

American Baptist Churches of Ohio
Board of Regional Ministries Meeting
Saturday, November 5, 2016 10:00 a.m.–2:15 p.m.

Present: Roger Alber, Ken Atchison, Rick Dostal, Paula DeMott, Paula Duncan, Anita King, Rita McClure, Barb Rockwell, Joe Sanders, Sharron Sedziol, Josh Ward, James Willis

Staff: Mark Click, Jane Gibbons

Guest: Fritz Minges

Absent: John Boxill, Dan Camick, Rockney Carter, Marvin Haught, Hai Vung Lian, Denny McDonald, Bev Keyse.

Staff: Ernest Jones

Call to Order and Welcome by Mrs. Sharron Sedziol, President, with the pounding of the gavel.

Devotions and Prayer: Pastor Rita McClure shared from Hebrews 12:1-3. Throwing off what hinders to run the race. We do this by fixing our eyes on Jesus. He is the one who empowers in all situations. When we lay it aside at Jesus' feet, we can run the race.

Worship Songs were lead by Mrs. Paula Duncan.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Board of Regional Ministries Minutes, September 17, 2016

Annual Gathering Minutes, October 4, 2016

Auditor's Review Letter

Office of the Future Task Force Update

State Advisory Committee on Ordination Update

Association Task Force Update

Motion made to approve: James Willis, second Rita McClure. Approved.

FINANCIAL REPORTS, Mr. Rick Dostal

3rd Quarter Financial "Snapshot"

Thank you to staff for keeping expenses down. Unexpected income which has provided a better balance sheet. Some of our assets are in the buildings (Granville and Xenia). A trend started in 2010 is moving upward. Time is needed to develop a revenue stream. Anticipation for growth with the need for capacity to manage. Surpluses are on paper and not all in cash. There is a deficit at the bottom line. The transitional process is ongoing. We need to pray continually as we take a step of faith. The diversity in the investments has helped with the budget. We are confident that God will provide what we need to get to where God wants us.

2017 Budget Presentation

Dr. Jones has been hands on with the budget process for 2017 as Region Chief Financial Officer. Matt Thomas from Design Group International has reassured Rick that there is income for the first quarter. About 5.5% is being drawn off of investment funds total return. There are very few items which can be changed. The Leadership Academy line item includes the Palmer grant which is spent. Additional staffing for accounting position is included in the budget along with Design Group International's Accounting contract. The staff is not aware of any plans to walk away from the mandate of the Board to develop the Associate Regional Ministers (ARMs). It was the feeling that this ministry (ARMs) needs to be moving forward in 2017. Some work on the ARMs has already begun. A provisional budget will be ready for the Board Retreat. A Budget Summit will be held as soon as possible in January with Dr Jones and the Finance Committee.

Questions for the Budget to be discussed with Dr Jones once he has recovered from surgery and returned to work:

- 1) What makes up the \$291,000 revenue source?

- 2) What makes up the difference on the anticipated increased return on investment from 2015, 2016, and 2017?
- 3) How do we turn the paper assets into cash?
- 4) Do we want to continue the draw down on investments or work to increase the investments?
- 5) How are the funds for youth and adult ministries to be spent?
- 6) Will the expenses for development of the Associate Regional Ministers (ARMS) be included in the budget?

Motion to approve a provisional budget for 2017 with a budget summit taking place as soon as possible in January to prepare a full year budget to be presented at the retreat. Roger Alber moved, Rita McClure second. Approved.

Reminders: Rise Up and Build AND Buckeye Mission & Ministry Offering help provide cash for the budget.

ALESCO INVESTMENTS ANNUAL REPORT, Mr. Fritz Minges, Executive V.P., Alesco Advisors
Please refer to the Investment Review as of 09/30/2016 report provided by Alesco Advisors from which the following summary is drawn:

The stock market dropped 10% in the first six weeks of 2016 which required patience for it to rebound. Several other factors contributed to some volatility. Their investments are based on long-term characteristics. Three factors in building assets: Time Horizon, Income Need, and Risk Investment. Stocks provide long term growth. An inflation hedge and real estate commodities are built in. As these items change Alesco will rebalance 1-2% of investment based upon the three factors. A 4-5% withdrawal is feasible for increased growth. There is a broad mix for diversification in the investments. International investments have been increased within the parameters of the portfolio. Commodities provide for diversification. Bonds are also diversified in our fixed income. The plan is conservative to take account for rate of inflation. Portfolio performance showed increases. Our withdrawals are at 5.6%. Growth continued to take place. A 10-15 year performance growth is underlining the building of the portfolio. Socially responsible investing is part of the plan. Household net worth appears to be moving upward along with consumer confidence. There is anticipation of the economy to continue to grow. First year of new US President the market improves in most years.

Region Board Meeting Suspended until after the Baptist Foundation INC meeting.

LUNCH

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BAPTIST FOUNDATION, INC.

Sharron called the meeting to order. Reg Martin was not available and Rick read his BFI Annual Report. The office is still on the market but offers have not been acceptable. The Kent Fund is being managed. Faith Baptist is behind about \$30,000. Further follow up is needed. The other churches have made their payments. Church of the Carpenter funds are being held. These funds came from the sale of the property. The funds can only be directed according to the closing document. Resurrection Crossing received \$40,000 from the checking account of the Church of the Carpenter through the Clinton Association. Rick will contact David Ball the attorney for the Region to verify these funds. Resurrection Crossing is in the former First Baptist Church of Xenia, owned by BFI and is paying \$1500 rent monthly. The lease is for one year ending August 31, 2017. Rick and Mark are continuing conversation about the future of the church. Moved to accept the report Rita McClure, Ken Atchison second, Approved

Motion to adjourn BFI meeting Rita, Roger second. Approved

Region Board Meeting Resumed

Staff Reports:

Rev. Jane Gibbons reported that the Leadership Academy is fully staffed and each intensive begins with worship lead by Jeni Gerber. Dr Kevin Hairston is the new Academic Dean and is seeking development to meet needs in the Region. Plans are in place for Mentor Pastor training to begin in May to prepare Academy candidates. This is funded by the Palmer Grant. Dr Phil Bergey an International Coach Federation Certified Coach will be the trainer.

Ordination Committee is now chaired by Tony Kendrick. Meetings are scheduled for January, June, September 2017. The Committee in their September 2016 meeting approved two candidates for local church ordination councils.

Pastoral transitions FBC Painesville has called Rev Anthony Edwards. Sharon Van Winkle Hunter is the interim at West Mansfield. Churches in the search process: Chesterland, FBC Ashtabula, FBC Lorain, FBC Mount Gilead,

Jane and Mark are coordinating the 2017 Face to Face in March 2017.

The Grant Committee met to award grants: FBC Conneaut, For the Little Ones, funds to provide diapers and baby care items to community families; Owl Creek Baptist of Mount Vernon, Children's Playground to reach out to children in their community; Mahoning Valley Baptist Association, Refresh, a ministry to provide mattresses for residents in Rockford Village; Zion Baptist of Dayton, Mae Lou's Project to reach out and provide a Christian support system to marginalized women in their community.

Rev. Mark Click reported the southern Ohio area of the American Baptist Churches of Ohio is comprised of ten associations and 120 congregations.

Currently twelve congregations (10%) are in pastoral transition.

Regular clergy fellowships are being held in 6 out of 10 associations. They are:

Western Association – Dr. Paul Mitchell, ARM
Dayton Association – Dr. Marva Hughes, ARM
Miami Association – Rev. Charles Russell, ARM
Clinton Association – Rev. Larry Stewart, ARM
Zanesville Association – Rev. Scott Johnston, ARM
Marietta Association – Rev. Scott Johnston, ARM

No regular clergy fellowship meetings are occurring in the following associations:

Lawrence Association Zoar Association
Rio Grande Association Cambridge Association

Active coaching relationships with turnaround pastors.

Eric Swenson – First Hillsboro
Chris Stokes – First Greenfield

Mark continues to serve on the following ABC/OHIO related ministry boards:

Kirkwood Ministries, Inc
Dayton Christian Center
American Baptist Campus Ministry @ UC

2017 ABC/OHIO American Baptist Youth Events – Youth Workers Summit was held on August 20 with twenty-two in attendance. No substitute for a Dare2Share Conference type event appears to be an option. However, other ideas were shared. The option of providing smaller conference and mission options for our ABY (Lima, Newark conferences and West Virginia Mission Outreach) is being considered.

ABC/OHIO held a Town Hall Meeting with Dr. Jones and Lon Swartzentruber on October 27 at the Montgomery Community Church of Cincinnati. Twenty-five were present, eleven pastors included.

Urban Leadership Academy of Omega Baptist Church, Dayton, celebrated their 2nd graduating class (6 years) on October 22, 2016. Dr. Jones delivered the graduation message. ULA is an ABC/OHIO recognized academy.

Rev. Don Dewey announced his retirement effective January 1, 2017 from the St. Clair Avenue Baptist Church of Hamilton.

Resurrection Crossing of Xenia launched their new congregation with 12 people on September 1, 2016 as a mission of the Clinton Association. The average attendance goal for the first year is 30. They currently have an average attendance after two months of 18.

First Baptist Church of Sidney (Western Association) is in the process of resolving their internal conflicts over continued American Baptist affiliation. Mark was invited by the pastor to meet with the church and answer concerns on October 9 for a two hour special business meeting. Several expressed their desire to maintain affiliation and others to separate. Following the business meeting the associate pastor and members who wanted to separate from ABC began to resign their leadership positions and make plans to leave the church. It would appear that over 50% have decided to stay and maintain ABC affiliation. Rev. Gnade plans to retire in May 2017 after twenty years as the pastor.

Myrtle Tree Baptist Church of St. Paris (Western Association) has notified Mark that they plan to sever their relationship with American Baptist Churches USA over the homosexual/same-sex issue, but maintain their membership in the American Baptist Churches of Ohio and the Western Baptist Association. An accommodation exists for this in the ABC/OHIO constitution.

Faith Alive Ministries (formerly known as Judson Baptist Church) of Moraine (Dayton Association): the pastor is being asked to leave and the congregation may be planning to disaffiliate with the American Baptist Churches. However, there is a reversionary clause in the deed giving ownership of the property to ABC/OHIO, should the congregation disaffiliate. Mark has spoken with the now "former" pastor Rev. Courlas, Jr. and a representative of the congregation. Current attendance is about 20-25 people. The listed tax value of the property (church building, parsonage, and 4 ½ acres) is over \$600,000. A copy of the deed has been given to Dr. Jones. At some point David Ball will review the deed.

Executive Minister's Report by Ernest H. Jones, November 5, 2016 (written report copied)

Since the September 17th meeting of the Board of Regional Ministries, we have engaged many of the plans outlined earlier in the year as programmatic and strategic emphases. What follows is a brief update on our activities in the last two months.

Annual Gathering. We are proud to report that the 190th Annual Gathering of American Baptist Churches of Ohio went smoothly. Much of the credit for the well-run nature of the event is due to staff and Region-related personnel, worship leaders and volunteers, Leslie Hoskinson and David Nuhfer, in particular.

Some one hundred and sixty (160) persons attended the Gathering's day and a half schedule, where the business of the Region was seamlessly conducted, and guest speakers and Bible study leaders provided exceptional inspiration and educational opportunities. Evaluations of the event have not been fully tabulated, but many anecdotal reports and responses indicate that participants consider the 2016 Annual Gathering as among the most memorable events in recent years. On the financial side, the Gathering appears to have come in close to budget.

First Baptist Church of Sidney, Ohio. At our last meeting, we presented a letter received from the official board of the First Baptist Church of Sidney, Ohio requesting that the Region allow the congregation to disaffiliate from the ABC/Ohio. The situation that precipitated this request is an internal schism that developed in the church ostensibly around the issue of human sexuality and ABCUSA's stance on same-sex relationships (marriage). It is more accurate to say that an outside influence gained positions of leadership and power within the congregation that sought to break all ties with ABCUSA and ABC/Ohio while keeping all related properties and assets. Unlike most situations of this kind, First Baptist Sidney's constitution, quick claim deed, and Articles of Incorporated includes a reversionary clause solidly linking the church to the Region. The Regional Board declined the church's request. Instead, the Board proffered an offer to begin a process of reconciliation between the church and Regional officers, with caveats.

President Sharron Sedziol and I met with FBC Sidney representatives Monday, September 19th. We made the offer, and FBC Sidney's representatives later informed the congregation. Several weeks of meetings ensued which resulted in the majority deciding to pursue reconciliation and maintain their affiliation with ABCUSA and ABC/Ohio. Dissenters have agreed to leave the congregation by the end of October 2016. Rev. Mark Click is working with FBC Sidney and its pastor to stabilize the church.

Medical Mutual. A central and critical aspect of finalizing the proposed budget for the November board meeting is obtaining health care premiums in a timely fashion from our insurance provider. It is my

understanding that this has not been the case in recent years. Fortunately, by way of our Core Administrator's persistence, we received 2017 premiums in time to accurately forecast our costs for the coming year.

Premiums will be 15.48% higher than last year. Year over year increases of this kind wreaks havoc on budgets small and large, private citizens and corporations. However, we have determined to coordinate with staff and our insurance provider to offer the best possible configuration to insure current levels of coverage.

Wilson, Shannon and Snow – Audit Report. Matt Thomas and I attended the audit review on Tuesday, October 25, 2016, at the offices of Wilson, Shannon and Snow. Per our auditors, American Baptist Churches of Ohio's books are in order according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in the U.S. There were no adjustments identified or required by W.S.S.

Miami Baptist Association Town Hall – October 27, 2016. My third and last town hall event for 2016 transpired on Thursday, October 27, 2016. Mr. Rick Dostal arranged for our gathering at the Montgomery Community Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, where he worships. Our office sent some thirty to forty invitations to Miami Baptist Association pastors, officers, and members. We had 25 people in attendance from the Association and several ARMS from the vicinity.

Mr. Lon Swartzentruber and I coordinated the evening with Rev. Mark Click. For the first forty-five minutes, I recounted the findings of the 100 Day Due Diligence Report submitted to the Board of Regional Ministries in May 2016. Afterward, participants engaged in a Q&A session with me then strategic mapping facilitated by Lon Swartzentruber. The evening ended around 8:40 p.m. after 90 minutes of intense interaction. Initial feedback from the town hall has been positive and there are several pages of information to review, code, and process as we move to the next phase of the strategic mapping process.

Our thanks to Pastor Phil Posthuma and the people of MCC for their gracious hospitality.

Sharron Sedziol reported that Rev. Jeremy Spence, pastor of FBC, St. Paris, told her at the Annual Gathering that he and several other Western Association pastors were pleased with the board's decision regarding FBC Sidney.

Family Announcements:

Mark Click's and Denise Jones' birthdays are November 10.

Bev Keyse still recovering from her stroke. This would have been the last meeting of her term as secretary. She appreciates calls but cannot talk for very long.

Leslie will be finishing her vacation a few days at time during November and December.

Update on Dr Jones

Still at the James Cancer Center recovering from surgery. He is up and walking but still on pain medication. He is not yet bored because Denise is at his side.

Sharron passed the basket for help with Dr. Jones' and Denise's expenses during his medical leave.

Motion to adjourn by Roger Alber, second Rita McClure. Approved.

Benediction & Blessing, Rev. James Willis, Sr.

2017 Theme is "Transformed by the Journey"

Theme Scripture is Luke 24:32: "Didn't our hearts burn within us as he talked with us on the road..."

Please save these dates for 2017:

The Board Retreat will be February 17, 18 at the Drury Inn in Dublin.

The Leadership Conference will be April 28, 29 at FBC Newark with Dr Slaikeu speaking on
Biblical Solutions to Conflict Resolutions.

Submitted by Rev. Joe Sanders, Secretary Pro Tempore

