

2017

Annual Report

190th Year

Rochester Genesee Region

American Baptist Churches

Our mission is to support congregations in developing leaders who transform lives. As we go about our work, we are shaped by the values of respect, Godly justice and reconciliation. We respect one another as children of God, holding one another in positive esteem, even when we hold different understandings of belief and celebrate with different traditions. Godly justice has to do with loving enemies, refusing to fight back, rejecting the desire to punish and coerce.

The justice of God is revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus, when love triumphed over power and evil. God's justice has been revealed separate from the legal realm, apart from the law. God keeps working to heal brokenness, as should we. Reconciliation is an element of salvation that refers to the results of atonement.

Reconciliation is the end of estrangement caused by sin between God and humanity and between sister and brother. We believe that we know God better when we are reconciled with all of God's people.

As we join together in God's work, we are directed by the following areas of concentration:

- We embrace diversity as a gift from God.
- We are intentional about building relationships between individuals, congregations, and ecumenical and interfaith communities.
- Through our regional relationships we support one another in faith formation for adults, youth and children; encourage the sharing of spiritual gifts and resources; promote innovative leadership; and encourage practices that lead to the transformation of lives.
- With hopeful spirits, we nurture and celebrate a culture open to new ways of supporting existing congregations and nurture new congregations and ministries.
- We support individuals and churches in intentional acts of mercy and justice in their neighborhoods, communities and the world and by speaking truth to power through witness, education, stewardship and actions.

Executive Minister's Report 2017

Alan G. Newton

As I write this report I am cognizant that this is my last official Annual Report. On the first of June I began my 17th year as the region's Executive Minister. These have been good years. They have been full years. During these years the region has grown considerably in number of churches but also in geography. 1 Chronicles 4 tells the story of Jabez, a leader of ancient Israel. The story goes that Jabez prayed to God "Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from hurt and harm!" I hasten to say that I have not been praying this prayer and yet, God continues to bless us with many fine congregations, which have sought us out as their new home.

During 2017 we received the Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, KY. It is more of an institution than church in Louisville. Once a "seminary church" it continues to be a stalwart leader in addressing many of the issues facing the city, state and country.

Also, during 2017 two of our Burmese congregations, the Minnesota Lisu Church of Jesus and the Rochester Karen Baptist Church established themselves in buildings. The Lisu church dedicated their building in the summer and the Karen Church received their building at the close of the year. But the sadness that is mixed with joy is that the Karen Church benefited from the gift of their building from the Parma Community Baptist Church, which held its final service in November after 185 years of ministry in the Spencerport community.

I coached the search committees of First Baptist Brockport, First Baptist Penfield, First Baptist Church Ithaca, Good Shepherd Community of Faith, First Baptist Church Painted Post, and Ogden Baptist Church this year.

In the community I co-chaired the Commission on Christian Community Relations, which hosted Rev. Dr. Roy Medley and his wife Rev. Patricia Medley. Roy presented on Religious Liberty to an overflow crowd at the Islamic Center of Rochester.

I have served on the Boards of Cameron Community Ministries and the Fairport Baptist Homes. In the community at large, I have continued to tutor high school and college youth, was President of the non-profit Focus Plus – a partnership with Action for a Better Community, and volunteered as a volunteer Restorative Justice facilitator in both community and courts settings.

During the year, I responded to invitations to meet with, preach or visit at 33 of the 48 congregations. Remember, if you want to see the next Executive Minister of the region you need to invite. Given our prized autonomy in our Baptist tradition, the Executive Minister does not intrude but would welcome your invitations.

These have been special years; ones which I will always treasure. Thank you for the privilege of serving God with you these many years.

God bless you all.

2017 Officers and Committees

Officers

Executive Minister	Rev. Alan Newton, FBC of Rochester
President	Rev. Michael Ware, Webster Baptist (2018)
Vice President	Beth Short, University Baptist, Columbus OH (2018) (Rotates to President in September 2018)
Treasurer	Barb Wolin, FBC Rochester (2018)
Clerk	Ivan Marable, FBC Rochester (2018)

Executive Board

Class of 2018 – Lawrence Taylor (First United Bloomington), Linda Clark (Genesee Baptist), Mitch Williams (Common Ground)
Class of 2020 – Sandra McDuffie (St. Luke MBC), William Summerville (Kingdom Come), Linda Pepe (BFC Moorestown), Nicole Iaquinto (Ogden Baptist)
Class of 2022 – Steve Gretz (Greece Baptist), Ron Duttweiler (Trinity Nunda)

National Board Representatives

Board of General Ministries – Tash Wilson (Nationally nominated)
International Ministries – Rev. Paul Vick (Nationally nominated)

Other Standing Committees and Region Representatives

Chair	Carol Owens, Genesee Baptist (2018)
Vice Chair	Bill Reynolds, FBC Ithaca (2018) Gaya Shakes, St. Luke (2018)

Additional Ordination Review Committee Members

Doug Donley – University Baptist, MN
Jason Alspaugh – United Church, OH
Rachel McGuire – CRCDS
Richard Barron – FBC Ithaca

Statement of Purpose of American Baptist Churches, USA

American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., as a manifestation of the church universal, bears witness to God's intention to bring redemption and wholeness to all creation. American Baptists believe that God's intention can be sought and followed in local congregations and other gatherings of Christians and in associational, regional, national and world bodies as they receive from one another mutual counsel and correction. Since Jesus Christ is the head of the church, each body of Christians, seeking to order its life in accordance with the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has a proper responsibility under God for maintaining its life of worship, witness, and ministry.

In every area of their common life American Baptists, acknowledging the importance of creative diversity, seek such a balance of freedom and order as will keep all parts of American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and at the same time enable them to work responsibly to carry out the common task of mission and ministry in our time.

American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. acknowledges that it shares a common faith in Christ with churches, which may be quite different from it in history, polity and practice. Consequently, it seeks to share with them a common ministry and to express it faithfully.

American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. acknowledges that God's will is also manifested in movements outside the formal structures of Christ's church, and that, therefore, it must respond faithfully to such disclosures.

American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. further acknowledges and confirms its commitment to the objects stated in its Act of Incorporation as follows: it to give expression to the opinions of its constituency upon moral, religious and denomination matters and to promote denominational unity and efficiency in efforts for the evangelization of the world."

In the light of this affirmation, American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. intends the following statement of purpose to implement and not to alter the objects stated in its Act of Incorporation:

- to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world and to lead persons to Christ;
- to seek the mind of Christ on moral, spiritual, political, economic, social, denominational and ecumenical matters, and to express to the rest of society on behalf of American Baptists, their convictions as to the mind of Christ in these matters;
- to guide, unify, and assist American Baptist in their witness in the world, in preparing members for the work of ministry, and in serving both those within and outside the fellowship of Christ; and
- to promote closer relations among American Baptist churches and groups, within the whole Body of Christ and to promote understanding with other religious bodies.

Standing Rules 5.1.1. Common Criteria

1. Affirm the statement entitled, “We are American Baptists” (revised 6/19/98) as descriptive of American Baptist faith and practice.
2. Affirm the mission/purpose of the American Baptist Churches USA and of the Region in which the church is a member.
3. Participate in the life and mission of the American Baptist Churches at local, regional, national and international levels.
4. Financially support the mission of the American Baptist Churches USA at a responsible level.
5. Share with the family the impact of the church’s ministries in reaching the community and world for Christ by reporting annually on forms supplied by the region and/or the ABC/USA.

Adopted by The General Board November 2001

Forwarded to Regions for consideration & adoption, December 2001

Adopted by ABCRGR Executive Board April 2002

Affirmed by The General Board (that $\frac{3}{4}$ of Regions adopted) November 2002

Administrative Reports

ABCRGR Region President – Michael Ware

This year as your region president has been an exciting and challenging time for me and the ABCRGR Executive Board. Transitions are a part of ministry and in fact change has been necessary for the advancement of God's work in the world. This year has been such a time.

As many of you are aware this fall we were informed that Executive Minister Alan Newton would be retiring at the close of our annual meeting September 20-22, 2018. While this was not a total surprise it did mean that along with the normal work of the board and region that a search committee needed to be formed. This was a major undertaking over the past several months. I was really pleased with the entire board's willingness to step up in attending extra meetings and those who served on the sub-committee to form the search committee itself. This was all completed while at the same time keeping an eye on the other administrative duties of the region.

I along with other members of our ABCRGR community joined a group of east coast regional leaders this past spring to take part in a listening session concerning ABCUSA. Our meeting was held in Worcester, Massachusetts as we gathered around tables to listen, discuss and share concerns in our experience of ABCUSA and its future. The conversations were rich and filled with compassionate insights. There is more work needed in listening to one another as members of ABCUSA.

My role as president provides me the opportunity to take part in region events when I can. I had the pleasure of taking part in the very important installation service of Rev. Dr. Carol Garrett, as she was called as the first woman Pastor of the Historic Parsells Church. It was a profound experience to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit throughout all the movements of this worship service. I felt the love of a congregation for its new pastor in all of its glory. Taking part in this occasion as the president of the region and celebrating with a new colleague in ministry brought tremendous pride to me and reflected the uniqueness of ABCRGR. I welcome Rev Garrett and challenge us all to support the ministry yet to come.

My friends, along with these highlights, I inform you that I will be departing from the area as I take on a pastoral position with North Shore Baptist Church in Chicago Illinois. It has been my pleasure to serve this region and I give thanks to Alan's leadership as he Executive retires, to the executive board who takes on their responsibilities, to the delegates of the region, and to each of you who support the region ministries.

May God continue to bless and keep you,

Rev. Michael Ware

Executive Board President, ABCRGR

2017 Affiliate Organizations

Cameron Community Ministries

48 Cameron Street
Rochester, NY 14606
(585) 254-2697

Fairport Baptist Homes

4646 Fairport Nine Mile Point Road
Fairport, NY 14450
(585) 377-0350

Genesee Area Campus Ministries

Interfaith Chapel
University of Rochester
Rochester, NY 14627
(585) 275-8522

Greater Rochester Community of Churches/FIAN

2 Riverside Street
Rochester, NY 14613
(585) 254-2570

Minnesota Council of Churches

122 West Franklin Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(612) 870-3600

NY State Council of Churches

1580 Central Avenue
Albany, NY 12205
(518) 436-9319

Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School

1100 South Goodman Street
Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 271-1320

Cameron Community Ministries

Cameron Community Ministries is an urban community center located in the Lyell-Otis neighborhood of Rochester, NY. Our mission is to provide hope to our community through emergency services, engagement, education and empowerment.

Services provided in 2017:

- 26,957 meals were served in our Hot Lunch Program.
- 3,759 Kids Café meals were served to children 18 and under.
- 2,340 people received fresh produce through Foodlink's monthly Mobile Food Pantry.
- 2,117 people were served through our Food Pantry program.
- 3,264 people shopped in our clothing house for clothing, accessories, housewares, baby and hygiene items.
- 4,780 diapers were distributed.
- 40 children participated in our After-School Enrichment Program, which features reading, math and homework support, arts, physical activities, technology and a variety of clubs and field trips throughout the school year.
- 40 children participated in our full day Summer Safe Haven programs, which includes reading, arts, field trips, physical activities, playground and meals.
- Over 300 backpacks filled with school supplies were handed out to children in the neighborhood.

Special Endeavors in 2017:

- Our incredible two young ladies, Kaila and Jalisa, completed year two at Mercy High School.
- Our special young man Adryan completed year one at McQuaid Jesuit High School.
- 215 children received a holiday gift and a visit with Santa at our Annual Neighborhood Santa Party.
- All 40 Cameron After School kids got brand new winter boots with help from Kammholz Law PLCC.

Additional Services Provided:

Cameron also provides a variety of services to the community, including:

- Phone, fax and computer access
- Voter registration
- Onsite bike repairs through R Community Bikes giveaway/repair
- Resumé-building
- Referrals
- Nutrition education
- Holiday celebrations with toy and food distribution
- Information for guests on other community programs and services

Genesee Area Campus Ministries

	2017 Year-end Actual	2017 Approved Budget
REVENUES		
Synod-NE Presbytery	15,000	15,000
United Methodist-Upper NY Conf	0	0
Episcopal Diocese of Rochester	4,600	4,600
Genesee Valley Assoc/UCC	2,400	2,400
American Baptist Churches/RGR	800	500
Total Judicatories	22,800	22,500
Grants		
Miscellaneous	1,000	4,000
Frank Snow Memorial Fund Draw	18,950	12,161
Grant - Willmott Foundation	3,500	0
U of R Chapel Grant	9,000	9,000
GACM "Friends" (Individuals)	3,170	3,000
GACM Board Member Support	9,450	12,000
American Baptist Churches	200	2,500
United Methodist Churches	620	0
United Ch of Christ Churches	1,200	0
Evangelical Lutheran Churches	100	0
Presbyterian Churches	200	0
PCC Student Support	2,188	2,500
Alumni Support	7,785	5,000
Parent Support	1,345	1,500
NYS Baptist Foundation for CM	900	900
Miscellaneous	5,702	0
Total Designated Income	65,311	52,561
TOTAL REVENUES	88,111	75,061
EXPENSES		
Salary: L. Tiberi	23,989	23,989
Housing: L. Tiberi	25,000	25,000
SS Offset: L. Tiberi	3,748	3,748
Professional Exp: L. Tiberi	136	2,000
Parking: L. Tiberi	473	500
Continuing Ed: L. Tiberi	301	1,000
TermLife/Disability: L. Tiberi	1,277	1,280
Pension: L. Tiberi	5,801	5,389
CashInLieu of Healthcare-L.Tiberi	4,081	4,081
Pulpit Supply	0	200
PCC Organist	1,680	3,000
Bookkeeper: H. Hoffman	1,809	1,809
Total Salaries and Benefits	68,295	71,996
Miscellaneous	4,702	0
United Way Processing Fees	65	0
"Audit" (Review of Books)	100	100
Liability Insurance	1,104	1,200
Workers' Comp Insurance	640	575
PCC Postage	536	750
PCC Office Supplies	57	100
PCC Student Workers	1,139	2,000
PCC Program Expenses	2,163	2,000
PCC Equipment	421	500
PCC Copying - Worship/Mailing	890	1,100
PCC Telecommunications	277	300
PCC Clerical Support	419	500
Total Support Costs	12,514	9,125
Total Endowment Transfer to Operating Account (entry for bookkeeping purposes only)	18,950	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	99,759	81,121
NET INCOME	(11,649)	(6,060)



Chaplain Laurie Tiberi



The Rev. Todd R. Goddard
GACM Board President



NY State Council of Churches

The New York State Council of Churches is very pleased to report on our activities in 2017 and 2018. In an era where resources are more limited, we believe strongly in the value of ecumenism and working together. We see ourselves, in many ways, as a networker and a “dot connector” to help our partners know what each other is doing while helping congregations offer the Gospel in our communities, state and nation. Our ecumenical witness is greatly enriched by the traditions and work of our denominational partners. We are keenly interested in the process of encouraging people to grow as disciples for Jesus Christ. In this spirit, we want to offer tools and perspectives which invite people to humbly engage the struggles of this world, listen to people’s real struggles, and seek to point to the promised kingdom of God on earth by offering comfort and doing justice. For us, pastoral care is not just an individual matter. It is about shaping laws and policies which do not discriminate and offer hope. We think this work is effectively done in an ecumenical way. Please visit our website www.nyscoc.org

Our purpose and work can be found in the following mission statement: New York State Council of Churches, embracing a spirit of ecumenism and hospitality, seeks to live into God’s call to do justice and to love our neighbor. Pointing to the Kingdom of God on earth, we envision a world where the marginalized are freed from poverty, where prisoners can be restored to live happier and healthier lives, and where we help people of all ages grow in their Christian discipleship.

To live into our purpose and vision, we have three emphases:

We promote faith formation for people of all ages.

February 20 to 22 we held our annual high school trip to the United Nations. 44 high school students from across the state participated in a seminar at The Church of the Covenant (Presbyterian) in New York City. A seminar led by theologian and hip-hop artist, Solomon Starr, used some very creative group exercises, to help young people explore the complex dimensions of white privilege, racism, and power as it relates to the Christian faith. We also had a tour of the United Nations. Christy D’Ambrosio, Director of Youth Ministries at First Presbyterian Church in Albany, coordinated the trip. Our next trip is scheduled for three days during spring break, April 22 to 26, 2019. More details to follow. We welcome high school applicants across the state.

In July, 2017 we held our first annual Bridging the Urban Rural Divide Conference in Johnstown. The Conference was geared towards helping us get beyond superficial political and geographical categories to meet concrete needs in our communities. In July 2018, we held our second conference at First Presbyterian Church in Johnstown, where we focused on congregations as catalysts for economic and communal renewal in the context of a rural-urban dialog. The 2017 and 2018 lectures can be found on our Facebook page. Looking ahead, we will be planning regional conversations through 2018 to 2019 in rural and urban settings.

We certify and support chaplains in our state prison system and other state institutions.

We certify Protestant chaplains for the state. Certification is necessary before one can be interviewed by the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) and other state agencies.

DOCCS is experiencing a crucial chaplain shortage. We welcome applications of highly qualified fully ordained clergy, with ecclesiastical standing, parish ministry experience, a Bachelors degree and an MDIV or at least 96 hours of graduate theological work to apply for certification. As of August, 2018, 30 chaplains have been visited and Reverend Cook has preached in a variety of prisons. The Council also held its annual chaplain’s conference comprised of chaplains from many different settings. 64 were in attendance in 2017. This year’s conference will be in Owego, October 10 to 12.

We help local churches and judicatories collaborate with other partners to do justice

*Working with the Collegiate Churches, Enterprise Partners, Presbytery of New York City, Interfaith Assembly on Housing and Homelessness, Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, Bronx Clergy Task Force, Kingdom Builders and many other partners, the Council formed the Interfaith Affordable Housing Collaborative which provides congregations in New York technical assistance to position them to use their property to build supportive and affordable housing. Our 2018 summer conference highlighted the work of the Collaborative.

*Collaborating with Katal Institute, we advocated for passage of bail reform bill which would have eliminated cash bail in most instances. The bill most likely to pass, passed the Assembly but did not get voted on in the Senate. We will return to advocate for bail reform in the 2019 legislative session.

*We are one of a variety of co-sponsors with the Labor-Religion Coalition which coordinated 40 days of Action in the New York State Capital as part of the New Poor People's Campaign in New York. The Campaign is a national movement, led by The Reverend Dr. William Barber.

*We led 8 seminars on Doing Social justice in Politically Diverse Communities. The seminars, designed to help us work on justice issues with people in our congregations with different political perspectives, were held in Potsdam, Stony Brook, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Auburn, Little Falls, and Buffalo. More seminars will be scheduled in 2018 and 2019 throughout the state.

*Moving towards a clean energy economy, we have supported effort, in conjunction with 350.org to call on Comptroller DiNapoli to divest of fossil fuel stocks from state pension funds. We also support the Climate and Community Protection Act to build clean energy infrastructure, restore social justice communities which are disproportionately affected by environmental hazards and to provide a path for workers moving from fossil fuel-based jobs to clean energy jobs. The CCPA lost narrowly in the 2018 legislative session. We will support the CCPA in the 2019 session.

*We worked with many partners to prevent the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act and to stop passage of the Tax Cut and Jobs Act law which we believe is now having an adverse economic affect on the poor and middle class, property and small business owners across New York. The new law, in our view, places an unacceptable strain of the state and Federal budgets and also causes significant increases in health insurance premiums. We are seeking now to support efforts to recapture some of the tax benefit which flowed to the extremely rich to prevent threatened cuts to the social safety net.

*We support efforts of our denominational partners to address discrimination against immigrants, people of color, and those of other faiths. At present, we support passage of a NY state law (SCAR Act) requiring full disclosure about the presence of separated children and families in state facilities while strongly advocating for laws which welcome immigrants to our country rather than punish them. The Council organized the New York delegation which advocated for just immigration policy as part of Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington D.C. We also support the National Council of Churches ACT (Awaken, Confront, Transform) movement to end racism.

The Council wishes to thank our denominational partners for their financial assistance, along with churches, individuals, labor unions, developers, and other organizations who have offered grants and contributions. We continue to need financial support to sustain our ministries.

In faith,
Peter Cook, Executive Director

Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School

From its humble beginning in Hamilton, New York to the present, CRCDS has witnessed and been part of significant changes – in the church, in society and in theological education. Yet, throughout these changes, CRCDS has remained committed to its mission of preparing women and men for transformative ministry, sending out thousands of graduates whose collective impact on our world is immeasurable. We thank God for the gift of this ministry, for the mission of CRCDS and for the generations of people who have made its mission possible over these many years.

For almost 90 years, CRCDS has called the campus at [1100 South Goodman Street](#) in Rochester “home.” I am delighted to report that the Trustees have voted to relocate CRCDS to a new “home” at [320 North Goodman Street](#) in Rochester, beginning with the Spring 2019 semester. Until that time, the school will remain on the current campus. While grateful for our current campus and the deep impact it has had on so many lives, the Trustees, for decades, have wrestled with the fact that the current campus no longer serves the school’s mission or its students and, in fact, has worked against it financially. The Trustees’ decision to sell the campus and relocate CRCDS to a more central location within the community allows for more direct community engagement and significant opportunities for our students with new and enhanced programs and offerings.

This past spring, the Trustees established a task force consisting of representatives from the student body, faculty, staff, alumni/ae, administration and Trustees, charging them with identifying a new location for CRCDS. After a significant amount of time visiting properties and much deliberation, the Task Force recommended the [320 North Goodman Street](#) location.

The Task Force established a number of criteria for a new location, including such important factors as accessibility, parking availability, proximity to amenities for students, easy access to highways (since all of our students commute to campus), and affordability. The most important criteria, however, were the desire to remain in the City of Rochester and a desire for a setting that would allow CRCDS to routinely engage with the community in a new way. The Task Force recognized that in many ways, the current campus setting – up, on top of a hill, behind an iron fence – removed and separated the school from the community in a very real and tangible way. Over the years, CRCDS had grown to expect people to come to it, rather than being present in the community and engaging it more directly.

The [320 North Goodman](#) location successfully meets the Task Force’s criteria. The space will be completely renovated this fall and, upon completion, will be a purpose-built, 21st Century educational facility. Located in Rochester’s Neighborhood of the Arts, near the University of Rochester’s Memorial Art Gallery, in the Village Gate complex, this location provides a vibrant, inviting atmosphere for our students while also placing them and the school in immediate proximity to a wide range of ministry partners. It also provides opportunities to work with the EMMA (East Main, Mustard & Atlantic), Beechwood and Marketview Heights (North and South) neighborhoods on issues related to social justice, education, neighborhood development and anti-poverty initiatives, just to name a few. This new location will provide greater opportunities for the school and its students and we are eager to share more on these initiatives with you in the months ahead.

This is an exciting time at CRCDS and we remain ever grateful for you and your prayers of support. The CRCDS family spans centuries and represents a shared vision that theological education positively impacts our world in truly transformative ways. We are intensely appreciative for all the ways our current location has served our mission thus far, and we very much look forward to how the new location will serve our future ministry as well as our current and future students.

Yours, in Christ, Rev. Marvin A. McMicle, PhD. / President

2017-2018 Board of General Ministries Director's Report for ABCRGR

~ Submitted by Tasha Wilson ~

Since my report to the Region in September 2017, I have been in Board Meetings on three separate occasions. In September 2017, I traveled to San Juan, Puerto Rico, in between Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria. This was a meeting of the BGM Executive Committee. We were hosted by the denomination's incoming President, Josue Gomez Menendez and his home church, Primera Iglesia Bautista de Rio Piedras, pastored by Rev. Laura Ivelisse Ayala.

We had a packed agenda that included:

- Review of the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit in Portland, Oregon and the revised Orientation to AB Life.
- Rev. Dr. Spitzer, General Secretary, shared about three programs that approached ABCUSA for exploring partnerships: Fresh Expressions, ecoAmerica (recommended by Creation Justice Taskforce) and National Institute for Civil Discourse. We approved bringing to the November meeting for Board approval, ecoAmerica and National Institute for Civil Discourse.
- United Mission continues to be a major concern given the drastic decline over time. The ABCUSA team has continued to work on new and exciting ways to promote this denominational funding stream that has an impact on everyone. Continue to check out umisthevehicle.org for updates. Also, bulletin inserts are being created for Region's highlighting their ministries and UM Stories.
- Building Matters – the future of the Mission Center in Valley Forge, PA

I was lucky to get out of Puerto Rico the morning that Hurricane Maria made landfall and return to Rochester!

In November 2017, I went down to Valley Forge, PA for a meeting of the full board. During this meeting we had a chance to celebrate with a Service of Thanksgiving for the Mission Center. It was a lovely service in a packed room of American Baptists.

During this meeting I continued to chair the Action Group, Communicating ABC Identity and we utilized our time meeting with Tina Turner, the new United Mission Coordinator for ABCUSA. Tina reviewed active projects, gained feedback, and elicited information on what folks are currently doing in their churches.

The Board of General Ministries, for the first time hosted a Staff Appreciation Dinner for the staff of ABCUSA. The staff were thanked for their years of dedication and provided a small token of appreciation. Topics of Discussion:

- Biennial Mission Summits: 2019 in Virginia Beach, Virginia and 2021 in San Juan, Puerto Rico
- Presentation by National Institute for Civil Discourse (<https://nicd.arizona.edu/>) with board approval
- Vote of approval to partner with ecoAmerica (<https://ecoamerica.org>)
- Building Update – the future of the Mission Center in Valley Forge, PA

In June, the Board of General Ministries gathered in Green Lake, Wisconsin and the Conference center. It is our typical practice to convene every June meeting there in the off year from Biennial Mission Summit. I have a new opportunity to serve under our new President, Josue Gomez-Menendez on the ABCUSA Nominating Committee. Topics of Discussion:

- Biennial Mission Summit 2019 Update
- Building Update – the future of the Mission Center in Valley Forge, PA
- Reports on various projects of the Office of the General Secretary and the Associate General Secretaries
- Inspired by one Board Director, Board of General Ministries directors engaged in a wide-ranging discussion on how to respond to the U.S. Attorney General's comments about Romans 13 and the separation of immigrant children from their parents. A wide variety of viewpoints were expressed, and the Board unanimously encouraged the General Secretary to write a letter to Mr. Sessions.

The Action Group that I chair focused our attention this meeting on Board Exit Interview process. A developed proposal is being provided to the President for consideration to start this November 2018.

I will be wrapping up my board tenure of 12 years (old bylaws and new!) at the end of 2019. With only 3 meetings left, I reflect back on the experiences and the future ahead for our denomination. There has been exciting work done and excitement for the future.

Minnesota Council of Churches

Twenty-five denominations are members of the Minnesota Council of Churches. Over the last year we...

- Gathered the leaders of Mainline Protestant, Historic Black Churches, Traditional Peace Churches and the Greek Orthodox Church, representing almost 1,000,000 Minnesota Christians in regular meetings to build the common good in the world.
- Held an historic press conference spanning Minnesota's Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Evangelical and Catholic leaders to oppose the immigration ban.
- Welcomed a new CEO, Rev. Dr. Curtiss DeYoung, whose faithful reflections on current events have been featured in eleven national or global news outlets
- Reached a cumulative 3,000 Minnesotans participating in 93 Respectful Conversations on topics ranging from guns in Minnesota to connecting above the red/blue divide
- Welcomed 320 refugees from 14 countries
- Brought 1,500 Christians and Muslims together in relationship at 23 cross-cultural Ramadan Iftars
- Diminished fear and mistrust in 69% of Taking Heart respondents
- Helped 143 refugees secure employment in Mankato and the Twin Cities Metro Area
- Trained 21 teachers to use Respectful Conversations to embrace difficult discussions about controversial topics in public school classrooms
- Witness to the good work of the body of Christ in 47 media articles
- Took a fearless stand in support of our neighbors with 462 #Blessed Ramadan lawn signs
- Supported Historic Black Churches in convening leaders from Protestant, Catholic, and Evangelical communions for critical conversations about racism post-Charlottesville
- Educated over 1,500 Minnesotans about refugees
- News for the Common Good reached over 3,500 congregational decision-makers every other week

ABCRGR Friends of the Region

GOLDEN FRIENDS

(≥ \$1,000)

Alan & Gail Newton
Kenneth Hines

PARTNER

(\$400 – 999)

Alfred Ginkel
Lawrence & Brenda Hargrave
Robert & Susan Benedetti
David & Joanne Woodyard
John Besch & Beth Short

COMPANION

(\$150 – 399)

Rev. Dr. Carrol & Joyce Turner
Melvin & Barbara Roberts
Mary Sarhatt
Walter & Cynthia Lage
Ken & Marcia McCarthy
John & Linda Pepe
Glenn Loafmann (250)
Esther & Susan Cable
Frederick Stahl
Melvin & Barbara Roberts
Malcolm & Sandra Chatfield
Donald Brown
Steve Gretz & Leslie Lee
Adam & Edris Hitchcock
Carol Kautz
William Taber
Robert Morgan
Edward & Patricia Carey
Lawrence & Carol Doud
Richard & Patricia MacIntyre
Julie Waterman
James & Constance Harper
Paul Vick
Mitch & Vail Williams
Don & Lisa Fox
David & Linda Caughey
Edward Lehman
Richard Cavers
Ken & Sally Dodgson
Richard & Elizabeth Myers
George & Karen Burbie
James Cannon & Joanne Gilbert-Cannon
Charles & Nancy Christiansen
Garth & Martha Brokaw

FRIEND

(\$100 – 149)

Jacqueline Sullivan
Mary Hazen
Don & Sharon Hagens

Robert & Nancy Dean
William & Peggy Jones Williams
Tanya Thurman
Elizabeth Heisig
Barbara Sherwood
Sarah Lockard
Jeffrey & Wendy Koch
Laurence & Carol Doud
Donald Beech
Walter & Lori Steenson
Mattie Thurman
Rod & Marilyn Vane
Clarence & Irene Ingram
Sandra McDuffie
Rachel McGuire
David Fisher
George & Cheryl Pettitt
Jane Grant
Ruth Ann Hazen
Audrey Davidson
Lawrence & Kathy Taylor
Clarence & Mary Ann Henry
Susan Maybeck
Rheanolte & Annie Marie LeBarbour
William & Diane Ehr
Dianne Newhouse
Marian Coger
Hope DePuy
James & Florence Braker
John & Michelle Brooks
H. Darrell Lance
Gene & Sarah Kohlenberg
Philip & Carol Ann Klingler
Neva Hoffmeier
Ron & Mildred Ortbach
Fred & Georgia May
Sylvia Nemecek
James Evans, Jr.
John & Miriam Ganze
David & Tonia Hunt
David & Grace Evans

PAL (< \$100)

Britton & Janet Hopkin
Timothy Judd
Joann Trolley
Tom & Thekla Raisner
James Volke
Ann Searls
John & Sally Lake
Helen Hoffman (25)
Tim & Julia Dean
Harold & Josephine Files
Janice Mann-Beech & Mary Beth
Chassagnol & Lisa Brown

Byron & Hayden Bangert
William & Barbara Fry
Travis & Lori Norvell
Gerald & Nancy Bishop
Peggy Malone
Tom & Nancy Olney
Jayne Gerega
Anthony Lister
Fred & Krystal Dicks
Doug & Mary Jo Klick
Ralph & Virginia Elliott
Barbara Wolin
David & Laurie Priest
Adrienne Phillips
Doug & Kimberly Donley
Joyce Newton
Maria Rosa Nachon
Bob & Rebecca Shoemith
Virginia Lohmann Bauman
Mary Jo Green
Ivan Marable
Joann Trolley
Thomas & Carolyn Argust
Richard & Lillian Barron
Joan Mitchell
Margaret Mary Lau & Cynthia Burch
Mat Thomas
John Auer
Richard Bird
Sylvia Farnand
Charles & Nancy Leport
Michael & Lara Ford
Audrey White
Karen & Emily Sundland
Doris Kerber

Gifts from Churches

FBC Penfield
Young-at-Hearts (Hilton Baptist)
Zion Hill Missionary Baptist
FBC Moorestown
Crescent Hill
Kingdom Come
Christ Community
FBC Keystone

Gifts in Memoriam

In Memory of Arlene Hanley (given by
Patricia Hanley)