



AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA
Office of the General Secretary
BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES | ABCUSA Reports

**Boards of General Ministries Reports from
American Baptist Churches USA
Office of the General Secretary
and Associated Ministry Organizations**

**Board of General Ministries Reports:
ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary
and Associated Ministry Organizations**

TREASURER'S OFFICE:

Highlights of Treasurer's Office, Accounting, American Baptist Churches Information Systems, OTCP, Associated Ministry Organizations (AMOs) – **June 2021- November 2021**

ABCUSA:

- Prepared proposed 2022 Budget
- Annual insurance reviews/renewals
- Prepared and presented Analyses and Financial Statements to BGM/ABCUSA Finance Committees, BGM and BGM EC; staffed meetings
- Oversaw work of legal counsel in several areas including several recent lawsuits
- Prepared for 2021 virtual Biennial Mission Summit
- Personnel supervision for Accounting, ABCIS and Building
- Secured \$744,000 additional funding from the second Payroll Protection Program for ABCUSA. Will be working on forgiveness.

- **ABCIS** - Geri Blier, our ABCIS Coordinator and NetSuite Implementation Project Leader, retired on Sept. 30, 2021. Feisal Al-Amry was hired as an IT Analyst-Developer. Geri spent three months training Feisal on the existing ABCIS system and he is learning NetSuite and the customizations created for ABCUSA. Bob Lovas continues in his role of supporting NetSuite, including user access and security.

Go-Live was delayed due to several issues and is expected to be effective on January 1, 2022. We will perform a month of parallel testing beginning December 1, 2021.

- **Office of Travel & Conference Planning** - The Hospitality Industry still continues to be one of the hardest hit industries by COVID-19 pandemic. Hotels have slowly reopened and may only be offering limited services as they try to bring back their furloughed employees or hire/train new Staff. The luxuries that one may have enjoyed in the past are slow to return or may still be limited. Areas such as daily housekeeping, no local shuttle transportation or limited Restaurant and menu offerings, to name just a few. Hotel occupancy needs to increase first before we see an increase in services. Although services are limited, hotels are open for business with some being reluctant to move meetings and have begun to implement cancellation policies. It varies from hotel chain to hotel chain. Relationships remain an important part in negotiations.

In regards to the Biennial Mission Summit, Sharese Shedrick, in her role as Meeting Registrar, maintained the registration site, added content to the event website and managed all outgoing e-mail promotions and communications. Sharese was available during the event week to ensure Attendees could connect and served as the primary contact for the Tech Support booth, which included training other staff from the Office of the General Secretary and volunteers.

OTCP continues to provide meeting planning assistance for the Office of the General Secretary and its Partners.

REGIONS:

- Conferred with Regions and churches on financial and administrative issues
- Ongoing Receiving Units (collecting agency) responsibilities for 13 regions
- Providing Accounting Services for Philadelphia Baptist Association and Cleveland Baptist Association
- Working on applications for forgiveness of \$32,370 loan secured from the Payroll Protection Program for PBA.

ASSOCIATED MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS (AMOs):

(AB Historical Society, AB Women's Ministries)

- Prepared 2020 Audits
- Accounting functions, ongoing consultations, insurance reviews, renewals, re: financial and operational matters

-- Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance/CFO/Treasurer

QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE 2021 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT – AN ONLINE EXPERIENCE

1. There were 1,115 registrations processed to date for the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit. 898 of these generated revenue. The number of persons registered for the event, including the Household of 2 and Watch Party options, totaled 1,189 (this includes 157 staff, workshop leaders, and tech support). There have been 12 Post-Event Registrations to date.
2. There were 2,275 log-ins to the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit Virtual Experience [2,060 during the live event; 215 from June 27 through July 19]. This was the first virtual Biennial ever held.
3. 86% of those registered logged in, which is “unheard of in the virtual meeting industry”
4. The sponsor pages were viewed 1,272 times.
5. There were 35 Exhibits available for attendees to visit. The planned activities within the exhibit booths during the week totaled 139. In total, there were 20,000 engagements with exhibitors/exhibit content.
6. The on-demand library has had over 2,300 interactions. The Prayer Room was visited 400 times.
7. Additional touches include:
 - a. 1,199 views of the welcome session
 - b. 1,045 watched “Imagine healing”
 - c. 830 watched “Imagine unity”
 - d. 758 watched “Imagine hope”
 - e. 636 watched the IM report
 - f. Over 640 participated in the MSC
 - g. 580 persons attended the MMBB report
 - h. 554 watched the ABHMS report
8. 95% of the comments regarding the overall Biennial and the hub experience are positive.
9. Participants especially appreciated:
 - a. Accessibility – have not attended the event in many years
 - b. Coordination and design of Worship; best services in years
 - c. Interactive booths
 - d. Diversity in worship
 - e. Beginning and ending worship on time
 - f. The online nature of the event allowed me to participate for the first time
 - g. Pre-roll segments
 - h. Ability to watch recordings of sessions missed
 - i. Participating in Sessions using Q&A and Chat features
 - j. Robust variety of ways to connect and interact

July 22, 2021

QUICK FACTS about the 2021 BIENNIAL mission summit – An Online experience

**Report to the Board of General Ministries ABCUSA
From Judith Christiansen, HR Consultant**

November, 2021

Dear Friends:

Since January, 2020, I have been consulting with the Office of the General Secretary on a variety of Human Resource issues.

With the pandemic and subsequent shutdown, much of my work has been centered on CoVID safety protocols, work from home agreements and, happily, return to work protocols. As of this September, staff is now reporting to the OGS at least three days a week and working remotely when not in the office. Employees who choose to work from home have executed a Telecommuting Agreement with their Supervisors. To date, the arrangements have worked very well.

In September, I presented the new Employee Handbook to all staff. It was well received and generated few questions. I am pleased that the Handbook has finally been implemented.

I have enjoyed being back in person with the Office of the General Secretary. It is my plan to travel to the office 2-3 days per month to address HR needs.

Blessings –
Judith Christiansen
H.R. Consultant

ABCUSA BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES, NOVEMBER 5-7, 2021

Report of the Associate General Secretary for Mission Resource Development

Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri | marie.onwubuariri@abc-usa.org x2318

MRD Team: Tina Kiernan, Bridget Lipin, Evon Moody | Stacy Emerson



Highlights from June-October 2021

Overview

Much of the first half of the year focused on the June 2021 Biennial Mission Summit and getting oriented to ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary and the work of Mission Resource Development (MRD), with an emphasis on communications due to the family leave of the Director of Communications during this period. In this second half of the year, my **overarching emphasis has been on assessing the areas of the MRD department**, with a lens of order and intentionality, from both intra- and inter-department perspectives. This emphasis has **both informed and been informed by the "ABCUSA Intentional Interim Strategic Plan 2020-2023" and the "Role of the Office of the General Secretary" documents.**

Public Relations: Align who we say we are and hope to be with what we present of ourselves in person, images, verbiage, actions, and interactions. [Communications, Marketing]

Priorities for the past several months and continuing into 4th quarter 2021/1st quarter 2022 include:

- **Creating an MRD Manual and Style Guide.** We are gradually reviewing existing policies and procedures, revising as necessary. We are also formalizing undocumented practices and including Leadership Team discussions when appropriate. We are working toward a comprehensive strategy for communications, marketing/story-telling of ABCUSA and the Office of the General Secretary, and ultimately an "ecclesiological" foundation to public/partnership relations. The purpose of this effort is to bring intentionality, consistency, relevance, and clarity to the areas of public relations, communications, and marketing.
- **Staff team development.** Through a process of reviewing job descriptions and actual workload, collaborative discussions about the role and effectiveness of MRD, and individual discussions about job satisfaction and assessment, I am working toward developing a department unit that can meet the ongoing needs of our organization, as well as positioning us to meet the priorities of a new chapter in our mission.
- **Routine activities have included:** Hands-on involvement and staff oversight for the content development, promotions, and debriefing of ABCUSA-sponsored events and offerings [Biennial Mission Summit (event and post-event), Everyday ABC Conversations, Anti-Racism Task Force & Symposium, Savvy Student Loan Management, ABWIM June 2022 Conference, Stewardship webinars, Christmas show planning, Advent 2021]. Responding to general inquiries and giving consideration to those that pose opportunities for more holistic responses. Involvement with ABNS (ongoing posting and the Review Project), monthly e-newsletters, and website content updates.
- **Infrastructure assessment.** I am in process of reviewing current practices related to data integrity and reporting and use of multiple third party software/platforms. I am working with Alan Musoke and ABCIS Team on seeking training/understanding on **how NetSuite can meet the needs of data management and analysis for both communications and donor management.**

Development: Create and sustain a climate, environment, and practice of joyful and increased giving to the American Baptist family and the Office of the General Secretary. [United Mission, donor relations, targeted fundraising, stewardship education, and creative resourcing]

- Stacy Emerson has continued in her role as Stewardship Consultant leading **the Generosity Project**. In this period she has contributed several blog posts and offered a webinar on "Financial Stewardship in an Era of Covid 19: What Can You Do" with Rev. Margaret Marcuson. We have contracted with her for 2022, with a major emphasis being on completing her work with existing Generosity Project cohorts, assessing the

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MRD Team: Tina Kiernan, Bridget Lipin, Evon Moody | Stacy Emerson

United in Christ 
Together in Mission

project, and providing recommendations for 2023 and beyond. With the closing of partner The Ecumenical Stewardship Center in 2021, Tina and I will also be discussing how we might **address additional needs of stewardship resources going into 2022.**

- As a member of the Advisory Council of ABHMS' In Support of Excellence Program (ISOE), which focuses on clergy financial health and empowerment, I/ABCUSA co-planned and co-sponsored "**Saavy Student Loan Management**" webinar with program director Jennifer Sanborn, held on October 21 with a registration of about 60 persons. The recording will be a helpful tool for ministers and seminarians, and even parents, who are carrying or considering student loans. Loan forgiveness possibilities were also covered in the webinar. As an advisory team member, I also attended Lilly Foundation's "2021 Team Leadership Gathering," during which I received **helpful tools in the areas of fundraising and charitable giving.**
- **Grant-related activity:** I registered for an 8-week **Grant Writing Course** offered by the District of Columbia Baptist Convention Fall 2021, which has provided very detailed and helpful resources. In partnership with Patricia Hernandez, I have been engaged with **donor-relations** and will also be assisting her on a **grant application to the Baugh Foundation [Nov/Dec 2021]**. I will be oriented to the work related to the **Chestnut Street Baptist Church Endowment** with Alan Musoke et. al. [Oct 2021], and thereafter assume the oversight of this process. I have fielded two requests for grant opportunities and after discussing their ministry ideas referred them to Iris Cobb regarding the Mission Initiative Fund.
- **Donor communications:** Evon Moody and I sent out **post-Biennial Mission Summit thank you** communications to sponsors, exhibitors, boosters, scholarship donors, and those who contributed to the worship service offerings (if contact information was available). We will be sending **year-end donation appeal letter**. We also are working on donor database clean up in anticipation for being able to use NetSuite starting in 2022 for the breadth of donor management activity.
- **United Mission:** Tina Kiernan highlighted some of the top 2020 UM giving churches during pre-show slides at the Biennial Mission Summit and sent certificates and letters to the top 100 in July. I was able to personally thank five congregations who have been consistent UM-contributors connected to preaching engagements (online and in person) in May and the summer months. We anticipate that an adopted "Role of the Office of the General Secretary" document will be foundational as we work on a refreshed UM narrative in 2022.
- **World Relief Committee:** Given that my portfolio includes the promotion of the four ABC offerings and having a development lens, we decided that I would now serve as ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary's staff rep to this committee, replacing Bridget Lipin.

Other Staff Activity

- **Anti-racism work:** In addition to being staff liaison to the Task Force, I am attending a six-week series called "Lamenting Racism" sponsored by the New Baptist Covenant (NBC). Two other task force members and one other ABCUSA Staff member are active in the cohort. Other new personal growth activities include engaging in exercises offered in the book *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies* and listening to "The Raceless Gospel" Podcast with Rev. Starlett Thomas [both known via the Anti-Racism Task Force], coupled with regular contact with my relationships of accountability.
- As a member of the advisory committee of ABHMS' Center for Continuous Learning, I was an invited participant in their Ribbon-Cutting ceremony on September 21 and presented a sample teaching session. I will be featured in "Bridges 4 Mission" Podcast hosted by IM's Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil (recording it Oct 2021).

American Baptist Women In Ministry (ABWIM) And Transition Ministries

ABWIM

Vision: ABWIM seeks the full partnership of men and women in ministry in which both women and men are able to fully utilize their God-given gifts and fully live out their God-given call.

Mission: ACCESS!

- Advocate for women in ministry
- Celebrate their gifts
- Cultivate their calls
- Educate about the biblical basis
- Share their history
- Spotlight women in ministry

**Celebrating Ministering Women: Radical. Redeemed. Ready.
June 15-18, 2022**

The Planning Team, co-chaired by Rev. Soozi Whitten Ford and Rev. Dr. Tom Wiles, has confirmed an outstanding slate of leaders: Rev. Dr. Jamie Clark-Soles, Rev. Dr. Trinetta McCray, Rev. Dr. Zina Jacques, Rev. Adalia Gutierrez Lee, MD, and Rev. Lauren Ng. Of particular note is that International Ministries and American Baptist Home Mission Societies will be represented. In addition, Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri (OGS) will be serving in the special role of Poet Laureate and Rev. Dr. Priscilla Eppinger, Executive Director of the American Baptist Historical Society, has been named as Conference Historian. As part of that role and in partnership with the conference, two issues of the American Baptist Quarterly, which had been planned in conjunction with the now postponed conference have been released, one focused on Lay Women and Missions and the other on the Women in Professional Ministry roles. Both issues are currently available from the Historical Society.

We have much to celebrate in ABCUSA's courageous commitment to and legacy of women leaders. Especially notable, is that this year is the **100th Anniversary of Helen Barret Montgomery** having served as the first woman President of the Northern Baptist Convention (1921), or for that matter of *any* Protestant denomination.

Celebrating Ministering Women – We are *celebrating* women ministerial leaders, their myriad journeys into ministry and their many ways of ministering. We are also **celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Women in Ministry Project**, now known as American Baptist Women in Ministry (ABWIM), which was fully launched in June 1982 with Rev. Dr. Margaret A. Cowden as the first Project Director.

Radical – ABCUSA has carried out a **radical** witness, *and radical* witness is *still* needed.

Redeemed – Churches flourish and our world is transformed when all God's gifts in all God's people are fully accessed, embraced, and utilized. We are all then redeemed.

READY! We are **READY**. Are you?

Mark your calendars now for June 15-18, 2022! Plan to Be There!

Transition Ministries ABCUSA

The goal of Transition Ministries ABCUSA is to partner with regions in resourcing churches during times of transition in a way which enhances their ministry and empowers them to journey into the future as vibrant missional congregations.

Our mission is to provide intentional interim ministers who are adept and experienced in leading churches through transitions. These interim pastors guide the congregation on a journey that involves celebrating their history, clarifying their identity, articulating their mission, and moving into a fruitful future.

Training – We have named a new training coordinator, Rev. Dr. William Tatum. Plans are underway for an online training event to be held Jan. 21, 22. As the situation with Covid-19 improves, we hope to plan an in-person training in the future.

We are thankful for the many ways interims have navigated through the challenges of remote worship with all the technological challenges involved as well as for those who have been able to resume in-person worship with all the accommodations needed. Through it all we have navigated with hope and faith for the future!

Especially in these extraordinary times, resources that strengthen our partnerships across our ABC regions are needed. **Transition Ministries** serves as the hands and feet of Christ, connecting with regions and congregations in ways that move mission and ministry forward.

American Baptist Spiritual Direction and Formation

Given the unprecedented times in which we are living, we are re-igniting and renewing an initiative that was begun about ten years ago as part of the Transformed by the Spirit movement. As part of this renewed movement, at the Biennial Mission Summit the Spiritual Direction Team of Rev. Betty Wright-Riggins, Rev. Judy Fackenthal and Rev. Brad Berglund hosted one of the Mission Summit conversations and there was a good response. People are longing for resources to deepen faith and to connect with others interested in spiritual direction and formation. Given the strong response, Rev. Betty Wright Riggins and Rev. Judy Fackenthal of the Spiritual Direction Team will be presenters at the second “ABC Everyday Conversations” focused on “Soul Care @ Christmas,” Nov. 30, 3pm.

In all of these ministry areas—ABWIM, Transition Ministries, and ABC Spiritual Direction and Formation—I am thankful for the wisdom, grace, guidance and support of Interim General Secretary Jeff Woods, the ABCUSA Leadership Team, the ABWIM Advisory Team and the Board of General Ministries without whom none of this could happen. **Thank-you!**

Rev. Dr. Patricia P. Hernandez, AGS ABWIM & Transition Ministries ABCUSA

American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) Update for the General Board of OGS, 10/22/21

ABC Biennial Mission Summit Support

It was a pleasure for ABWM staff to be a prayerful and active national partner. Our staff spent countless hours collaborating and generously developing and executing ideas to ensure that the first virtual Biennial Mission Summit was successful. We participated in the pre-biennial worship service, workshops, as well Orientation To American Baptist Life. We were enthusiastically present spiritually and financially. AB women, including our board, associations, AB GIRLS, and Young Adult Women's Ministries Advisory Team (YAWMAT) throughout the US, including Puerto Rico, were supportive. It was wonderful to witness our family united in fellowship, ministries, and mission.

World Relief Committee (WRC)

We are thankful the OGS board honored our request to have ABWM staff join the WRC meetings. We were recently provided an orientation that was very helpful and highlighted other distinct ways ABWM is treated differently from its peers. ABWM has one vote and is excluded from the funds distribution. It seems that both of these differences may impact the committee's efficacy and equity.

Annual Report

Here is the link for our 2019-2020 annual report that will provide a snapshot of ABWM. Download American Baptist Women's Ministries' annual report now at <https://abwomensministries.org/resourceDetails.aspx?resourceDetailId=1555>!

*Submitted by Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain, Executive Director
10/22/21*

ABC Creation Justice Network 2021 Report
ABC Board of General Ministries Board Meetings
November 2021

This year the ABC Creation Justice Network and it's steering committee has been committed to creating resources, offering workshops and virtual gatherings, and strengthening partnerships. Below please find a description of our year.

Events/Gatherings

Hosted a three part Lenten Devotional Series: Earth, Sea, and Sky

Tom Carr, hosted the National Religious Coalition on Creation Care webinar, "Facing Our Forest Crises with Faith and Action," on March 22, 2021. Tom is also a board member Creation Justice Ministries

Supported an Earth Day Event hosted by Ken Whitt and International Ministries with four Global Servants.

Hosted CJN's Virtual Retreat: October 8-9, 2021

Kathy Smith presenting at North American Baptist Fellowship's Annual Meeting on October 27-28, 2021

Resources

Recorded a Creation Justice Congregations Conversation with Betsy Sowers, Minister for Earth Justice at Old Cambridge Baptist Church, April 2021

2021 ABC Biennial Mission Summit: hosted an exhibit booth, prayers of petition during worship service, recorded workshop.

Kathy Smith created and hosts a virtual resource database on the Baptist Creation Care Initiative website.

Partnerships

Brookmont Baptist Church in Bethesda, Maryland became a Creation Justice Congregation

Karyn Bigelow serves as co-executive director of Creation Justice Ministries

Kathy Smith serves as executive director of Baptist Creation Care Initiative

Rebecca Driscoll serves as minister of creation care for The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, board member Creation Justice Ministries, member Leadership Circle Blessed Tomorrow

Kathy Smith presenting at North American Baptist Fellowship's Annual Meeting on October 27-28, 2021

In June, CJN initiated the Ohio Baptist Creation Justice Task Force. CJN was represented at the American Baptist Churches of Ohio's 2021 Annual Gathering in October.

On November 16th, the Reverend Jason Alsbaugh of FBC, Dayton and the Reverend Tom Carr, coordinator of the Steering Committee of the Creation Justice Network, will host a virtual "Creation Justice Prayer Gathering" for Ohio ABC.

Met with Ani Fete Crews, national director of Blessed Tomorrow to update CJN's partnership agreement

Grants

Applied for ACLS grant through Blessed Tomorrow

Applied for reallocation of World Relief Committee Grant Years 1, 2, and 3

The ABC Creation Justice Network looks forward to continuing to serve God, creation and the denomination in the year to come.

Peace and Blessings to you.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Thomas Carr, Chair of the ABC Creation Justice Network

The Rev. Rebecca Driscoll, Creation Justice Network Liaison to the Office of the General Secretary

The ABC Creation Justice Network Steering Committee



Rainbow Acres

*A Residential Christian Community
Serving Adults with
Developmental Disabilities*

Rainbow Acres Report for the Board of General Ministries ABCUSA

October 26, 2021

The Good News from Rainbow Acres:

Rainbow Acres Board of Trustees completed a yearlong national search for the new President & CEO, Dr. Nathan Velez. He is a native of Arizona and has more than 20 years of experience in disability services. Dr. Velez succeeds President & CEO Rev. Gary W. Wagner, who provided leadership at Rainbow Acres for nearly 26 years.

At Family and Friends weekend this October, The Rancher Gathering Place, new KOTR (radio) Studio and Equipment, and the dedication of Yeshua Boy of Nazareth sculpture to the Glory of God and empowerment of the Ranchers.

American Baptists layman Richard Bladorn of Salem, Oregon, and First Baptist Church of Redlands collaborated in funding "the Rancher Gathering Place. KOTR was the vision of Ray Dennis, a retired radio broadcaster and American Baptist from Des Moines, IA." Ruth Schreiner Wheaton, the Yeshua Sculpture creator, took up sculpting at age 80. She and her husband, Rev. Dr. Robert Wheaton, are lifelong American Baptists from Los Gatos, CA.

The Ranchers are well and thriving! We achieved an 89% vaccination rate among the Ranchers. Creativity and ingenuity by the Rainbow Academy have increased Rancher's participation in "lifelong learning experiences and activities." The KOTR Radio Station is now capable of "live streaming" educational and inspirational content into each Rancher Home on the Ranch.

The Ranchers are getting excited to visit their families and friends for Christmas. Please keep them in your prayers that they are safe and well this holiday season. We are deeply grateful for the continuing support of our American Baptist Family! Thank you.

For the Ranchers,

Gary W. Wagner
President & CEO



2120 W. Reservation Loop Road • Camp Verde, AZ 86322
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Federal Tax ID #86-0286420 • Rainbow Acres is a 501 (c) (3) organization • Qualify Charitable Organization (QCO) #20399





As a volunteer men's ministry of service to others, 2021 continued to provide challenges to many who had hoped to serve as the Hands and Feet of Jesus through ABMen USA. Utilizing the good judgment of all involved, region execs provided great counsel as men planned gatherings and retreats this year, many having to be restructured or canceled at the last moment as health protocols continued.

With the completion of our 3-year commitment to the Rebuild Restore Renew mission in Puerto Rico in 2020, the focus of ABMen National Disaster Relief Coordinator Jack Cobb and former President - current District Representative Cody Pollington coordinated repairs and improvements to the facilities at Crow Community Baptist Church in Crow Agency, MT. This work had been originally scheduled for 2020.

Our Shower Trailer Ministry remained active in 2021. The West Virginia-based unit served several ministry needs throughout the year including several months in the Hudson Valley. The Kansas-based unit served the volunteers at the Crow Community Baptist Church project and from there was taken to Elkhorn NE where in conjunction with AmeriCorps Volunteers, served a two-month rebuild stemming from the March 2019 Nebraska flooding. ABMen are grateful for these trailers which continue to be in genuine need. The men will prepare the trailers over the winter for next season.

ABMen embraced their fears and participated in the virtual ABC USA Biennial June 24-26. President Bill Morningstar, Treasurer Dave Cross, and Executive Director Bob Slechta manned the virtual "booth" and were able to share ABMen ministry news with many that were kind enough to stop by. The men also made available several videos of its past ministry activities from Puerto Rico to Bacone College, from Green Lake to Lake Charles, LA all highlighting the faces of many volunteers who take great pride in serving Christ.

ABMen District Representative Don Rogers coordinated the 2021 Fall Work Party at Green Lake held September 13-17. 12 volunteers participated, many from Illinois, where they were able to finish many small lingering jobs on the property.

Our ABMen leadership team continues to encourage men to engage and participate in men's meetings, bible study, etc., through an unprecedented number of technological tools at our disposal. Focusing our support in local regions and on our pastors to ensure that men's fellowship continues to serve their church needs in old and new ways.

ABMEN USA continues today as a primarily self-funded ministry through its Key Contributor support of men who believe in its mission and God's call to serve as the Hands and Feet of Christ. The ABMen Centennial Committee will coordinate mission activities in 2022 representing the **100th anniversary of the ABMen national ministries.**

Striving to be the Hands and Feet of Jesus,

Bob Slechta
Executive Director

**Green Lake Conference Center Update for the NLC
October 2021**

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness"

Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*.

After celebrating 75 years of ministry in 2019, the last two years have been a wild ride for Green Lake. Through tidal waves of COVID and lost retreats, labour shortages and struggles to order food, we have hung on, banded together and with staff crossing over assignments and all kinds of volunteer help, we have survived the past two years. Weary, we also emerge stronger in our values as a staff and joyful that conferences including Holy Spirit Renewal, Fellowship of American Baptist Musicians and our Quest Youth ministry could joyfully worship, meet and play together this year. It was great for everyone's souls.

For 2022, we are focused on how to grow our mission since 1944 to "nurture and train leadership for the cause of Christianity and the world mission of the church" through expanding our student ministry once again. So, if you have great students in your churches or kids of missionaries you know who might flourish working at Green Lake for a summer or longer (we are devising a college credit programme), let us know. If you have weary ministers, bring a group to restore their soul. Contact KaraRobbins@glcc.org.

Thanks for your prayers and support.

October of 2021



Dear Dr. Woods and Members of the Board of General Ministries,

We are thankful for the common life and ministry we share with our American Baptist family and are grateful for the opportunity to share an overview of the work of the Ministers Council ABCUSA.

ADAPTIVE CHANGE: Four years ago, the Ministers Council ABCUSA entered an adaptive change process characterized by the Leadership Team assuming a more active role in fulfilling our mission “... *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ* ...” (Ephesians 4:12-13). This process was amplified further upon the resignation of our Member Service Coordinator to relocate with her family. A temporary Program Administrator has been employed and is working from a remote location until a permanent employee is secured.

MINISTERS CODE OF ETHICS: Following an 18-month process of development, a revised version of the Ministers Council Covenant and Code of Ethics was approved at the November 2020 MC ABCUSA biennial business meeting. This approved document is currently in a two-year (2021-2022) ratification process of local chapters before full adoption as the standing Covenant and Code of Ethics. Additionally, a team is being formed to develop a Learning Guide to accompany the Code of Ethics.

AMERICAN BAPTIST LIFE: Ministers Council ABCUSA is made up of about 500 members with 26 local chapters, including specialized ministers such as Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors. With the core values of Collegiality, Centeredness, and Competence, these local chapters seek to support and encourage AB clergy serving a variety of ministry settings. Nationally, we support local efforts through:

- Providing Together in Ministry grants for small collegial groups.
- Supporting local chapter retreat gatherings with Excellence in Ministry grants.
- MC – Live webcasts on topics related to ministerial concerns.
- Coordinating a Rauschenbusch pilgrimage using Johnson’s “*To Live in God.*”

We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in denominational gatherings of the National Leadership Council and Professional Ministry Team. I was also our joy to sponsor morning devotions at the 2021 Virtual Biennial. We give thanks for the common life we share with American Baptists.

Peace and All Good to you,

Rev. Dr. Randolph T Miller, President
Leadership Team, Ministers Council ABCUSA



Kachin American Baptist Association

American Jinghpaw Wunpawng Hkalup Ninghtan Hpung
3264 Townsend Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32277; (904) 442-5522



October 27, 2021

To,
Rev. Dr. C. Jeff Woods
Acting General Secretary of ABCUSA

Re: Submitting A Report of Kachin American Baptist Association (KABA).

Greetings on behalf of the Executive Board of KABA! By grace, KABA accomplished the following ministries during the pandemic.

- (1) We had an opportunity to participate together with our fellows Myanmar Ethnic Baptist churches leaders in the activities and meetings hosted by ABHMS, ABCUSA IM, and BRC.
- (2) We are still supporting the CDM in Kachin State, Myanmar.
- (3) We have supported the Zaiwa Bible Translation Project financially, led by Kachin Baptist Convention in Myanmar, since 2018. KABA provided 3.6 million Myanmar currency every year for the housing fee.
- (4) The Fourth of July 2021 is significant in the history of KABA because we became a valued cooperative partnership with Central Baptist Theological Seminary (CBTS), Shawnee, Kansas. We signed the MOU between KABA and CBTS for the partnership of Foundations Ola Hanson Bible Institute (F-OHBI), founded by KABA. We hold the very first Graduation Service on that day at Dallas Fort Worth Kachin Baptist Church in Grand Prairie, Texas. F-OHBI will open its Diploma program in 2022. Thirty-six students graduated their first batch of Level One, and 32 students graduated their first batch of Level Two and received their Certificate of Ministry Studies on that day. Rev. Dr. Robert Johnson, the Provost, and Dean of CBTS, attended that ceremony and awarded the certificates.
- (5) We held a new church dedication service for Dallas Fort Worth Kachin Baptist Church (DFWKBC), one of our member churches, on the Third of July in 2021. Dr. Stoops, Executive Minister of ABC-NE, joined with us and preached on that Sunday Service.
- (6) We also joined some activities and meetings of the Alliance of Asian American Baptist Churches.

In Christ,

Rev. Tu Lum Lamung

Executive Minister of KABA

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