

American Baptist Churches of New York State
Board of Mission Meeting
June 4, 2021 - Provisional Minutes

Present

Officers

Wendy Depew Partelow - Pres.
Lecia Rodriguez - Vice Pres.
Bruce Aikin - Secretary
Jim Harriff - Treasurer

At-Large

Jeanne Bennett
Lillian Cabral
Gregory Johnson
Sabrina Smith
George Stefani

Association Reps

Keith Griffin AD and VPCCM Board rep
Marlene Ciranowicz BT
Phyllis Fox IR
Michael Dickinson LW
Dan Saulsgiver MA
John Partise MO
Walter Hargrove NI
Leon Runner NC
Francis Gasparri WA
Tom Tharp WE

Staff

James Kelsey - Exec. Min.
Mary Schwarz - Admin. Asst.

Auxiliary Organizations

Grace Kelley-Neal (ABWM)

- 1.0 The Zoom meeting was called to order at 9:33 AM by the President, Wendy Depew Partelow.
There were 20 Board members and 2 Staff members present.
She welcomed the members and asked them to share joys and prayer concerns. These will be incorporated in the opening prayer. Several concerns and joys were shared.
- 2.0 Devotions and Opening Prayer – Tom Tharp read Philippians 3: 7-14 and then read a devotion from *Lighten Up and Live* by Ken Davis. He then gave the opening prayer for the meeting and included the joys and concerns expressed.
- 3.0 Approval of Agenda (Document #1)
The Agenda was approved as submitted.
- 4.0 The Minutes of the March 6, 2021, Board of Mission meeting (Document #2) were approved as submitted.

Reports

- 5.0 Vick & Pathfinder CCM – Keith Griffin (Document #15)
Keith made some addendums to his written report. There will be no camping or programs at Camp Vick this year. The Camp Vick camping and programs will be held at Pathfinder Lodge. Volunteers are needed at Camp Vick to help organize and clean up the grounds. Volunteers are needed at Pathfinder Lodge for lifeguards and counselors.

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6.0 Executive Minister - Jim Kelsey (Document #3)

Addendum to Executive Minister's Report - Email of 6-3-2021

Upon further reflection, I would suggest the following course of action concerning Mr. Wayne Aarum and FBC Arcade.

I will try to contact the chair of the deacon board by phone. Failing in that endeavor, I will mail to him a letter at the church. I will offer to provide advice and support to them.

The issue at hand is not addressed by the Common Criteria for Cooperating Churches (ABCUSA), and therefore this is perhaps the most we can do at this time. Our churches are autonomous and make their own leadership decisions both lay and ordained.

I will ask for no action on the part of the board. I will seek only the board's counsel concerning the wisdom of the above course of action.

Jim Kelsey 6-3-2021

The Board advised that we should do nothing about this unless contacted by the church. This will be our course of action.

We should write a general policy about a safe Region to protect children at ABCNYS events; the AB Youth Convention and others. Our legal system is based on a presumption of innocence of anyone accused of sexual misconduct, but our responsibility is to protect the vulnerable. It was noted that *Roberts' Rules of Order* includes a provision for excluding people from organizations based on reputation. The President will appoint a sub-committee to develop a policy and the Executive Committee will present it to the Board of Mission.

Jim reviewed his written report.

Some financial training events are being planned.

The lawyer, Roy Rotenberg, who was retained to represent us in the two lawsuits under the NYS Child Victims Act, has filed responses to both suits.

It was **moved** by Jim Kelsey and **seconded** by Marlene Ciranowicz, that we hold a mission trip to Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier in the autumn of 2021. The limit will be ten people. We already have a deposit with Stella Niagara for accommodations. The **motion was carried**. Wendy Depew Partelow will head the planning committee for this.

A mission conference will be held in January or February of 2022.

The possibility of having hybrid Board of Mission meetings, with some people attending in person and some by Zoom online, was discussed. It was moved by Keith Griffin and Seconded by Sabrina Smith that the Board of Mission will hold in person or hybrid meetings and events as conditions permit. The motion was carried.

7.0 Associate Executive Minister - Jerrod Huguenot (Document #4) – There were no questions about Jerrod's written report.

8.0 Treasurer - Jim Harriff discussed the financial reports.

8.1 2021 April General Fund Profit and Loss Snapshot (Document #5)

The United Mission giving is doing well. The America for Christ giving is good. All of the other giving is on track or ahead of the budgeted amounts. Line 45000 – the

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investments are doing well. The Profit & Loss Statement through April 2021 showed a net profit of \$6,147.41.

8.2 2021 April General Fund Profit and Loss Detail (Document #6)

The stock market is strong now but it may not remain that way. We need to consider ways to put money aside for the future when this income goes down.

8.3 2021 April Total Ministry Profit and Loss (Document #7)

Line 44350 reflects the proceeds from the sale of the United Church of Waterford, \$123,897.60. We also received \$3,728.58 from the estate of the Rev. Howard Church. At the end of the year the Finance Committee will make a recommendation for the permanent investment of these funds.

8.4 2021 April Balance Sheet (Document #8)

Line 11524 – There is still \$24,700.00 available for PSALM COVID-19 Relief. Line 11560 – The Reserve Fund is good at \$75,964.83. Line 15250 – Unrestricted Endowment at \$436,526.87 is money we have set aside to earn investment income for our ministry. Line 17040 is a loan we made to ourselves and should possibly just be removed. Line 24100 – Is the second PPP loan which will be converted to a grant later.

8.5 5-27-2021 General Fund Profit and Loss Snapshot (Document #9)

The net income as of May 27, 2021 was -\$6,558.81. Organization Expenses of \$17,031.86, which is mostly legal fees for the two lawsuits, accounted for this loss. This loss was due to a retainer paid to the lawyers that will be refunded by May 31st, which will result in a net profit for the month of May.

We may need to pay \$4,000.00 to \$5,000.00, before Travelers Insurance will take over the payments.

Overall, we are in a strong position financially at this point.

9.0 Committee on Ministry – Dr. Greg Johnson (Document #16)

The Committee met on May 10, 2021, and recognized the non-ABC ordination of the Rev. Kymberly McNair.

Dr. Johnson recommended that pastors consider taking the Assessment for Ministry. Jim Kelsey recommended that this program be taken every ten years to help pastors find their strengths and weaknesses. It is a two-day experience and can now be done online.

Old Business

10.0 Tuscarora Mission trip will be postponed until 2022.

11.0 Rwanda Update – The Rev. Suzi Harriff was there on a two week trip when the COVID restrictions began. It is hoped that there can be another mission trip in 2022.

12.0 Rewording of Rules and Procedures 5 (c)

The change to the Rules and Procedures about having Board meetings by computer, on Zoom or another platform, recommended by the Executive Committee

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was presented to the Board. It was **moved** and **seconded** that this change to the Rules and Procedures be adopted. **Motion carried.**

Rule 5 (c) will now read:

Members of the Board of Mission may participate in Board of Mission meetings by electronic means. Each person using electronic means to participate is considered “present” at the meeting. All business conducted is validly transacted as in an assembly. Votes will be rendered by electronic participants by stating their names and saying “yes” or “no.” Votes will be verified and recorded by the Secretary.

New Business:

13.0 Chicken Coops for Onondaga Nation (Document #10)

The **Executive Committee recommends** that we donate \$1,000.00 to this project. The money will come from the Evangelism portion of the Ministry and Mission Fund. The **motion was carried.**

14.0 Request from *Literacy of Love* (Document #11) A request for recognition and possible support was received from a mission begun by a member of the First Baptist Church of Olean. This project helps children in Uganda. This project was the subject of a version of “*What is God doing among us?*” which was recently sent to our churches. Jim Kelsey noted that projects like this are the future of ministry. In addition to International Ministries sending missionaries, missions will also be done by endeavors such as this. The **Executive Committee presents the motion** that the Board of Mission set up a committee to discuss a policy on supporting mission requests in the future. We should be open to the passion of all our churches. We could consider changing the guidelines for the Ministry and Mission Fund to allow for these sorts of projects. The AB Youth may support this project at their Convention next autumn. **Motion carried.** It was suggested that three non-Board members be asked to be on the Committee. It should have six to ten members. Marlene Ciranowicz and Lillian Cabral volunteered to be on the Committee.

Additional Reports

15.0 Ministers Council - Patricia Ludwig (Document #12)

Their Annual Retreat will be held September 12, 13, 14, 2021, in Canandaigua. Jim Kelsey will be the main speaker about Civility.

16.0 AB Men - Chris Blackwell – No Report.

17.0 AB Women’s Ministries - Grace Kelly-Neal (Document #13)

The AB Women and AB Girls online conference held on April 23 and 24, was a great success. A number of young people have joined their Board. Jim Kelsey was thanked for being a speaker at the conference.

18.0 AB Youth - Stephanie Schneider (Document #14)

The AB Youth Fall Convention will be held on November 5 – 7 at the Holiday Inn in Liverpool. The theme will be, “Finding Joy.”

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- 19.0 ABCUSA Board of General Ministries – Judith Christiansen – No report.
- 20.0 Lay Study Program – George Stefani for Leon Oaks-Lee
The overviews of courses have been completed. Three courses will be offered this fall. It is possible to become a Certified Lay Pastor in two-and-one-half years.
- 21.0 Wendy Depew Partelow noted that we need to begin planning for the 2022 Biennial meeting. There will be a discussion about possible themes at the next Board of Mission meeting.
- 22.0 It was noted that Leon Runner is leaving the North Country Association and can no longer be their Representative to the Board of Mission. It was **moved** by Dan Saulsgiver and **seconded** by Jim Kelsey that he be appointed to a Member At-large position on the Board. **Motion carried.**
- 23.0 It was **moved** by Sabrina Smith and **seconded** by Bruce Aikin that we donate \$1,000.00 from the estate of the Rev. Howard Church to the Office of the General Secretary of ABCUSA. **Motion carried.**
- 24.0 The **Executive Committee recommends** that we donate \$5,000.00 to the Eastwood Baptist Church for their continuing provision of office space for the Region. **Motion carried.** The money will be taken from the Reserve Fund.
- 25.0 Future Meeting Dates
Executive Committee: All Fridays on Zoom: August 20, November 19
Board of Mission: Saturday, September 11, will be in person with an option for Zoom; Friday, December 3
- 26.0 Reflection
The meeting went smoothly.
Walter Hargrove asked for prayers for himself and his family as his oldest brother's funeral was Tuesday. He is considering becoming involved in Native American ministry.
Marlene Ciranowicz said the new Board member orientation was helpful.
Phyllis Fox is glad to see our expanding mission with projects like Literacy of Love.
- 27.0 Wendy asked Jim Kelsey to close the meeting with prayer. Before doing so Jim thanked the Board for the present for the anniversary of his ordination which allowed Debbie and he to go to New York City. He noted that Mary Schwarz is still planning her trip. Jim then gave the closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM.

Minutes taken by
Bruce D. Aikin
ABCNYS Secretary

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