

COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN UNITY AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS

November 14, 2014

Committee Participants: Andy Arndt, Ruth Clark, Dennis Johnson, Ernest Jones, Alan Newton, Alan Rudnick, and June Totten (chair); Roy Medley (General Secretary)

Guest Participant: Virginia Holmstrom, Executive Director, American Baptist Women's Ministries

We welcomed new members and guest, briefly checked in with each other, and opened with prayer. The proposed Agenda was approved, as were the Minutes of the last meeting.

Baptist – Muslim relationships. Alan Newton is joining our Committee (voted by BGM) to assist with organizing of dialogues in local communities. Following national and regional dialogues, we want to encourage our church members to become more involved in interfaith dialogue locally. A planning committee is working on a third national event for 2016, this time pairing younger Baptists and Muslims living in the same communities. Ernest Jones represents us on Shoulder to Shoulder and reported on their activities. Virginia Holmstrom met with us to share what ABWM is already doing in this area, and ways we can partner with each other in this work. ABWM has led trips, is planning a Retreat, and will be developing an e-resource. The Fall 2012 issue of *AB Quarterly* features the Second National Baptist-Muslim Dialogue; printed copies were shared with all BGM members. Roy Medley shared about his recent travels and meetings and work in this area, including international advocacy for human rights.

Middle East relations. Plans for the next Middle East trip were shared. A Peace Conference planned by Arab Israeli Baptists will precede a Telos-led tour, and an extended tour to Jordan will follow. Wes Brown who represents ABC on Churches for Middle East Peace submitted a written report.

Biennial/Mission Summit. The Luke Mowbray Ecumenical Award is in the purview of our committee, and we discussed how notice for nominations would be publicized and what the deadline for submissions would be. We sponsor the Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations Dinner during each Biennial/Mission Summit. The Rev. Dr. Roy Medley will be our speaker for this event in 2015. We discussed other plans related to the dinner and also the CCUIR exhibit at the convention.

BWA Commissions. The Baptist World Alliance requested that ABC nominate persons to serve on Commissions for 2015-2020. We reviewed our representation, and recommended six persons to be our official representatives. BGM voted to approve those names. It has been our practice in recent years to nominate young theologians to serve on the commissions and to help defray their expenses. Others who are interested, but not named officially, are welcome to serve at their own expense.

National Council of Churches. Roy Medley who is currently serving NCC as Chairperson reported on their activities. In their new structure, their priorities are mass incarceration and interfaith dialogue for peace. Their next meeting will be held in Missouri to support the Ferguson community following the racial issues there.

World Council of Churches. June Totten reported on the Central Committee meetings in Geneva last July where she represented ABC. There will be commemorations of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide held in 2015 with participation by WCC and NCC leaders.