

**Board of General Ministries
Mission Resource Development Response Group Meeting Notes
American Baptist Churches USA**

Attendees:

Robin Crouch
Vivan Martindale
Alan Rudnick
Elmore Warren

Staff Members:

Beth Fogg
Bridget Holmstrom
Leo Thorne



First Session: November 8, 4:30pm-5:45pm

1. Opening

- Leo opened the meeting, letting group members know that this group was the only group that met between June and November BGM meetings. He expressed regrets for Frank Christine, who was unable to attend and was missing his first Board meeting since joining the General Board. Additionally, Leo announced that in our second response group session we will be meeting with the Finance Committee.
- Robin Crouch led the group in an opening meditation.

2. Matthew 25 Grant

- ABCUSA and MRD staff member Beth Fogg was introduced to make a presentation about the new Matthew 25 Grant, being offered through the offices of ABCUSA.
 - Presented Matthew 25 Grant to BGM Executive Committee in September – they recommended that we bring it back to this response group.
 - Any advice you have on presentation for this? Structure for this?
 - We would also like to discuss a volunteer or volunteers from the response group to be on committee that makes grant decisions?
 - We will keep the grant flexible, but it is limited to those directly connected with American Baptist Churches USA in some way.

Suggestions:

- Add a date to the return report request.
- And send a questionnaire for them to fill our report.
- The whole group will be involved in this process.
- Alan and Robin on Committee for grant selection.
- If there is a conflict of interest, Alan and Robin can recuse themselves and have another Response Group member step in.

- Additionally, we will send report on Grants to the whole Response Group after they are given.
 - Publicize specifics – talk about Matthew 25 Grant stories on website.
3. Update on United Mission giving of BGM member churches
- Statistics supplied by Beth Fogg
 - Total BGM church membership – 40 different churches
 - Number of churches giving above zero to United Mission – 31 churches (9 gave zero)
 - Number of churches giving above zero to total UM, targeted and specifics combines – 34 churches (6 churches gave zero in these categories)
 - To contact Beth with any questions, email Beth.Fogg@abc-usa.org
4. Update on financial commitment by BGM Members
- We brought this to Ruth, and she took on contacting BGM members.
 - President Clark sent a letter to BGM members inviting them to give openly as members of the BGM.
 - Perhaps say “BGM” supports Mission Summit – this could be publicized. Ex: “Our board gives this.”
 - Breakfast at Mission Summit/Biennial – a thank you to donors/supporters. You as Response Group members will receive an invitation to this.
5. United Mission
- At our previous meeting, we looked at: How do we raise contributions? How should we frame United Mission? Should we change the form? How are we united?
- Do we need to craft our story before we begin considering United Mission?
 - UM is part of the old structure, where a percentage goes to ABHMS, IM, etc. Is this what we are talking about?
 - UM giving is down because of attitudes about what it is going toward. In order to develop a new narrative, we need to develop a new name, passion, etc. We need to clarify what it is.
 - Name Idea like: “Together in Ministry”?
 - Regional staff leaders in one region formerly encouraged churches to give to UM. Today, that is not happening. Churches are on their own in this decision now.
 - There is a branding issue. Additionally, there is a funding model is not working as it currently is. It should be redesigned, changed, rebranded for future.
 - Designate your gift – should we give churches this information.
 - What does changing the name of United Mission do to the budget covenant? Does it have an effect?
 - This may be something our Response Group needs to recommend to the budget covenant committee.
 - Note: United Mission pie chart distributed. ABMS Giving for September 2012 distributed.

**Board of General Ministries
Finance and Mission Resource Development
Joint Response Group Meeting Notes
American Baptist Churches USA**

Attendees:

Robin Crouch
Paul Higgins
Beryl Hornberger
Vivan Martindale
Charity Matic
James Ratliff
Wesley Roberts
Alan Rudnick
Elmore Warren

Staff Members:

Bridget Holmstrom
Alan Musoke
Leo Thorne



Second Session: November 10, 10:30am-12:00pm

1. This session was a combined meeting of Mission Resource Development and Finance Response Groups.
 - Reason for combined meeting: To have discussion around hiring a new Director of Development reporting to Roy; United Mission giving; Reflections on other areas of mission giving.
2. Finance Committee discussed recommendation for an offering for General Ministries. This has been recommended and passed on before, and nothing has been created.
 - Who else supports UM (partner organizations?) Should we as BGM raise money just for BGM? Are we incorrect in thinking we need to raise money for the whole family? Or should we focus on BGM?
 - We are not really a whole family in the same sense anymore. Perhaps we should just focus on BGM, as we need to fund our organization
 - We are enabling local churches to do ministry; that is why we are here.
 - BGM Executive Committee has recognized, people want to give money for mission work. We need to show them that we are not strictly an administrative office, but rather show that we do work with mission.

- Why are targeted offerings growing, and UM declining? Are people telling us something with this change?
 - People like giving with specific gifts in mind, targeted giving.
 - There are already 4 major offerings, plus region offering. We can't add much more.
 - We need to look at the structure for UM/other funding mechanisms for regions, partner organizations, etc.
 - Yesterday, we talked about how we feel that there needs to be a fundamental change within the budget covenant, and organizations need to cooperate dependently and independently.
 - This is not sustainable. Are the other organizations realizing these declines as we are? Perhaps not, but they need to realize this fact as well.
 - Other partners are not dependent on UM, so will they really be open to this change?
 -
 - The 9 million dollars we get from UM is still 9 million dollars. This is still a considerable amount that we shouldn't ignore.
 - BUT, ABHMS, IM, etc have kept their offerings around, but also added new ways of giving that are more specific and offer different things.
 - We as a Board need to be more specific in this as well.
 - The partner organizations should sit down and decide who should contact what groups, be respectful of this.
- 3. A concern in hiring a Director of Development is that we need to be careful creating the job description. We need someone who can look at the big picture, regroup, work with our specific organization. We don't just need someone to do cold calls.
 - We need to craft our story before really getting out there and fundraising and looking at these new ways of gaining funds.
 - The new Director of Development would need to create a culture of philanthropy. How do we realize the mission of ABCUSA through fundraising, and a new culture of philanthropy.
 - This person will help us with the journey of Transformed by the Spirit – be a steward for these donors we have, and new donors.
 - We are looking for the right person who understands who we are, who is able to help us build up, and also who can show us what they have done and what they have raised in the past.
 - We will ask them to look for new donors, new money.
- 4. We need our churches to give. When they don't give, they are hurting us.
 - Regions are not encouraging giving to UM. They are supporting other causes.
 - Regions are raising money for regional ministries in different ways – regional offering, other methods. This also takes away from UM, other groups.

- We need to think about how churches are viewing things. We need to think about churches that are dually affiliated, etc. They have different views on the offerings, etc.
 - Regional Executive Ministers are the communicators with churches. If it isn't communicated, churches may not know and/or support UM or the denomination in the same way.
 - Regions have smaller staff teams, and are struggling as well.
 - Churches are asked to give, but do they receive? Do they receive anything? A number of churches would be fine without the denomination. A number of churches also are there by name, but with no connection or support to the denomination.
 - ABHMS, other program boards offer a LOT – grants, etc. Perhaps people don't know about these things, but there is also more offered.
 - The culture has changed, but our fundraising has not changed.
 - What should we do to craft the story of ABCUSA?
 - In one church, they found out about a grant that ABCUSA provides. This grant inspired them to give to ABCUSA, because they are doing *mission*.
 - “We raised money we didn't know we had.” There is no shortage of money out there. It's not whether there is not money there, it is whether someone can become passionate about something to give it.
 - We need to figure out ways that we can support churches, as well. Small churches, growing churches, churches that need support.
 - We need to put more resources into giving back – give people tools and ways to help churches, give them things they can use.
 - We don't hear the story
 - We need to get the story out in a better way. We can't only contact churches when we need money, but rather, we need to get the story out to churches. We need to tell who we are, what we are, what we do.
 - That is one of the issues we have been having.
 - If we go out and tell the story, we may get more. People want to receive and tell the story.
 - We need to analyze website, other things we disseminate better.
 - Orientation to American Baptist Life Conference was a good place to learn these things. What about pastors who do not attend this orientation?
 - Do new pastors who aren't connected take people away from ABC life? Should we connect with them?
 - If they aren't connected, they are more likely to not support the region, move elsewhere, etc.
5. How do we sell this? Create light-bulbs for our audience?
- Faces, Names, Stories.
 - We need to do this. Websites, publications, etc. At events. We need faces, names and stories.
 - ABCUSA cared for me when...

- ABCUSA provided for...
 - What does ABCUSA do?
 - Continued Names, Faces, Stories.
- Director of Development has to develop and also fundraise. Develop the story, and support it.
 - We need to be careful not to lose the big picture. This new person needs to understand the big picture, the nature of the organization, etc. BUT, could we bring someone in who knows us too well?
- 6. Group decided to keep meeting if possible, as Finance/MRD Groups joined, from time to time, and recommends similar joint meeting among other response groups.
- 7. For the next meeting of the MRD Response Group, it was decided that Vivan Martindale will give an opening devotion to start the meeting.