

# ABOUT THE REPORT OF CHANGED RELATIONSHIPS OF LOCAL CHURCHES

BGM Item 8C  
Report of Changed Relationships  
(BGM EC Item 4c)  
11/2019

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## CHURCHES IN CHANGED RELATIONSHIPS (CICR)

The name *Churches in Changed Relations* or CICR, for short, is often used when referring to this entire document under the more formal name of the *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches*. Here is the list of items in this document:

- \* About the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches (*this document*)
- \* Report of Churches that have Changed Regions
- \* Status Counts per Region
- \* Tally Sheet
- \* Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches (Includes *Table of Contents* on the last page)

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## THE CICR REPORTS CONTINUE TO BE AUTOMATED

EVERY REPORT COMES DIRECTLY FROM ABCIS - This means that every report has backing directly from the *ABCIS database*.

CHURCH STATUS DESCRIPTIONS - The descriptions report provides *information* on each Church Status group.

TALLY SHEET - This tally sheet provides *church counts* for the Church Status groups. This allows you to see *at a glance* the starting count of ABC churches, the changed church counts by status group, and the resulting ending count of ABC churches.

CHURCHES THAT CHANGED REGIONS - This report shows which churches changed regions during this reporting period.

STATUS COUNTS PER REGION - This report shows the counts of each relationship change, grouped by region.

## CICR REPORT FORMAT

The *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches* report is a single document with contiguous page numbers, printed on white paper, and includes *quick reference markings* in the upper right-hand corner.

Because this report comes directly from the ABCIS system, it is fast and efficient to run. Its single column layout aligns the church names and other data nicely, making it easy for you to navigate through the list. It also includes church counts at the end of each church status group.

*For those churches leaving ABC, this report now includes the REASON WHY they chose to leave, when available.*

*For merged churches, the church name, location city/state and the reason why they merged are provided, when available.*

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## A WORD ABOUT "NO PASTOR ON FILE"

For churches that are no longer a part of ABC, for whatever reason listed (disbanded, dismissed, withdrawn, etc.), you should see in most situations 'No Pastor On File' in place of the pastor's name. This means the region correctly entered an end date for the pastor in the ABCIS system. For those that still list a pastor's name, we will alert the region that the pastor is still active, giving them the chance to either change it or keep it as is, depending on the specifics of each church/pastor situation.

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## QUESTIONS?

If you have comments or questions about these changes, or suggestions for improvement, please do not hesitate to contact me:

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## WHAT NORMALLY IS INCLUDED IN THE REPORT

The *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches* typically consists of churches that have one of these status categories:

- Been **Received** into membership by regions
- **Withdrawn** from regions
- **Disbanded** (have ceased to exist)
- **Merged**
- Been **Dismissed**
- Had **Corrections** made to them

It should be noted that there is no status category on the *Profile Change Report* form for reporting the **Transfer** of a church from one region to another. Instead, a separate report using church data from the *American Baptist Churches Information Systems* (ABCIS) database lists churches that have changed regions within the reporting timeframe.

Because the *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches* constitutes the formal legal record of ABCUSA member churches, information received *informally* is not included in the reports. A region can enter information about changes directly into ABCIS or submit a Congregational Profile Change report. These are the only two ways to change the official records.

For instance, if a church secretary called in a resident membership change, or wrote a letter to ABCUSA that a church had withdrawn, these changes would be reflected only when the church's region reports the changes to ABCUSA or enters the change into the database directly. This respects the Bylaws and Standing Rules of ABCUSA, outlining how churches enter and leave the denomination.

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## PROCEDURE FOR RECOGNIZING A CHANGED RELATIONSHIP

Churches affiliate with ABCUSA through regions, which serve as gatekeepers. Except in very rare instances outlined in the Standing Rules where action may be made directly by the General Board, church names appear on the *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches* because a change has been entered into ABCIS directly by the region or ABCUSA has received written instructions from the region notifying ABCUSA of a change in status. Usually, region action has already been taken when the report comes to the ABCUSA.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, including an advance notice of the proposed report sent to every region where one or more churches are listed in changed relationship. Regions have been requested to verify the report and propose in writing any changes.

The *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches* is reviewed by the Credentials and Caucus Committee. Through 1998, the *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches* was adopted by the General Board when it adopted the General Board Executive Committee's actions. By agreement at the November 1998 General Board meeting, the report now comes to the General Board from the General Board Executive Committee as a separate report for deliberation and action. Once the General Board gives its approval, the church's changed status is effective for its relationship with ABCUSA.

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## TIMING OF THE REPORT

Each report covers a timeframe which is specified in the report header on the actual *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches*; for example, the report start date and report end date may look like this: November 11, 2016 – June 11, 2017.

This report includes all changes entered directly (or submitted in writing) by regions during the report timeframe. The region may have taken its action before the start date but reported it to ABCUSA during this report period. Thus the status date may be outside the actual time period covered by the report; a new header line called the *Data Range* has been added to help better define the data timeframe.

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## UNDERSTANDING THE VARIOUS CHURCH CHANGE STATUSES

### Churches Received

- These churches are coming into affiliation with ABCUSA following region action. They may have been new church starts, departments of mother churches now seeking status as separate churches, churches that have previously been independent, churches formerly affiliated with another denomination, or churches seeking dual alignment.
- Churches are reported by the region. The church name, address, pastor, ethnicity, date of organization of the church, status date signifying when the region took action, and resident membership are reported. If any of this data is missing, it is because the region has not been able to provide it. Most often, the information omitted is a pastor's name or resident membership.

### Churches Withdrawn

- These churches have decided at their own initiative to formally discontinue the relationship with ABCUSA. In some instances, the church's participation has been marginal or non-existent for a period of time prior to this decision. If a reason for the withdrawal is known, it is reported.

### Churches Withdrawn From ABC to Remain With Transformational Ministries (Formerly ABC of the PSW)

- The American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest (now known as *Transformation Ministries*) withdrew as a region from ABCUSA in 2006. Churches which were members of that region remain ABC churches unless and until they notify the national ABC offices in writing their intention to withdraw from ABC to remain with Transformation Ministries. Churches that have provided this formal notification are listed separately in the "Withdrawn" section of the *Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches*.

### Churches Disbanded

- These churches are characterized as disbanded because they have literally closed their doors and ceased to be a congregation. Generally, disbanding churches have extremely small memberships.

### Churches Merged

- Merged churches are the result of two or more churches coming together to form one. Where churches merge, they are both American Baptist. Additional information indicates with what other church the merger occurred.

### Churches Dismissed

- Dismissed churches are leaving the denomination by action of the region, rather than by initiative of a given church. However, generally these churches have been contacted on multiple occasions by the region, and are now being dismissed in order to keep the region membership statistics accurate. Often this occurs much like a local church's cleaning of its own membership roll, and reflects lack of interest on the part of the church now being dismissed. Regions, when they dismiss churches, are acting on the Common Criteria for Cooperating Churches, often including lack of participation in region events and lack of giving.

### Churches With Corrections

- This page reports corrections of errors in coding of churches whose change in status was reported to the General Board on a previous report.

To see the specific counts of churches for the most recent reported timeframe for the  
Church Change Statuses listed above, see the  
attached **Tally Sheet** and  
***Churches in Changed Relationships pages***  
(you will find a Table of Contents on the last page)