

American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island
181st Annual Business Meeting, Part A
Monday, March 5, 2007 at 7:00 pm
Warwick Central Baptist Church, Post Road, Warwick, RI

Norman Gregory began the evening by quieting the crowd with his playing of the piano. Jim Essex led the delegates in heartfelt singing.

President Nancy Bancroft welcomed delegates and read Philippians 2:1-11 to set the tone for the evening. The Rev. D. Paul Lawrence led in prayer.

Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Baptist Heritage Center

This meeting was called to order by President, Rev. Clay Berry, who reported that the American Baptist Historical Society decided not to move their collection to Rhode Island but rather selected a site on the campus of Mercer University in Atlanta, GA. With that decision a new opportunity exists to develop a partnership with Mercer University to preserve and promote Baptist heritage. First steps in this partnership will take place as we, in conjunction with the Massachusetts American Baptist Historical Society, develop a Baptist Heritage Weekend for November 3 and 4 featuring Baptist scholar Walter Shurden from Mercer University and Deborah VanBroekhoven from the American Baptist Historical Society.

The new treasurer, Lou Tripler, has a new accounting system in place so that we are now ready to solicit and receive donations

Nominating Committee Report: 2007—2008 was accepted as presented and officers were elected.

| | | |
|------------|----------------|---|
| Officers: | President | Rev. Paul Hanson |
| | Vice President | Nancy Cyr-Larson |
| | Secretary | Rev. Clay Barry |
| | Treasurer | Rev. Lou Tripler |
| Directors: | 2008 | Paul Becker |
| | 2009 | Roberta Ritchie, Rev. Dr. Charles Hartman |
| | 2010 | Dr. J. Stanley Lemons, Rev. Dr. Donald R. Rasmussen |

Meeting Adjourned.

Annual Meeting of the Baptist Home of Rhode Island

Vivian Searle, president, stated that the Baptist Home of Rhode Island is not a building, but rather a board of fourteen people to support needs of the aging. This support is done mainly through the John Clarke Retirement Center, Elder Care Ministries, and providing grants to churches.

The report of the nominating committee was presented as follows:

Secretary: Rev Lynne Holden; Treasurer: Tom Archer; Assistant Treasurer: Bill Johnson

Board Members: Tom Kennedy term ending 2009

| | | |
|----------------|---|------------------|
| Linda Anderson | } | term ending 2010 |
| Naomi Kiggins | | |
| Richard Pierce | | |

Slate elected as presented. Meeting adjourned.

ABCORI Annual Meeting, Session A

President Nancy Bancroft called the meeting to order. Linda Chaffee was appointed Clerk and Don Wolfe was appointed Parliamentarian.

Linda Chaffee called the roll of churches. There were 32 churches represented and 123 delegates present. Nancy Bancroft declared a quorum.

Minutes of the 2006 annual meeting were accepted as presented.

Tom Archer, Treasurer, reported that the revenues of 2006 were slightly less than expected and expenses were slightly greater than expected resulting in a deficit of \$57 K. An overview of the ABCORI budget showed revenues in a slowing trend with only a 3 % increase from the previous year and United Mission falling 10% below anticipated income. The largest surge in expenses were in fixed costs especially utilities, and insurance—medical, liability and property. Highlights of the Canonicus budget showed a full year of Administrator expense shared with ABCORI on a 75/25 split. Program and maintenance costs as well as overhead costs were reduced.

ABCORI 2006 Financial Highlights and 2007 Budget Presentation

| | 2006 Actual | | | 2007 Budget | | |
|------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| | ABCORI | Canonicus | Total | ABCORI | Canonicus | Total |
| Revenues | \$183,600 | \$642,100 | \$825,700 | \$233,100 | \$668,400 | \$901,500 |
| Expenses | \$215,000 | \$667,700 | \$882,700 | \$233,100 | \$666,900 | \$900,000 |
| Net Income | (\$31,400) | (\$25,500) | (\$57,000) | - | \$1,500 | \$1,500 |

Report will be placed on file to be audited.

Budget moved, seconded and carried.

Report of the Executive Minister

Day 50! Liliana DaValle reported that she is working to bring stability to the many facets of ministry in a time of transition. She has met with staff, churches—both clergy and lay leaders, and interfaith leaders. She highlighted the activities:

- ABCORI has adopted Children in Poverty—an initiative of ABCUSA—and is preparing the ground work to launch in RI for the welfare of the children.
- The staff has been reorganized and is working well with 100% retention of the staff with new job descriptions.
- Executive staff is working as a team meeting monthly for goal setting and team building.

She shared the following components of her vision for the future:

- Plant new churches
- Invigorate evangelism
- Train and resource lay leaders
- Strong prophetic presence in the state and denominational family
- Enhance church renewal
- Engage churches in hands-on mission work
- Glorify God

Report of the Director of Administration

Liz Lussier reported that she has completed her first year as Director of Administration. This position is a new one and was scheduled to be reviewed twice during its first year and

a half. One review has taken place and the second is to take place in late spring 2007. Liz reported that these reviews were very supportive to her and that progress can be made with authority given to an administrator in the areas of Personnel, Conferences, Camping and Canonicus Property and Facilities Management. A new Non-Exempt Staff Manual has been developed which reflects our responsibilities in a not-for-profit, religious, and seasonal situation.

A review and plan for upgrading computers and software has been developed. A new rate structure for 2007 conferences has been developed. In the area of camping, there will be an intentional effort to involve pastors in the creation of the Bible curriculum; the pastors will present and teach this curriculum to the 2007 staff during staff training week. There are two weeks during the summer during which churches are invited to bring their youth to camp to conduct their own programs with Canonicus support.

Report of the Director of Elder Care

Kathy Black reported that she is beginning her ninth year. She explained that there is a major shift in care for the elderly and that ABCORI is on the forefront of change in elder care as it relates to patient centered care. The new model is an holistic model, considering the body, mind and spirit of the person. In keeping with this change, Elder Care Ministries has sought to increase its focus on the chaplaincy and spiritual services to nursing home residents.

Grandparents camp at Canonicus was held for the seventh season. Elder Care Ministries program includes the recruitment and celebration of ABCORI volunteers. Volunteers are vitally important to the various program of ABCORI.

Report from the General Board

ABCORI representatives to the General Board, the Rev. Dr. Hank Pedersen and Peggy Johnson, reported that the following issues are under consideration by the General Board:

- Withdrawal of the Region of the Pacific Southwest—over 300 churches—the region has voted to withdraw; 200 churches wish to wait and see; 60 churches favor the formation of a new region within ABCUSA
- Stance on Homosexuality
- Selling headquarters building in Valley Forge which is under utilized
- Restructuring of the denomination's governance
- Initiative on Children in Poverty

Endowments, United Mission giving and the four special offerings are the major sources of funding for ABCUSA. There has been a giving malaise that has affected the ability of ABCUSA to carry out its mission. Both representatives urged churches to accept the responsibility of enabling American Baptists to continue in ministry nationally and internationally. United Mission covers overhead expenses to support both national and international ministries, as well as regional ministries.

New Business

Report from the Recruitment Committee

It was noted by Paul Becker, chair of the Recruitment Committee, that on the report distributed, the Board of Mission list should include Vivian Searle, President of the Baptist Home Board, and Peggy Johnson, Past President of ABCUSA, as members by virtue of their positions.

Presented for election:

President: Rev. Dr. Daniel Cottrell
Vice President: James Essex
Treasurer: Don Wolfe
Secretary: Rev. Dr. Liliana Da Valle

Board of Mission:

Class ending 2008: Rev. George Barclay *
Class ending 2010: Rev. Ethel Corbin(2), Peggy Johnson(1), Rev. Janet MacGray(2)

Department of Stewardship and Administration:

Class ending 2008: Whitney Bancroft*, Kimberly Vernava*
Class ending 2010: Perry Alexander(2), Robert Sherman(1), Bruce Wilcox(1)

Department of Church Life:

Class ending 2010: Rev. Dr. Evan Howard(2), Rebecca Law(1), Greg Rubano(1)

* Indicates filling unexpired terms.

Slate elected.

New Churches

President Bancroft reported that two new churches are seeking membership in ABCORI, and it is expected they will be presented for vote into membership by delegates in May. They are Iglesia La Esperanza in Providence and River of Life Church in Providence. Other developing churches are Primera Iglesia Bautista Latinoamericana in Woonsocket and a Brazilian congregation in East Providence.

By-Laws

Recommendations for minor changes in the By-Laws will be presented for vote at the May meeting.

Announcements

March 18 - South Providence Neighbor Ministries Annual Concert at Phillips Memorial Baptist Church, Cranston, at 4pm; bring canned goods for their food pantry.

Installation of Lilianna Da Valle - May 6 at 4 pm at Calvary Baptist, Providence.

National Ministries is partnering with Habitat for Humanity for a "Blitz Build" to construct twelve houses in two weeks in Baton Rouge, LA, and volunteers are needed.

Written reports for 2006 are due in the ABCORI office by March 26 to be published for the May ABCORI meeting. Send them to Colleen Tolhurst, Administrative Assistant.

Everyone was urged to update personal contact information as soon as possible so that the yearbook information is current.

The Annual Gathering begins Friday night, May 18 with a coffee house at Meshanticut Park Baptist Church, Cranston. The Annual Gathering will be Saturday, May 19 with additional activities including Session B of the business meeting. On Sunday, May 20, the Youth Gathering will be at Meshanticut Park Church.

The meeting adjourned until Saturday, May 19, 2007 at Meshanticut Park Church. Benediction pronounced by the Rev. Dr. Liliana Da Valle.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Chaffee