



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 8, 2010

East Lansing—The ABC-MI Executive Committee held a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, January 21. Highlights of the meeting include:

- *Bylaw Discussion:* President Erica Van Brakle led a discussion regarding possible Bylaw changes to recommend to the 2010 Annual Meeting delegates in October. Possible Bylaw revisions are needed as it relates to the Annual Meeting and to Areas. Any proposed changes need to go before the Region Board at their April meeting in order to have proposed changes circulating at least ninety days prior to the Annual Meeting as required in the current Bylaws;
- *Future Search:* President Erica Van Brakle presented an updated report of activities related to the eight key principles identified in the Future Search process. Specifically she highlighted the development of the Outreach/Community Partnership Resources now available on our website. She expressed appreciation to Linnea Berg for her work in compiling this resource over a period of months;
- *2010 Annual Meeting Update:* The First Baptist Church of Charlotte has graciously agreed to host the 2010 ABC-MI Annual Meeting October 22-23. Vice-President Mary Ivey reported the planning committee has met and is working to secure the speaker;
- *2010 Region Offering:* Vice-President Mary Ivey reported on efforts to update the bulletin inserts and poster for this year's offering. Dr. Williams shared the good news regarding the \$15,000 challenge grant offered by the First Baptist Church of Royal Oak Mission Fund. They will match dollar for dollar new dollars coming to the Region Offering. Any new churches to give to the Region Offering in 2010 or 2009 Region Offering contributors who increase their gifts over their 2009 giving will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$15,000. It was noted this offering needs to annually raise \$100,000 to help offset declines in United Mission giving (see February 8 news release entitled *ABC-MI Churches 2009 Mission Giving Reflects Challenging Economic Times*);

- *2009 Mission Giving & Financial Reports:* Mr. Ed Ritzler, Region treasurer presented the year-end financial report. He noted the actual revenue (unaudited) for 2009 was \$604,845 against a budget of \$716,044. The actual expenses (unaudited) were \$659,541 compared to budgeted expenses of \$718,990. He reminded the Executive Committee of their September action, in which, in anticipation of the year-end shortfall, they authorized a \$50,000 grant from the Michigan Baptist Convention reserve fund. It was also reported that one support staff position was eliminated following the 2009 Annual Meeting recognizing the 2010 budget approved by delegates required moving from four to three support staff positions. The individual involved was provided a severance package;
- *Camp Task Force Report:* Immediate Past President, Rev. Heidi DeMott Shanes, as chair of the camp task force, reported on the November 11, 2009 and January 19, 2010 meetings of the camp task force. She noted both camps ended 2009 with revenues exceeding expenses. Both camps have developed a preliminary business plan and have worked to identify time lines and milestones (see February 8 news release entitled *Camping Task Force Update—February, 2010*);
- *AB Foundation & Staffing Opportunity:* ABC-MI Executive Minister, Dr. Michael Williams, presented a proposed “Consultant for Stewardship, Discipleship, and Congregational Health” job description with the gracious offer of the First Baptist Church of Royal Oak Mission Fund and Genesis the Church to fund Dr. Dave Nichols to serve in this capacity. This position would be combined with the AB Foundation position currently open following Joseph Huse’ departure last Fall. This portion of the position would be funded by the AB Foundation (see February 8 news release entitled *Dr. Dave Nichols Joins ABC-MI Staff*). The funding of the position would not require funding from the 2010 ABC-MI budget and represents new dollars, not re-directed dollars. The Executive Committee unanimously approved this position and expressed appreciation to the First Baptist Church of Royal Oak Mission Fund, Genesis the Church, and the AB Foundation for working to make it possible for Dr. Nichols to assume this critical role;
- *First Baptist Church of Imlay City:* Dr. Williams shared the sad news of the closing of the First Baptist Church of Imlay City effective December 13, 2009. The church authorized a dissolution committee to work with the ABC-MI to affect an orderly process for winding up operations. It is expected the dissolution committee will complete their work by February 1. The congregation voted to gift the property to the ABC-MI. The Executive Committee authorized the staff to move forward in exploring options for the use of the property including a possible sale;
- *Fanning the Flame:* Dr. Williams reported on plans for *Fanning the Flame: A National Pastors Renewal Conference* May 24-27, 2010 sponsored by several

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regions of the ABCUSA including ABC-MI. It will take place at the Green Lake Conference Center in Green Lake, WI. A mailing to pastors went out in early January with information regarding the event, registration materials, etc.

- *ReTool*: Congregational Ministries & Missions Team Chair, Rev. Tom Roberts, submitted a proposal regarding a two-year, guided process of church mobilization intended to bring about renewal and growth in local churches. He reported that CMMT has decided to move forward with the training of coaches needed to lead ReTool in our churches. He also reported plans in 2010 to assist in funding several people to attend the New Church Planter Assessment process at the Green Lake Conference Center. The CMMT continues to look at new church planting options. The Executive Committee enthusiastically affirmed both initiatives.

The next meeting of the ABC-MI Executive Committee is scheduled for June 10, 2010.

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