



**BGM Executive Committee**  
**June 15, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**Officers:** Karen Podsiadly, President  
Jim Wolfe, Vice President  
Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer  
Josué Gómez-Menéndez, Past President  
Jeff Woods, Interim General Secretary

**Committee:** Cedric Jones, PBA  
Raimundo Barreto, NJ  
Judith Christiansen, NYS

**Chaplain:** Zina Jacque, CHI

**Parliamentarian:** Bill Frederickson NJ

**Staff:** Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary/Treasurer/CFO  
Kathy Jachowski, Administrator

*The June meeting of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee was scheduled to meet in Green Lake, WI June 14-15, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic precautions were taken to hold the meeting via conference call instead of in person on June 15, 2020. The scheduled Board of General Ministries meeting for June 15-17, 2020 was canceled as well.*

Not present: Josué Gómez-Menéndez and Zina Jacque

## **BGM EC 668      DEVOTIONS**

Cedric Jones lit the Christ Candle in recognition of Christ's presence and shared a devotion based on John 3:16.

## **BGM EC 669      CALL TO ORDER**

ABC President Karen Podsiadly called the meeting to order.

## **BGM EC 670      CONSENT AGENDA**

*Jim Wolfe made a motion and seconded by Cedric Jones to accept the agenda items dated June 15, 2020.*

*Judith Christiansen made a motion and seconded by Jim Wolfe to approve minutes of the March 19, 2020 meeting of the Executive Committee, held virtually.*

Approved with no objections.

## **BGM EC 671      REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER**

Paul Higgins presented a synopsis of ABCUSA's financials, drawn from the 2019 audited financial statements, to fulfill the disclosure requirements of New York's Nonprofit Law. In particular, he presented the assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2019; the principal changes in assets and liabilities for 2019; and the revenues and expenses for 2019.

Referring to the financial report prepared by Alan Musoke, Paul highlighted the year-to-date (through April 30) net loss of \$3,346.27 and compared it with the net loss of \$147,023.11 a year prior. (Both numbers omit the financial impact of the biennial.) This is a tremendous improvement, particularly considering the decrease in mission giving attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting inability of churches to hold worship gatherings in-person. While overall revenue has decreased, expenses have also decreased substantially, leading to an even smaller loss than at this point last year.

Paul commended the staff for obtaining a loan from the Paycheck Protection Program of approximately \$620,000. Today, this amount is shown on our books as a loan, a liability. Once forgiven, however, it will be recorded as income, potentially making up for the loss in United Mission support received by ABCUSA.

## **BGM EC 672      ANNUAL MEETING DESIGNATION**

*Judith Christiansen made a motion and seconded by Jim Wolfe to designate the November Board of General Ministries Meeting as the Annual Meeting.*

Approved with no objections.

## **BGM EC 673      REPORT OF THE INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY COVID-19 Pandemic**

Jeff Woods mentioned that in addition to the work highlighted in his report, Jeff has been holding weekly virtual meetings with the Region Executive Ministers (REM) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Resources for churches regarding COVID-19 have been filtered through the REMs to the congregations. Such resources included information for churches to apply for the Paycheck

Protection Program (PPP) which is funded through the government's "Cares Act." This provision allows nonprofit organizations who retain their employees during the health crisis to receive three months of loaned income from the Small Business Administration. Those who retain 100% of their employees during this economic crisis could have 100% of the loan forgiven.

Reaching out to the churches as filtered by the REMs has led to several pastoral calls. In addition to the weekly REM virtual meetings, there have also been conference calls held with the National Executive Council and the Region Executive Minister Council Officers. Additional COVID-19 resources are regularly posted on the ABCUSA website in the COVID-19 section; along with, a discussion guide on things to think about as churches work through the COVID-19 crisis in their churches, including thirty learnings from COVID-19: opportunities and discussions. Jeff noted that the worst thing is to go back to the way things were before the pandemic. In a recent survey of ABC congregations, signs of hope have emerged in thinking of opportunities in place of the negatives.

### **Anti-Racism**

In addition to the discussion of COVID-19 during the weekly REM meetings, conversations around racism have now become part of the weekly dialogue. Jeff shared that he responded positively to an invitation to engage this issue by Trinette McCray, President of the ABC Black Caucus. The invitation also came to Jeffrey Haggray, Executive Director of American Baptist Home Mission Societies. Also, a request was made to reconvene the ABCUSA Taskforce on Race and Race Based Violence.

Karen Podsiadly recommended that the taskforce reconvene and be renamed to reflect "anti-racism" as an action against racism versus stating that racism exists. Karen shared the following definition of anti-racism "as the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably" (*NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity*).

*Raimundo Barreto made a motion and seconded by Judith Christiansen to reaffirm the ABCUSA Taskforce on Race and Race Based Violence with a focus on anti-racism and naming a chair to begin the work to create opportunities for the future to move ABCUSA to be anti-racist.*

Approved with no objections.

Jeff and Karen will work together to organize the committee.

### **Additional Report Items**

Jeff was just beginning to work with OGS staff in team building and morale just before the pandemic hit. After which, Jeff began holding online meetings monthly with the staff, including some fun interactions in getting to know each other better. Smaller groups also met virtually.

Meetings continue with Weidenhammer Systems Corporation to review the current ABCIS system and determine how it could best be improved or replaced. Weidenhammer reviewed the functions within

ABCIS, interviewed a variety of leaders and users to determine the strengths and weaknesses of ABCIS, and surveyed the commercial software landscape to determine potential replacements.

In regards to events, a video was created to promote the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico, recognizing that the plan is to continue to move forward while at the same time monitoring the conditions in Puerto Rico and should alternative plans need to be arranged for the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit. The Mission Table has been scheduled as a two-day event following the Biennial. The NLC is scheduled to meet in November.

**BGM EC 674            CREDENTIALS AND CAUCUS COMMITTEE**

Paul Higgins (in substitution of Josué Gómez-Menéndez, chair) called to order the meeting of the Credentials & Caucus Committee.

After discussion and consideration regarding caucus funding, the committee recommended deferring a decision on allocations for caucuses until a future meeting.

**BGM EC 675            EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Before adjourning the meeting, the Executive Committee met in Executive Session. Actions taken during this meeting will be placed in a sealed envelope and filed with the official minutes in the General Secretary's office.

Submitted by,



Dr. C. Jeff Woods  
Interim General Secretary

CJW/kj

*Documents attached*

*BGM EC Proposed Agenda (1101:06/20)*

*BGM EC Roster June 2020*

*BGM Executive Committee Minutes: March 2020 (1002:06/20)*

*ABCUSA Financial Report through April 2020*

*UM Proposed Distribution with COVID-19 Sensitivity Analysis*

*Report of the Interim General Secretary*

*Alliance of Asian Americans Report*

*Haitian Caucus Report*

*Hispanic Caucus Report*

*Indian Caucus Report*

*Women's Caucus Report*

*Black Caucus Report*

*Portuguese Speaking Caucus Report*