



BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES

June 16-18, 2016

MINUTES

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

Officers: Judy Fackenthal, President
Josue Gómez-Menendez, Vice President
Don Ng, Past President
Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer
Susan E. Gillies, Interim General Secretary

Parliamentarian: Dennis Johnson **BGM Chaplain:** Kay Farley

BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES RETREAT

Thursday, June 16, 2016 (9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.) – Friday, June 17, 2016 (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

Brayton Case, Kern Lodge

Participants: The Board of General Ministries; ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary Board-Related Staff; Marcia Patton, Charles Revis, John Williams (Region Executive Ministers), the General Secretary's Search Committee members of the ABC Nominating Committee and the General Secretary's Search Committee, and Doris Garcia-Rivera (presidenta de Seminario Evangelico de Puerto Rico), also a member of the General Secretary's Search Committee.

Participants gathered in a retreat setting for a day and a half to intentionally focus on building relationships and to explore issues of race, gender and culture, recognizing the impact of those issues on our life together as a denominational family. During this time, participants also contemplated how to best leverage the gift of diversity as it discerns leadership for the future of the denomination. The retreat was facilitated by consultant Erin Hawkins, General Secretary of the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race.

ABC President Judy Fackenthal welcomed participants and led in prayer for the family of Rev. Dr. Roger Fredrikson, former ABC President (1970-1971) and long-time pastor and social justice advocate, who passed away on June 16, 2016 in Sioux Falls, SD.

Camille Brown, Chair of the Beloved Community Action Group shared an opening devotional on Thursday morning based on I Corinthians 12:12-27 (one body, many parts, each dependent upon the other) and BGM chaplain Kay Farley shared an opening devotional on Friday morning based on Genesis 45, the story of Joseph (truth can hurt, but when it is poured out, it is love that sets us free).

The ABC Bylaws, Article XV, Section 1: The Executive Director of the corporation managed by each National Board, elected or appointed by such National Board in accordance with Article XIII, Section 2 of these Bylaws, shall be elected by the Board of General Ministries as a National Secretary of ABCUSA to serve for a term which is concurrent with such person's term as such Executive Director; provided that the General Secretary serves as a member of the advisory search committee of such corporation which recommends the appointment of such Executive Director and the corporation remains a party to the Covenant of Relationships.

A motion was made, seconded and it was

VOTED: To elect Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, Executive Director of American Baptist Home Mission Societies, as a National Secretary of ABCUSA to serve for a term which is concurrent with his term as Executive Director.

A motion was made, seconded and it was

VOTED: To elect Rev. Sharon T. Koh, Executive Director of International Ministries, ABC, as a National Secretary of ABCUSA to serve for a term which is concurrent with her term as Executive Director, effective August 1.

BGM 286

REPORT OF THE INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY

Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies, who was attending her first meeting of the full Board of General Ministries, affirmed the work accomplished at the BGM Retreat, noting that this is a long journey we are a part of, and expressing the importance of taking small strides forward so we do not fall back.

In her report to the board, Susan addressed the recent shooting in Orlando, Florida, sharing with BGM the press release which was just posted this afternoon on the ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary website, extending sympathy to families and friends of the victims and addressing American Baptist brothers and sisters who are part of the LGBTQ community with this statement: "...never mistake our debates and disagreements with the depth of our love for you as part of our family. To the rest of the ABC family my message is, even in the midst of profound disagreement; let us love as Christ loved." Susan reported that a press release addressing gun violence and racism will also soon be posted.

Susan ended her report by celebrating the fact that at its June 2017 meeting, the name of the proposed new General Secretary will come to BGM for vote. Susan also submitted to BGM a written report of update.

BGM 287

BGM OFFERING

Judy Fackenthal reported that the BGM Executive Committee voted to direct the BGM offering to be collected on Saturday, June 18, 2016 to persons working with families of the victims of the Orlando massacre. She encouraged BGM directors and staff to prayerfully consider "what the Lord prompts you to give to bring support to those in need at this time."

BGM 288

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Fackenthal recessed the meeting of the Board of General Ministries to meet in Executive Session, without staff present, to discuss the General Secretary Search—job description, process, recruitment firms and timeline. Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies was invited to remain for the Executive Session due to her work and reflection on the search process.

BGM 289**RECONVENE
MISSION TABLE- 7 PRIORITIES**

President Fackenthal reconvened the meeting of the BGM.

As a result of the November 2015 Mission Table, ABC churches, regions and national organizations were encouraged to focus on one or more of 7 priorities (Next Generation of Leaders, Violence, Discipleship, Poverty, Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society, Women in Ministry, and Alternative Models for Pastoral Ministry) to engage these priorities and to continue to champion ministries associated with these priorities. BGM will be focusing on “The Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society.” The BGM Executive Committee decided that at each June and November BGM meeting, Action Groups will meet for one session, dedicating the remaining time when Action Groups would normally meet for a second session, to hear from a variety of leaders involved in proclaiming the gospel in the midst of change. Speakers will engage BGM in discussions that provide a sense of how God is at work in the world in new and innovative ways. At the November 2016 meeting, Duh Kam will address the issue of refugee resettlement.

Judy also reported that the Executive Committee recognizes that due to both *Transformed by the Spirit* and the denominational focus on the 7 priorities, congregational renewal is being championed by ABC partner organizations in new and various ways. Because of this, the Executive Committee recommends that BGM’s Renewing Congregations Action Group be discontinued, with members joining one of the remaining groups. The Executive Committee commends the work of Wesley Roberts and Jeff Woods and members of the Congregational Renewal Action Group, and Judy expressed gratitude on behalf of BGM for their good work.

There was time for questions and discussion. It was noted that the website prepared for Mission Summit conversations, www.missionsummitconversations.com, functions as an online interactive forum to share ministry information and to build a sense of community among American Baptists. Case statements for each of the 7 priorities are included on the site. The ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary website also carries a link to the Mission Summit website.

BGM 290**UNITED MISSION ADVERTISING**

BGM received, prior to the meeting, a written report from the United Mission Advertising (UM AD) Team regarding its work on the “United Mission is the Vehicle” emphasis to raise the ABC family’s awareness and enthusiasm for United Mission. The first phase included a pilot project involving three regions, conducted from late September to December 2015. UM AD met on April 18, 2016 to begin planning the 2017 campaign. Tasha Wilson, a member of the Team, invited BGM directors to reach out to her or to Leo Thorne, with any questions about the written report or about the work of the UM AD Team.

BGM 291**REPORT OF CHANGED RELATIONSHIPS**

Josue Gómez-Menendez, chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee, presented the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches. Following a time for discussion and questions, a motion was made, seconded, and it was

VOTED: To recognize the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches (document 1205.1:6/16) dated November 5, 2015 through June 3, 2016.

BGM 292**BGM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

President Fackenthal reported on the March 10-12, 2016 BGM Executive Committee meeting at Camp Verde, AZ, hosted by Rainbow Acres, one of ABCUSA’s Associated Ministry Organizations. She also reported on actions taken at the Executive Committee’s meeting on Wednesday, June 15, at Green Lake.

to live into God's reign in heaven as we conduct heart to heart conversations without schism, taking the "hallway conversations" back into meeting rooms and talking with other Baptist brothers and sisters, not just within our own circles. In light of this conversation, Don proposed the formation of a taskforce, which would come for board approval.

Time was provided for questions and further discussion. A question was raised about whether such a taskforce might be formed between now and the November BGM meeting. It was agreed that this may need to be a slower process, with formation of such a taskforce following the meeting in Portland.

A motion was made by Janice Bell, seconded by Elmore Warren, and it was

VOTED: That BGM create a Taskforce on Baptist Talk

Further discussion culminated with consideration of this new group being named as a Commission, which could include people outside BGM. Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies spoke to the issue of funding. The first motion was recalled. A motion was made by Janice Bell, seconded by Elmore Warren and it was

VOTED: To establish a commission on "Baptist Talk" to discuss meaty issues.

It was noted that the current mission table conversations can be part of this. President Judy Fackenthal will have responsibility for the formation of this commission.

BGM 297 WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

Shirley Fair, BGM director and Chair of the World Relief Committee, shared an update of the committee's work. A full written report, including a financial report, was also posted on the BGM document page prior to this meeting for review and is attached to the minutes.

As part of her report, Shirley encouraged BGM directors to keep their respective regions engaged with One Great Hour of Sharing. The theme of the 2016 OGHS materials is the displaced people of our world. Globally, as of June 2015, one in every 122 human beings is either a refugee, is internally displaced, or is seeking asylum. If these groups of displaced persons were categorized as a country, that country would rank as the world's 24th largest.

Gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing are helping in tangible ways, currently aiding Syrian and Middle East refugees in Lebanon, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, and Greece; the small percentage of refugees currently being accepted for resettlement in the U.S and the internally displaced in South Sudan, even as they brace for the outbreak of more civil conflict. And more needs will continue to reveal themselves in the coming years.

2016 OGHS promotional materials were sent to all churches the first week of April and other materials, including a Planning and Resource Guide, poster, bulletin inserts, offering envelopes and refugee tent-shaped coin boxes, were mailed to the 2,294 American Baptist churches that have requested them.

BGM 298 BGM ACTION GROUPS

President Fackenthal reviewed the schedule for the evening and recessed the meeting of the full Board of General Ministries. From 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., the BGM convened in the following Action Groups to focus its work in various areas. (The list of names of members of Action Groups below specify full membership although not all were able to be present.)

Finance Committee (Led by Paul Higgins; Alan Musoke, staff)
Robin Crouch, Beryl Hornberger, Danny Jack, Charity Matic, Dianne Steelman
Christian Unity & Interfaith Relations (Led by June Totten)

ABCUSA Audit: The report of independent certified public accountants, Tait, Weller & Baker LLP, stated that ABCUSA's audit was "impeccably clean." The auditors reported that staff, while being tasked with a 4 - 6% reduction each year, have done an excellent job of managing expenses.

Based on the recommendation of the BGM Finance Committee it was

VOTED: To accept, as recommended by the BGM Finance Committee, the Auditor's Report on the 2015 ABCUSA Audited Financial Statements for the years ended December 31, 2015 and 2014.

Grants from the Mission Initiative Fund: The ABCUSA Finance Committee reviewed requests for grants from the Mission Initiative Fund. One request was for a three-year grant to help provide seed money to form an ABC Creation Justice Network. The creation of this network would foster dialogue within the ABC family in terms of our responsibility towards God's creation. It would also enable ABC to cooperate more effectively with ecumenical and interfaith partners such as Creation Justice Ministries, an ecumenical eco-justice organization affiliated with the National Council of Churches. The ABCUSA Finance Committee approved \$20,000 in funding for 2016-2017 (September-August). Further funding will be considered after receiving a report from the ABC Creation Justice Network.

Building Update: A Mission Center Building Update document was distributed. In summarizing steps which have been taken, Alan Musoke explained that 15 potential developers were invited to participate in an exploration of a "joint venture" process. Of those invited, nine submitted plans; of those nine, three were invited to submit Best And Final Offers (BAFO). The deadline to receive BAFO responses is July 9. It is anticipated that the BAFOs will include various combinations of retail and service-oriented structures. In response to a question, Alan stated that while there is a desire to maximize the value of the property there is continued concern over the type of businesses which would be located on the property. He noted that zoning has been changed so that almost any plan could be followed.

Mission Center Property Taxes: Alan reported that both the Township of Upper Merion and the School District agreed to a settlement of 588 Associates' tax appeal, agreeing upon a 41.26% tax-exempt percentage, with the remaining percentage considered taxable. He also reported that Palmer Seminary is vacating their leased space in June 2016. A question was asked about the possibility of leasing the vacated space. Alan responded that it would be difficult to find long-term tenants due to the disposition of the building. He also noted that the loss of rental income from Palmer has already been taken into account.

BGM 302 ACTION GROUP REPORTS

Action groups were given time to highlight items from their written reports and from their meetings earlier.

Finance Committee Action Group: Paul Higgins reported that the draw rate from our 2 endowments has been reduced from 5% to 4.5% and may need to be reduced further. He spoke briefly about region audits which the Finance Committee reviews. It is of concern that some regions do not submit audits and it would seem that some regions do not have any review of their financials. The mission receipt forms which have been revised were reviewed.

Beloved Community Action Group: Camille Brown thanked the president and the Executive Committee for including the Beloved Community group members in the retreat planning process. She suggested that the small group process be continued by taking an agenda item and then having a small group deal with it.

ABC Identity Action Group: Jonathan Malone spoke about the 2 logos and the question of which a church should use. Susan suggested that we do not rush into making a decision but consider again in November. Our organization is the harmonizer and we desire to bring unity to the denomination and to help the program boards understand our importance.

Renewing Congregations Action Group: Wesley Roberts noted that this was the last meeting of the action group and, as such, time was spent in reflecting on what has been accomplished. The group has considered the life cycle of congregations, church renewal strategies, research on church growth, reviewed Transformed by the Spirit Resources, and identified stories of renewal. Wesley spoke about his concern over the loss of congregations and the need to keep this in our thinking.

Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations: June Totten reminded the board of the Luke Mowbray Award which is presented at the Biennial. June asked directors to be thinking of nominees. She also spoke about a third Baptist/Muslim dialogue which will probably be a retreat at Green Lake. Participants will be invited by the taskforce to come “2 by 2”—one Baptist and one Muslim. The focus will be on young people (40 years and younger).

Notes from Action Group sessions will be posted on the BGM document page of the ABCUSA website.

BGM 303 WRITTEN REPORTS

Josue noted that a number of written reports were transmitted prior to the meeting as a means of sharing information and updates and time was provided for comment and questions relative to these reports.

President’s Report: Judy spoke about her desire to be available to directors and noted that not all ideas shared will be instituted. She spoke about the changes which have occurred as the move has been made from a huge conglomerate board & process to that of a working board. In reference to the General Secretary Search Committee she spoke about the way in which an orchestra tunes its instruments before a performance. After each individual musician comes onto the stage the first chair violinist, the concert master, comes and everyone tunes up. After the tuning is complete then the conductor comes onto the stage. She likened the General Secretary to the concert master with God being the conductor. The concert master makes sure the harmony, which at times is lush and rich and at other times dissonant, is there. Judy prays for the search to lead to the person who can be the “harmonizer.” As one way of strengthening relationships within the American Baptist family, Judy, along with Susan, will be returning to Green Lake for the World Mission Conference.

In answer to a question about sharing the telephone numbers of board directors, Judy asked that directors email Marilyn Tyson with the number that can be posted for them. This list of numbers will be posted on the BGM page on the ABCUSA website, which is password protected.

Transformed by the Spirit (TbyS): Jeff Woods reported that the Journey Team is working to improve the TbyS process by involving the pastor to a greater extent. Work in contextualizing the resource to specific geographic areas, to fit the culture of an area, is also being done.

Ken Marsenburg noted that, since the \$800,000 goal for TbyS, has been surpassed, the goal has been raised to 1.2 million. He noted that the Greek for “God loves a cheerful giver” might be rendered as “God loves a hilarious giver.” He challenged the Board to lead by example.

BGM 304 SIGNING OF THE AMO COVENANT: ABCUSA/KACHIN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA

President Judy Fackenthal welcomed Mr. Zau Hkawng Dure, General Secretary of the Kachin Baptist Churches USA, Rev. Dr. Maw San Awng Jum, Associate General Secretary and Ms. Nang Doi Lahpai, President, and several other KBCUSA guests who were present at this meeting of the BGM

At the recommendation of the BGM Executive Committee it was

VOTED: To approve the Kachin Baptist Churches USA as Associated Ministry Organizations (AMOs) with ABCUSA.

Subsequent to this vote, there was a formal signing of a covenant agreement.

Rev. Judy Fackenthal, Mr. Josue Gómez-Mendendez and Dr. Susan E. Gillies signed the covenant on behalf of ABCUSA; Mr. Zau Hkawng Dure, Rev. Dr. Maw San Awng Jum and Ms. Nang Doi Lahpai signed the covenant on behalf of the Kachin Baptist Churches USA.

Dr. Jum and Mrs. Nang Doi Lahpai shared some remarks and presented a wooden symbol of the Kachin as a gift to ABC. There was a time for picture taking as a means of commemoration of the occasion.

BGM 305 BGM OFFERING AND CLOSING WORSHIP

Rev. Bill Frederickson read Numbers 17:1-9 as scripture for worship. Stephanie Commandest sang “Precious Lord, Take My Hand.”

As part of worship, an offering (\$1,000) was collected for persons ministering to the families of victims of the June 12, 2016 massacre in Orlando, Florida.

BGM Chaplain, Rev. Kay Farley, led the Board in prayer circles which encompassed members of the General Secretary’s Search Committee, members of the previous Search Committee, BGM directors and staff. Kay led the prayer which had been prayed in unison at the beginning of the Board retreat and then all joined in reciting the Lord’s Prayer.

BGM 306 ADJOURNING

President Fackenthal adjourned the meeting of the Board of General Ministries.

A Buffet Lunch was served in the Bauer Dining Room for those who did not have to rush to meet a shuttle to the airport. Boxes lunches were provided for others.

Future meetings of the BGM and BGM Executive Committee:

September 8-10, 2016 (Executive Committee) – Rochester, NY
November 16-19, 2016 –King of Prussia, PA (Nominating Committee will meet on Nov. 15)
March 9-11, 2017 (Executive Committee) – Atlanta, GA
June 27-28, 2017 – Portland, OR (Nominating Committee will meet on June 26)
June 29, 2017 – Pre-Biennial Events; June 30-July 2, 2017 – Biennial Mission Summit
September 14-16, 2017(Executive Committee) – Puerto Rico
November 16-18, 2017 – King of Prussia, PA (Nominating Committee will meet aft. of Nov. 15; Executive Committee dinner on Nov. 15)

Submitted by,

Dr. Susan E. Gillies
Interim General Secretary

SEG/cb

Documents attached:

BGM Integrated Schedule (1008:6/16)
BGM Proposed Agenda (1102:6/16)
BGM Minutes-November 12-14, 2016 (1101:11/16)
BGM Executive Committee Minutes – March 9-12, 2016 (1002:3/16)
Final Report: BGM Retreat, submitted by Erin M. Hawkins, consultant
ABC President's Report (1201:6/16)
Report of Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies (1202:6/16)
Staff Reports from ABCUSA & AMOs
ABCUSA News Releases
Fackenthal Memo to BGM: BGM Retreat
Action Group Assignments
UM Advertising Team Update
Report on 2017 Orientation to American Baptist Life (OTABL)
ABHS Call to Meeting (2412:6/16)
Minutes - ABHS Corporate Meeting (9200.11)
"Baptists Talk"
Retirement celebration program: Dr. Deborah Van Broekhoven; Rev. Dr. Leo S. Thorne
ABCUSA Audit – 2015(1501.6/16)
Financials YTD as of April 2016
Update on Building Issues (1427.5)
Action Group Reports from Nov. 2015
Letter from KBCUSA General Secretary
Associated Ministry Organization Covenant: ABCUSA & KBCUSA
Matthew 25 Grant Summary
Report from General Secretary Emeritus Roy Medley: US/Egyptian Dialogue (0061.1)
Report from ABCUSA Immigration Taskforce (0053.23:6/16)
Reports of the World Relief Officer, Lisa Rothenberger
Transformed by the Spirit Update, Jeff Woods (1223:6/16)
Reports-BGM directors serving other boards: MMBB, Bill Frederickson; ABHMS, James Wolfe; IM, Vivan Martindale
June BGM Highlights, Judy Fackenthal