people incarcerated as of February 2000. This is one quarter of the world's prison population, even though, by comparison, we have only five percent of the world's total population. At the same time, there is a frustrating sense that justice is not always served. A punitive approach to justice does not effectively address the needs of victims or the community harmed by crime. There are few systemic efforts to address the circumstances of offenders, who often leave prison finding it difficult to live in society without re-offending. Retributive justice, by design, is simply unable to respond to the human dynamics in individual crimes, in part because the focus is on the breaking of the laws of the state, instead of the relationships between the victim and the offender.

A biblically-based paradigm of restorative justice, however, does address these dynamics, placing them at the center of the concern for justice for all parties. Throughout the Bible, God calls people into a covenant relationship based on *shalom* or right-relationships. This includes physical well-being, living in peace with all people, and living with moral integrity. A justice based on these principles requires a relational component, reflecting the covenant established between God and God's people.

The difference between retributive justice and restorative justice is a matter of dealing not just with broken laws, but with the reparation of broken relationships. Love and mercy are extended both to those who break the covenant relationship and those who are harmed by that brokenness.

Restorative justice principles can, perhaps, be best understood by comparing the questions posed by retributive approaches.

*Retributive Justice*

*What law was broken?*

*Who is responsible for breaking the law?  
harm?*

*What punishment is appropriate?  
harm?*

*Restorative Justice*

*What harm has been done by the crime?*

*What needs to be done to repair the*

*Who is responsible for repairing the*

Where applied, the principles of restorative justice improve the current criminal justice system in a variety of ways and at all levels. For example, prosecutors fund victim advocates in their offices to ensure that each victim receives the attention necessary for meeting their needs. Judges choose to hear from each victim before sentencing offenders. Victim/Offender mediation programs are established to offer face-to-face meetings to all those who want to participate during any part of the criminal justice process. Corrections departments focus more attention on programs that work to bring offenders to an understanding of their responsibility for their actions, and to help them find ways to respond to and repair, if possible, the damage they have done to their victims and to society. Legislators develop laws and fund programs sympathetic to the goals of restorative justice. The very nature of the system is being transformed by the process of repairing the damage caused by crime.

Individuals in the community, likewise, share responsibility for upholding restorative justice principles through education and advocacy, and through support to victims of crime and to offenders seeking to repair the harm they have done. We can establish support groups for victims and their families for healing and to help create a climate that returns a person back to a sense of safety and well-being. We can help offenders recognize their accountability and responsibility for their actions. We can assist the offenders' families through a variety of supportive measures such as providing transportation for visits and advocating programs for children and their incarcerated parents. Furthermore, we can develop diversion, mentoring, or intervention programs.

Once the principles of restorative justice are understood, there are myriad ways they can be implemented to bring about true justice and shalom in our communities.

Therefore, we call upon American Baptists to:

- become more aware of and educated about restorative justice;
- encourage the use of resources available through National Ministries, the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, and the local church;
- to work toward implementing restorative justice in their communities; and
- encourage legislators to develop laws and fund programs sympathetic to the goals of restorative justice.

34. Regional Youth Representatives spoke the names of their schools symbolizing the extent of school violence in America., and Karen Mendes from Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Eli Hernandez from Dorchester, Massachusetts introduced a Statement of Concern on Violence in Schools. A video presentation was played prior to the delegate vote.

THE STATEMENT OF CONCERN ON VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS follows:  
(1147 Affirm; 3 Not Affirm)

*This Statement of Concern is written in collaboration with*

*our American Baptist Youth*

*“Finally all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing.” I Peter 3:8-9*

Violence in our nation’s schools is frightening and is a significant issue for our youth. Violent incidents in our schools, illustrated by the death of fifteen people at Columbine High School in the spring of 1999, demonstrate a larger social reality for youth. We have witnessed the same horrors in our country’s elementary schools, middle schools, colleges, and universities. As part of that population, American Baptist youth have directly or indirectly been impacted by such violence.

Violence is not limited to physical harm. It can be inflicted verbally, or without words at all. Taunting and verbal abuse add to a climate of hostility that can lead to violent acts against an individual or group. No form of violence should be tolerated or ignored wherever it is found, whether in our schools, homes, churches, or communities.

In the face of violence, people search for something, or someone, to blame. The questions are continually asked, “Who or what is responsible?” and “What made them do it?” Do we blame the student’s parents, or circle of friends, or even “Hollywood?” Yet, even if we could answer those questions, the problem of violence would not necessarily be resolved. A climate of safety and well-being is needed in our schools, which is something all can work toward. As Christians, we are inspired by Christ to respond to violence through love, justice, forgiveness, compassion, comfort, and peace.

Therefore, we join our American Baptist youth in calling upon:

- American Baptist youth to set a Christ-like example for their peers, both in the ways they act and react in the face of violence, by:
  - taking action against violence in their schools;
  - facilitating change in behavior, where necessary;
  - treating their peers with respect;
  - tolerating differences between people; and
- being willing to step forward as positive role models and leaders.
  
- Our families and our local churches to address the issue of violence in schools, and to take appropriate action, by:
  - keeping guns and weapons out of the hands of children;
  - praying for peace, and healing the scars left by violence throughout our schools; and
  - acting as caregivers by addressing the issue of violence honestly and sensitively.
  - to work with school systems in reasonable efforts to make schools safe for all children;
  - to encourage the establishment of a hot line for people to anonymously report problems leading to potential violence;
  
- Pastors and lay people to identify and discuss with children and youth causes of potential violence.

- To encourage media to report on acts of violence in a responsible and sensitive manner.
- The ABC/USA to provide resources through denominational channels for addressing violence in our schools.

All American Baptists to walk the path of peace that Christ has set before us.

The ushers collected the votes on both statements from delegates and the totals were announced at the evening session.

35. Aidsand Wright-Riggins, executive director of National Ministries introduced the two recipients of the Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace Award, the Rev. Gordon C. Bennett of Pennsylvania, and Senator Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon. This award recognizes American Baptists who have shown a deep commitment to the issues of peace and justice.

Gordon C. Bennett has been involved for more than twenty years in activities for peace through writing, teaching and personal involvement in non-violent civil disobedience. His concept of nuclear Free Zones has been adopted by suburban communities near Philadelphia and in Takoma Park, Maryland. Several members of Bennett's home church, Central Baptist Church of Wayne, Pennsylvania, were present to honor him.

The Honorable Mark O. Hatfield has served as a public servant for forty-seven years – first in the state of Oregon as State legislator, Secretary of State, and governor – and from 1967 to 1996, as United States Senator. In these arenas he was known as a tenacious, articulate and effective peacemaker. A Republican, he was able to bring together bipartisan coalitions to enact federal legislation and international treaties to advance peaceful programs.

Both Bennett and Hatfield gave short responses to the conferring of this award, each recognizing the great contributions of the other to the cause of peace.

36. President McCray introduced Martha Cortner Pixley of Kalamazoo, Michigan, recipient of the Cora and John Sparrowk President's Award, presented over 20 years to American Baptists who have "over a period of years made an exceptional and outstanding contribution to the Life of Christ's church; and in life and service manifest richly the fruits and gifts of the Spirit." Through over a half century Mrs. Pixley participated in ministry in town and country churches throughout Michigan with her husband, the Rev. William Pixley. Following retirement and up until the present time Mrs. Pixley has remained active in leadership roles within the church at the local and regional levels. Her pastor and members of her church were present to honor her.

37. Mrs. Pixley made a brief response.

38. Jean Kim gave the benediction to close the morning session.

### **THIRD SESSION: Saturday, June 23, 2001 – 6:50 P.M.**

#### **Evening Gathering**

#### *PROVIDENCE IS A PRESENT*

*"...let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely.."*

39. People entering the hall were greeted by Regional Youth Representatives distributing New Life 2010 brochures. Free New Life 2010 T-Shirts had been distributed earlier and all attendees were invited to wear them to the Saturday evening session..
40. Interim General Secretary Robert Roberts led the congregation in a "thank you shout" based on Psalm 150.
41. Kim and Reggie Harris led singing of the "NEW LIFE" song.

42. Vice President Hunt thanked Bob, Kim and Reggie and called on President McCray to announce the names of those elected as new ABC Officers and the Members of the Statements of Concern Committee.  
 ABC Officers for the 2002-2003 Biennium are:  
 President: DAVID G. HUNT, Grace Baptist Church, Portland, OR  
 Vice President: YOSH NAKAGAWA, Japanese Baptist Church, Seattle, WA  
 Budget Review Officer: MELVA GRAY, First Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN  
 Statements of Concern Committee Members:  
 MARK BASIL, Montgomery Community Baptist Church, Cincinnati, OH  
 DOUGLAS COPELAND, Unity Baptist Church, Las Vegas, NV  
 GEORGE CUMMINGS, Imani Community Church, Oakland, CA  
 ANGELA FARRAR, Seattle First Baptist Church, Seattle, WA  
 RON JOHNSON, First Baptist Church, Portland, OR  
 RALPH WAGNER, Princeton Baptist Church of Penns Neck, Laurenceville, NJ  
 W. KENNETH WILLIAMS, First Baptist Church, Rochester, NY
43. Bob Roberts and Aidsand Wright-Riggins, III, Executive Director of National Ministries, discussed the goals of NEW LIFE 2010 - planting 1,010 new churches and winning 1,000,010 new Christians by the year 2010.
44. Carol Sutton, national movement director for NEW LIFE 2010, interviewed Dalton Said, Frances Houston, Sandra Alvarado and Doug Scalise about their ministries which are dynamic parts of this denominational emphasis.
45. Following prayers of support for the many ministries of NEW LIFE 2010, Bob Roberts introduced Dove Award Winner of New Artist of the Year - Contemporary Christian singer Ginny Owens who played and sang in concert.
46. At the end of the concert, all present were invited to walk to nearby Waterplace Park to witness the evening presentation of Waterfire, a gift to the ABC/USA Biennial from the city of Providence.

**FOURTH SESSION, Sunday, June 24, 2001 - 8:45 A.M.**

**Morning Gathering**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PROCESS*

*"...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us..."*

47. Congregational singing was led by the Alderson-Broadus College Praise and Worship Team and Band, Michael Engelhardt, director . Selections included "Open The Eyes of My Heart", "Holy, Holy, Holy", and "Glorify Thy Name."
48. Bob Roberts, his son, Tom, and granddaughter Kerianne led the Lord's Prayer and Kerianne sang the Lord's Prayer, accompanied by her mother, Jeanine.
49. Vice President Hunt then introduced the morning Bible Study leader, Bernadette Glover-Williams, Executive Assistant Pastor for Second Baptist Church, Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Dr. Glover-Williams focused on "the eternal now."
50. Following a time of congregational singing led by Kim and Reggie Harris, a Celebration of Mission - The Ride of Your Life! was presented by Dr. Jean Kim, executive director, Educational Ministries, highlighting Discipleship Partners, New England; John Sundquist, executive director, International Ministries, highlighting Xtreme Teams to South Africa; and Aidsand Wright-Riggins, executive director, National Ministries, introducing the New Life Youth Media Team, Denver, Colorado.
51. Congregational praise and worship including "I Could Sing of Your Love Forever" and "Shout to the Lord" was led by the Alderson Broadus Praise Team and Band.

52. Hank Pedersen, Local Arrangements Chairperson, introduced the offering to benefit the ministry of the Local Arrangements Committee. (Total Received: \$6,478.00). The prayer was given by Ethel Corbin, pastor of the Georgiaville and Graniteville Rhode Island churches and President of American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island .
53. The West Virginians sang the offertory.
54. The morning scripture, Matthew 14:13-21, was read in Wampanoag by Cheryle Frye, a member of Praying Strong All Tribes House, Mashpee, Massachusetts, and in English by Vivian Lopes, Mashpee Baptist Church, Mashpee, Massachusetts.
55. Vice President Hunt next introduced the preacher for morning worship, Jenny Quey, Senior Pastor of the Community Baptist Church in San Mateo, California, whose sermon was entitled "God Is in Control - Blessings Overflow!"
56. People gathered in small groups and shared the names of ABC/USA congregations printed on cards received as they entered the hall. Prayers of the People for every American Baptist congregation were led by Brad Berglund, pastoral musician, prayer leader from Englewood, Colorado.

**FIFTH SESSION, Sunday, June 24, 2001 – 6:50 P.M.**

**Evening Gathering**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PROCESS*

*"...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us..."*

(The liturgical structure for this service was developed for the World Council of Churches assembly held in Vancouver, Canada in 1983. Rooted in historical liturgies, it has been used by Christians in multi-lingual and multi-cultural settings throughout the world.)

57. As the congregation entered, James Bonn played the prelude for the evening service.
58. President McCray welcomed the delegates and visitors and introduced the evening preacher, Billy Kim, President of the Baptist World Alliance.
59. The introit, "Christ the Sure Foundation", was sung by the All Biennial Choir, directed by Martha Sobaje, minister of music and education, Phillips Memorial Baptist Church, Cranston, Rhode Island.
60. President McCray led a responsive call to worship and gave the invocation following congregational singing of "All Hail the Power" in English, Spanish and Creole.
61. The All Biennial Choir and Handbells next performed the "Concerto on Hyfrydol" - arr. Hal Hopson.
62. The Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon were given by Marguerite Thomas, president, American Baptist Women of Rhode Island and Helen Schall, chair, Women's Concern Committee of Rhode Island, United Church of Christ Congregational.
63. The Entrance of the Word was preceded by liturgical dancer, Jessica Sehested of New York, New York.
64. The congregation sang "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah", followed by the Old Testament reading, Psalm 105:1-3, read by Keren Sanchez, Regional Youth Representative, ABC Metro Chicago (Spanish) and David Chhangte, associate pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Providence, Rhode Island (Mizo) and the New Testament Reading, Matthew 23:18-20, read by Daniella Nicolas, member, Alliance of Haitian Baptist Churches (French) and Reaves Nahwooks, pastor of Rainy Mountain Kiowa Indian Baptist Church, Mountain View, Oklahoma (Commanche).
65. The Far East Broadcasting Company Korean Children's Choir, Jae-Han Mo, director, sang several selections.

66. Dr. Billy Kim, President, Baptist World Alliance, preached the evening sermon, entitled "Providence Experienced."
67. A Call to Commitment was given by Wanda Henry, administrator, Baptist Joint Committee.
68. An offering to benefit South Providence Neighborhood Ministries was introduced by Dr. Don Rasmussen, executive minister, American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island and Wanda Michaelson, executive director, South Providence Neighborhood Ministries (Total Received: \$5,701.92)
69. Following congregational singing of the Doxology, an offertory duet, "We, O God Unite Our Voices" - Duke/Nutt, was played and sung by J. Thomas Son, from Pennsylvania, and Bethany Socia, Groton, Massachusetts, with liturgical dance interpretation by Jessica Sehested.
70. Prayers of the people were then presented by ecumenical leaders including Sharon Key, Rhode Island, and Robert Edgar, New York, followed by the Lord's Prayer, prayed by the congregation in each person's language of choice.
71. The closing hymn, "Jesus Shall Reign", was followed by the benediction, given by Joan Jensen, chair, Committee on Christian Unity, ABC/USA.
72. The All Biennial Choir sang the Hallelujah Chorus - G.F.Handel.
73. James Bonn played the postlude, "Toccata in F" - Charles Marie Widor

**SIXTH SESSION, Monday, June 25, 2001 – 8:45 A.M.**

**Morning Gathering**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PRESENCE*

*"...looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith..."*

74. As people entered the hall the prelude was played by Paul Baker, organ, and James Bonn, keyboards.
75. Songleaders Heather Daniels and Tedd Szeto, led the congregation in singing "Come, Now is the Time to Worship", "Ancient of Days", "My Jesus, I Love Thee", and "I Love You, Lord".
76. Choral Praise was sung by the Chapel Choir, First Baptist Church, Gaithersburg, MD, Matt Gaines, director.
77. Vice President Hunt welcomed those present and introduced Thomas Moore, family therapist, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, Sun Hills, AZ who led the morning Bible study.
78. Heather Daniels and Tedd Szeto led congregational singing of "Open Our Eyes, Lord".
79. Statements of Concern Committee members John Burns, College Park, Maryland; Loris Colette, Aptos, California; Sheri Whitehouse, Summer, Washington; and Mylion Waite, University Heights, OH introduced the Statement of Concern "Conflict in our American Baptist Family". A video presentation of historical people in the ABC/USA "cloud of witnesses" was played prior to delegates voting.

THE STATEMENT OF CONCERN "CONFLICT IN OUR AMERICAN BAPTIST COMMUNITY" follows:

( 752 Affirm; 88 Not Affirm)

Baptist history in America is seasoned with experiences of disagreement and dissent. For centuries, we have struggled over different interpretations and applications of Scripture, as well as the implications they have for mission and ministry. Since Roger Williams began Baptist ministry in Providence, conflict has been a part of the growing pains of our religious heritage as we have sought the mind of Christ in a context of personal freedom and Christian community. From the time that Ann and Adonirum Judson served as Baptist missionaries, we have labored through a variety of difficult issues while attempting to maintain a common mission. Since we have not yet reached the place



where God ultimately wants us to be, we will continue to wrestle through conflict as we strive to serve the Lord in love, humility and good conscience.

*“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...”* Hebrews 12:1-2

American Baptists historically have sought to work through disputes while being faithful to the Bible and to our collective mission in Christ’s name. Recognizing that there are many scriptural models for responding to disagreements, we have handled them in a variety of ways over time, ranging from reconciliation and reunification to outright schism and separation. Throughout our experience with differing views, however, we have tried to be faithful to two closely related principles. First, we believe in the right of every congregation to exercise authority under God for its own life and ministry. Second, we believe in the right of every congregation to choose voluntarily whether or not to associate with other congregations. Both practices are in keeping with our unique heritage as Baptists.

Our interdependence is based on our need and desire to fulfill God’s mission. The fact that we are autonomous does not leave us without responsibility. Similarly, our interdependence does not require us to be uniform. The love of Christ, however, compels us to live in harmony and humility and to strive to become the people that Christ wants us to be.

*“Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”* Romans 12:16-18

Our handling of conflict has too often resulted in estrangement that hinders our common mission. As American Baptists, we must be committed to work together and not allow our disagreements to dominate our common life. Thus, we need to deepen our relationships with each other, listen thoughtfully and respectfully to each other, enter into dialogue for mutual understanding and not simply to change the opinions of others, and seek to become one in spirit through Christ, effectively implementing the mission to which we are called.

Therefore:

- We call on American Baptists to strive to maintain unity and participation in mission in spite of our disagreements, differences, and conflicts. We also recognize, with sober grief, that at times there may be differences so great that after all efforts toward reconciliation have been exhausted, conflict resolution may come through separation by mutual agreement and with respect toward all parties.
- We call upon churches, associations, Regions, and the ABC/USA to communicate the nature of Baptist life within and outside our denomination, specifically the autonomy of the local church and the voluntary association of churches.
- We call upon ABC/USA-related educational institutions to train students to constructively deal with conflicts in churches.

- We encourage the ABC/USA, Regions, and churches to develop, promote, and utilize resources for constructively addressing conflict in Regions, associations, and churches.
- We call on the ABC/USA and Regions to identify individuals, trained and experienced in conflict transformation, to be utilized by American Baptists.

80. Statements of Concern Committee members Dianne Steelman, Cincinnati, OH; John Polite, Los Angeles, California; Loris Coletta; and Helen Phillips participated in a skit which introduced the Statement of Concern on “New Church Planting”.

THE STATEMENT OF CONCERN “NEW CHURCH PLANTING” follows:

(810 Affirm; 22 Not Affirm)

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19-20*

The American Baptist Churches/USA, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have adopted the goal of planting 1,010 new congregations by the end of 2010. This is both a worthy and ambitious objective. In order to achieve this goal, new church planting must be a priority of every American Baptist congregation. We hope and expect that existing churches will experience renewal as they work together in planting these churches. For we believe that as mission and ministry expand into the world around us, churches that participate in this endeavor similarly experience the blessing of the outpouring of God’s Spirit.

At the same time, our current models of church planting must expand and evolve. Changes in society incurred through population shifts and the introduction of new immigrant groups require us to find and train new church planters who can respond effectively to the realities of the unchurched and to help bring about transformation in their lives. To meet the goal of discipling all people, we are challenged to plant churches that are ethnically and economically diverse, as well as those that have different worship and organizational styles, suitable to the needs and interests of the congregation that gathers.

We realize that in order to start these new churches, each ABC/USA Region will need to form its own church planting goals and strategies. Likewise, established churches will need to strategically determine their level of support for new church starts through financial and human resources, along with logistical, structural, and ongoing spiritual support. Furthermore, money must be allocated on a regional and national level to help in this effort. Finally, we must attempt to use all the people God calls for this ministry, including both seminary and non-seminary trained pastors.

While we start new churches, American Baptists must also support our existing churches with resources for revitalization. We appreciate the efforts of ABC/USA and Regions to provide resources and strategies for church transformation and renewal. Developing healthy churches in the ABC/USA is the objective, whether the congregations are small or large.

As we begin a new millennium, let us be challenged by the dual goals of planting 1,010 new churches and encouraging established congregations in their healthy renewal.

Therefore, out of a desire to share the love of Christ:

- We call on American Baptist congregations to accept the challenge of planting a new church or becoming a partner with other congregations to start a new church.
- We urge our existing churches to open their doors to provide space for a new church start.
- We call on the ABC/USA, Regions, and local churches to provide funding for new churches and for renewal efforts in established churches.
- We encourage our associations, Regions, and the ABC/USA to recognize, respect, and appreciate the culture, language, and customs of constituent churches in a desire to share the love of Christ with all people.
- We encourage American Baptists to become knowledgeable and supportive of the program initiatives for New Life 2010 proposed by National Ministries, Educational Ministries, and International Ministries.

81. As ushers collected votes on Statements of Concern, Heather Daniels and Tedd Szeto led congregational singing of "Rejoice! Our Loving God".
82. The King's Kids, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Twin Oaks, PA, Rotelia Waller, coordinator performed a praise dance.
83. Karen Selig, president of American Baptist Women's Ministries, was joined by Edwenia Collins of Anchorage, Alaska, and Jennifer Bailey of Waterford, California, in leading a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of American Baptist Women's Ministries.
84. Walter L. Parrish, II, executive minister of American Baptist Churches of the South and Barry T. Young, Local Arrangements Chairperson, gave an invitation to all present to attend the 2003 Biennial Meeting in Richmond, Virginia.
85. President McCray and Interim General Secretary Roberts, hosted a Town Meeting segment which addressed several questions about denominational life which had been mailed to the Mission Center in Valley Forge prior to the Biennial Meeting.
86. John Sundquist, executive director, International Ministries, gave the benediction.

**SEVENTH SESSION, June 25, 2001 - 2:45 P.M.**

**Afternoon Gathering**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PRESENCE*

*"...looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith..."*

87. President McCray called the meeting to order for the purpose of hearing discussion of the statement of concern "A Faithful Response to Faith-Based Initiatives."
88. President McCray presided at the discussion, and Katie Wistoff, Regional Youth Representative, was timekeeper. Those speaking for the statement were: Steve Case, Westmont, New Jersey; Jon Dainty, Akron, Ohio; Alan Martin, Portland, Oregon; Kenneth Dodgson, East Rochester, New York; Ashley Smith, Pittsfield, Massachusetts; and James Ratliff, Rosedale, New York. Those speaking against the statement were: Ethan Rayburn, Terre Haute, Indiana; Jim Peterson, Granville, New York; Richard Pierard, Beverly, Massachusetts; Peter Sprigg, Clifton Park, New York; Glenn Layne, Temple City, California; and Wendy Fobert, Cranston, Rhode Island.
89. The total affirmative vote was less than required for affirmation (25% of those registered at the opening of the Biennial Meeting) so this statement was not affirmed.

90. There being no signature statements for consideration, President McCray adjourned the session until 6:50 p.m.

**EIGHTH SESSION, June 25, 2001 – 6:50 P.M.**

**Evening Gathering**

*PROVIDENCE IS A PRESENCE*

*"...looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.."*

91. Martha Sobaje played the organ prelude. The final prelude selection, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" was arranged by Dr. Sobaje in honor of the 2001 Biennial Meeting, and was performed for the first time at this evening gathering.
92. President McCray welcomed the congregation and gave an introduction of the evening preacher, Luis Palau, a renowned evangelist who has ministered through mass evangelism via radio and television broadcasts and face to face with 13.6 million people in 69 nations.
93. The Call to Worship was given in Spanish by Carlos Gomez, ABC/Metro New York, and in English by Stephanie Woo, ABC/New Jersey.
94. Heather Daniels and Tedd Szeto led the congregational singing of "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High" and "O, For A Thousand Tongues to Sing".
95. Sumner Grant, executive director, Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board gave the invocation.
96. Choral praise was provided by the Ambassador Chorale, Florida Memorial College, Miami, FL, Lloyd Brockington, director.
97. Sumner Grant introduced the members of the General Secretary Search Committee, The Advisory Committee and Observers to that committee:
- GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH COMMITTEE:**  
Trinette V. McCray, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, chair; Vernell C. Neely, Nashville, Tennessee; H. Jay Flu-Allen, Columbus, Ohio; Jorge Pierola, Culver City, California; Stephen E. Hasper, Granada Hills, California; Mary H. Purcell, Wallingford, Pennsylvania; Kevin D. Rose, Indianapolis, Indiana.
- ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH COMMITTEE:**  
Lemaire Alerte, Jersey City, New Jersey; James Chuck, San Francisco, California; Luis Cortés, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; George C. L. Cummings, Hercules, California; Jean Cunningham, Kenna, West Virginia; Daniel Florés, Carolina, Puerto Rico; Robert Frykholm, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Katharine Bau Hsiao, Castro Valley, California; Clydia Nahwooksy, Cache, Oklahoma; Mary E. Robinson, Cedar Falls, Iowa; Cora Sparrowk, Ione, California; Dianne W. Steelman, Cincinnati, Ohio.
- OBSERVERS TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH COMMITTEE:**  
Sumner M. Grant (NEC), New York, New York; Lloyd D. Hamblin, Jr. (REMC), Parkersburg, West Virginia; Linda C. Spoolstra (REMC), Dedham, Massachusetts

The group was thanked for their service in this important role for the denomination and were asked to disburse among the congregation. People gathered around each individual and laid hands on them as prayers of thanks were given for them. Also prayers were offered asking God's guidance and support for them in their task of discerning God's direction in selection of the next General Secretary for ABC/USA.

98. Chad Znoj and Kate Lovejoy, 1999 Regional Youth Representatives, American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island shared the excitement they experienced as Regional Youth Representatives and introduced the offering to benefit the Biennial Regional Youth Representatives Program (Total Received: \$4,726) and gave the offertory prayer.
99. An offertory selection was sung by the Youth Choir, Slavic Baptist Church, Providence, R.I., Tamara Kinenok, director.

100. President McCray introduced the ABC/USA Officers for the 2002-2003 biennium and in his response President-elect David G. Hunt said, "For the next biennium our team will focus on a variety of challenges and opportunities - from a new general secretary to NEW LIFE 2010...from restructuring to planning to fund-raising... The cloud of witnesses we celebrate this week has passed the baton to us, and we have a responsibility to pas it on...."
101. Lloyd Hamblin, president, Regional Executive Ministers Council, and Ryan Stoner and Bethany Crouch, regional youth representatives, West Virginia Baptist Convention led a time of thanksgiving for and introduced new Regional Executive Ministers: Paul Borden, ABC of the West; Susan Gillies, ABC of Nebraska; Arlo Reichter, ABC of Wisconsin and Riley Walker ABC of the Dakotas. Each executive minister was accompanied to the platform by the Regional Youth Representatives from their region.
102. Heather Daniels and Tedd Szeto led the congregational song "God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending" .
103. The evening sermon was given by Luis Palau, president, Luis Palau Evangelistic Association, Portland, OR.
104. Following the sermon a celebration of New Life was introduced with movement and signing to "He Touched Me" - Gaither, by the Signs of Light, Union Baptist Church, East Killingly, CT, Sandra Pelc,director.
105. A litany was led by Carol Sutton, movement director, NEW LIFE 2010, Jean Kim, John Sundquist, Aidsand Wright-Riggins, Louise Barger, executive minister, American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains, representing the Regional Executive Ministers Council, Robert H. Roberts, the ABC/USA, New Life Youth MediaTeam, Regional Youth Representatives, and XTreme Team members.
106. Heather Daniels and Tedd Szeto led the congregation in a final singing of the New Life Song.
107. President McCray invited all present to greet the new officers at a reception following the evening gathering and gave the benediction closing the final session of the 2001 Biennial.
108. Faces of Living Witnesses in ABC/USA were shown on the screens as people left the gathering hall.

#### REGISTRATION REPORT FOR THE 2001 BIENNIAL

Registered Delegates:	2,048
Registered Visitors:	1,923
Musicians and Rhode Island Volunteers:	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,971</b>