

## Co-Director Search Update

March 1, 2020

By the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors

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*“For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven...”*

Ecclesiastes 3:1, NRSV

In April we will gather as the Alliance of Baptists to reflect on the forward-facing question, “How Then Shall We Live?” One aspect of the answer to that question pertains to the identification of new leadership for the Alliance. Last October, Paula Clayton Dempsey, Director of Partnership Relations, shared with us that her season as Co-Director of the Alliance is coming to a close, and she will retire later this year.

As the Executive Committee began to prepare ourselves for the upcoming loss of Paula’s faithful leadership in this role for the last eleven years, we also initiated meetings with the Personnel Committee to plan for the search process. Several decisions emerged from these discussions: we will retain the co-leader model; the title of the position will become “Co-Director of the Alliance of Baptists;” and we will enlist the services of a search and transition consultant to assist with the search process. In consultation with the Alliance staff, we identified the qualities, qualifications, and experience we are seeking in the next Co-Director and drafted the job description.

We also named a Search Committee to perform this vital task for us. It includes April Baker and Ezra Fairley-Collins (Co-Chairs), Christina García-Alfonso, Christine Wiley, Ben Boswell, Erica Saunders, and GJ Tarrazi. This group is preparing themselves for the search at this time. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was drafted and disseminated in order to identify a consultant with the necessary skills and relationships. Several proposals have been received, and we are currently determining who we will hire to assist with the search. We hope the committee can begin working with the consultant in March.

Our goal is to hire our new Co-Director in time for this person to be present for the Fall Board of Directors meeting, which is typically held in late September. Like anyone who has been involved in a search process, we are keenly aware that desired timetables don’t always unfold as planned. Therefore, our proposed schedule is a target. This timing will fit with Paula’s preferred retirement date and allow us to welcome a new Co-Director at our Fall Virtual Gathering, hopefully in October or early November.

As we move forward in our search for a new leader, we will also gather to celebrate and give thanks for Paula's strong leadership and tireless dedication to the Alliance through the years. We will invite former board members to a June virtual Board meeting to express our gratitude. Then in August, we will host a virtual all-Alliance send-off for Paula where we can share our deep thanks for her ministry among us.

Please hold the members of the Search Committee and the consultant in your prayers in these days. The Committee chairs will provide updates as the search process moves forward. We also ask that you keep Paula in your thoughts and prayers as she makes this significant transition in her life.

Following the verse quoted at the beginning of this article, the writer of Ecclesiastes goes on to say: "God has put a sense of past and future into their minds..." It is our hope and prayer that we can draw on wisdom from our past and an unfolding creative vision for our future as we select our new Co-Director in the coming days.