



BGM Executive Committee
June 3, 2021

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

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, precautions were taken to hold the June meeting of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee via virtual platform instead of in person.

Thursday, June 3, 2021; 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting (All present)

BGM EC 714 DEVOTIONS

Zina Jacque lit the Christ Candle in recognition of Christ's presence and shared a devotion based on Proverbs 20:27.

“The human spirit is the lamp of the LORD, searching every inmost part.”

BGM EC 715 CALL TO ORDER

ABCUSA President Karen Podsiadly called the meeting to order.

BGM EC 716 CONSENT AGENDA

***MOTION:** Cedric Jones made a motion and seconded by Judith Christiansen to accept the agenda items dated June 3, 2021 and to approve minutes of the March 11, 2021 meeting of the Executive Committee, held virtually.*

Approved with no objections.

BGM EC 717 REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER

Paul Higgins gave key highlights of his report noting that he would give more details at the board meeting to allow time to cover various items on the agenda. Highlights included:

1. The ABCUSA audit was completed for 2020.
2. 2020 financial reports were given in March.
3. United Mission is up 12% compared to last year at this time.

BGM EC 718 REPORT OF THE ABCUSA PRESIDENT

Karen Podsiadly shared her service as President over the past months that included:

1. Continuing to work with the Biennial Mission Summit (BMS) Planning Team and looking forward to being at the studio.
2. Traveling to Atlanta to present the Cora and John Sparrowk President's Award to Paul Albert Brinson and created video for the BMS.
3. Working with the Anti-Racism Task Force.
4. Participating in the New Director Orientation.
5. Leading a staff diversity-training program with the staff of the Office of the General Secretary.
6. Continuing work in ABCUSA identity, the Intentional Interim Process, Inclusion in the denomination, the role of caucus funding, and mission support.
7. Karen will be speaking at First Baptist Church Brockport on July 4 and at the Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Connecticut on September 25.

BGM EC 719 REPORT OF THE ABCUSA INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY

In addition to the many areas of mission, Jeff Woods' process goals for 2021 include (1) the empowerment of staff and volunteers, (2) the clarification of identity for the Office of the General Secretary, and (3) the continued strengthening of relationships among national and regional staff. Jeff's attached *Report of the Interim General Secretary* includes some highlights of the missional activity during the first six months of 2021. Jeff also mentioned that ABCUSA was named in four lawsuits on cases that date back to 1979 involving clergy misconduct.

BGM EC 720 ORIENTATION TO AMERICAN BAPTIST LIFE (OTABL)

OTABL is led by Judy Fackenthal and Zina Jacque and assisted by a team that includes three Region Executive Ministers (REMs), a representative from International Ministries and American Baptist Home Missions Society; along with, American Baptist Historical Society (ABHS) giving a presentation on the history of the ministry partner for that evening session. Zina shared that each session is 90 minutes with 49 individual participants and 38 guests. The small groups are led by the Region Executive Ministers. Even though the Associated Ministry Organizations did not have face time, they shared documents about their organizations. Handouts and videos of the sessions are available on the ABCUSA Website.

BGM EC 721 IDENTITY STATEMENT- ROLE OF ABCUSA

See the attached document *Role of the American Baptist Churches USA*. Suggested edits to the document under the heading “Administrative Functions” included:

1. Add the word “some” to item f to read, “Accounting and Administration Services for some Associated Ministry Organizations and some regions.”
2. Change the word “extension” to “exemption” in item g to read, “Managing American Baptist Churches Group Exemption.”

***MOTION:** Jim Wolfe made a motion and seconded by Judith Christiansen to approve the document “Role of the American Baptist Churches USA,” with the noted edits, for use by the Interim General Secretary for feedback on the role of the Office of the General Secretary.*

Approved with no objections.

***NEXT STEPS:** After getting feedback from the National Executive Council (NEC) and the REMs, the document will go to the BGM in November 2021 to affirm the role of the Office of the General Secretary.*

BGM EC 722 GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION

See the attached document *Guidelines for Establishing a Commission*. The suggestion was made to add the following sentence at the end of section one “General Guidelines” to read, “Any group may appeal directly to the BGM Executive Committee to become a commission.”

***MOTION:** Raimundo Barreto made a motion and seconded by Judith Christiansen to recommend to the Board of General Ministries to accept the “Guidelines for Establishing a Commission” with the added clarifying sentence, “Any group may appeal directly to the BGM Executive Committee to become a commission.”*

Approved with no objections.

BGM EC 723 ANTI-RACISM TASK FORCE

See the attached document *Proposal for the Establishment of an Anti-Racism Commission*. The suggestion was made to request further revision to the proposal to broaden the scope for language of inclusion, budget details, and leadership by September 1, 2021 and then call for the vote to establish the Anti-Racism Commission at the November Board meeting.

***MOTION:** Paul Higgins made a motion and seconded by Cedric Jones stating that the BGM Executive Committee supports the proposal from the Anti-Racism Task Force and requests further revisions regarding inclusive language, funding, and leadership by September 1, 2021.*

Approved with no objections.

***NEXT STEPS:** After the Anti-Racism Task Force finishes the proposal with the changes, then the proposal will go to the BGM in November 2021 to vote on the Anti-Racism Task Force becoming a commission.*

BGM EC 724 GUIDELINES FOR GENERAL SECRETARY STATEMENTS

See the attached document *Public Statements Made by the ABCUSA General Secretary.*” This is a guideline for General Secretaries to refer to when making public statements. No action needed on this document.

BGM EC 725 2021 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT UPDATE

Need more delegates. Promotion of delegate registrations will include the encouragement of regions to ask for one additional congregation to affirm the registration of a delegate.

BGM EC 726 BOOK PROPOSAL

Gary Wagner asked Jeff Woods for an endorsement from the Office of the General Secretary for the book, “The American Baptist Experience 1907-2020” by Dr. William H. Brackney Ph.D. On behalf of the BGM Executive Committee, Jeff will offer support for the project from the General Secretary and ask that the project be inclusive of who we are in light of the current landscape and include comments received from BGM Executive Committee member Raimundo Barreto.

BGM EC 727 RECESS/CREDENTIALS & CAUCUS/RECONVENE

Josué Gómez-Menéndez called to order the meeting of the Credentials & Caucus Committee. Josué shared the Changed Relationship Report with more detail to be given during the board meeting. At the beginning of the report period there were 5003 churches, currently 4970 churches.

June 4, 2021 Continued discussion on Report of Changed Relationships

Word of Life Church in Joliette Canada needs to be removed from the roster as it is not in the United States.

***MOTION:** Paul Higgins moved and seconded by Jim Wolfe that all churches located outside the United States (as defined in Standing Rule 18.12.1) be removed from the roster of Cooperating Churches, with appropriate notice to the affiliated regions that the churches may continue affiliation with the regions, and that a report of all churches removed be provided to the Credentials and Caucus Committee prior to its September 2021 meeting.*

Approved with no objections.

***NEXT STEPS:** A letter to the region will be sent from OGS.*

BGM EC 728 ADJOURNMENT

Next BGM Executive Committee Meeting is September 16-18.

Note for future BGM Executive Committee meeting to include a book discussion. Members are invited to make suggestions to Karen Podsiadly.

Submitted by,



Dr. C. Jeff Woods
Interim General Secretary

CJW/kj

Documents attached

BGM EC Proposed Agenda (1101:06/21)

BGM EC Roster June 2021

BGM Executive Committee Minutes: March 2021 (1002:03/21)

ABCUSA Financial Report through March 2021

Financial Statements and Report of Independent CPAs Dec. 31, 2020 and 2019

Report of the Interim General Secretary

Role of the American Baptist Churches USA

Guidelines for Establishing a Commission

Proposal for the Establishment of an Anti-Racism Commission

Public Statements Made by the ABCUSA General Secretary

Book Proposal "The American Baptist Experience 1907-2020"

Report of Changed Relationships (1205:1:06/21)