

2023 Biennial Mission Summit

The Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team met online January 5-6 to begin planning for the event which will be held June 23-25, 2023 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The theme, “For Such a Time as This,” surfaced very quickly during the planning meeting. Following this initial meeting an invitation was extended to ABCUSA Vice President Michelle Nickens to join the Planning Team. The Chairs Group, which consists of the ABCUSA President, Vice President, General Secretary, Chair, Vice Chair, Biennial Producer, and Program Coordinator, will meet every four to six weeks to provide input, make decisions when needed, and receive updates. The Staff Advisory Group will also meet regularly to continue the planning process.

During the planning meeting, a suggestion was made to ask the constituency what topics are of interest to them at this time. This survey which opened February 16 asks persons to consider the theme and identify “What is *your* ‘this’?”. The survey closes on March 21. These results will be used to decide workshop titles and invite workshop presenters.

In October 2021 I began a conversation with Edgardo Caraballo Marin, executive minister of the Iglesia Bautistas de Puerto Rico, about region sponsorship of the event. We discussed the amount of sponsorship the region provided in 2011 and what this opportunity might look like for the 2023 event. We discussed that it would not be possible at this time to provide free registration for all persons from Puerto Rico but that a significant contribution from IBPR could extend a significant discount to residents who wish to register.

The 2023 Biennial Mission Summit will follow a schedule similar to what we have had for several years with a few changes.

- Friday at 3:00 pm, we will hold a Welcome Session for all attendees on the main stage. This session will be recorded and played in the registration area throughout the event.
- Friday at 4:00 pm, there will be a “Spotlight on Puerto Rico” session.
- 15-20 minute Worshipful Work sessions will be held each evening at 7:30 pm. This is the time for board reports with IM scheduled for Friday and ABHMS on Saturday. OGS will be given this time on Sunday evening marking the first time in several events that we have had an opportunity to provide a report to all attendees. By providing this intentional time for reporting and other business matters, the one hour worship sessions will be strictly a worship experience.
- Several concurrent workshops will be held Saturday 9-10 am and 10:30-11:30 am, and Sunday 4-5 pm.
- Mission Summit Conversations will be on Saturday afternoon.
- The Sunday morning Puerto Rico Worship experience will be a much longer time of worship that we hope will be planned in cooperation with local churches in Puerto Rico. This is in place of the local church worship experience that was offered in 2011. Communion will take place during this worship service.
- The Business Session will be conducted on Sunday afternoon at 2:30 pm.

Since the event is being held in Puerto Rico, we intend to make all marketing, and event-related items available in Spanish. Currently two young adults from Puerto Rico, who assisted with Spanish translation for the 2021 event, are working with Bridget Lipin and myself in this area. The need for Spanish translation does create earlier deadlines. We will need to have all speakers, workshops and workshop leaders confirmed by the end of June in order to begin creating the website and registration site.

I hope to schedule a site visit in April to meet with region leadership, the Local Arrangements Committee chair, and Convention Center staff in order to begin planning with these groups.

Submitted by Tina Kiernan, Biennial Mission Summit Program Coordinator