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Rev. Sharon Koh, IM Executive Director / CEO, Giving Opening Keynote Address at Biennial Mission Summit



CATHERINE NOLD

American Baptist International Ministries (IM) is pleased to announce that its new executive director / CEO, the Rev. Sharon T. Koh, will bring the message at the opening worship service at the American Baptist Churches (ABCUSA) Biennial Mission Summit on Friday evening, June 30, 2017. The event runs from June 30 through July 2 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon. All American Baptist church leadership, members and friends are invited to attend.

Koh joined IM as executive director elect in July 2016. In September 2016, she became executive director / CEO. The Mission Summit will mark her first anniversary in a leadership

position with IM and her first formal address to the entire ABCUSA denomination. The theme is "Connected to Christ!" Koh will invite all to connect to Christ, remain in Christ and live like Christ's missionaries.

Koh is a Los Angeles native and an ABCUSA pastor. She graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, with an M.Div. and an M.A.T. and served as a mission pastor for over a decade. Her passion is facilitating God's mission around the world, and she cares deeply about IM's global servants and their families. Her hobbies include global travel, photography and enjoying the people and food of other cultures.

"From the opening worship Friday evening through the dramatic conclusion on Sunday evening, this will be a very special Biennial Mission Summit," said Dr. Susan Gillies, interim general secretary of ABCUSA. "It is fitting at this time of new leadership in the ABC that we hear from ABCUSA leaders who have been called forth. I encourage every American Baptist to pray for this gathering and to attend."

Also present at the event will be 14 currently serving and up to a dozen recently appointed IM global servants. "Having so many global workers at one event will provide a multitude of opportunities for participants to speak one-on-one and pray and worship with IM's global servants," commented the Rev. Jim Bell, IM's director of Vocational Development.

"In fact, IM is arranging a warm and welcoming living-room ambiance in our exhibit area to encourage people to sit, relax and strike up conversations with our global personnel," added Karen Mason, director of Special Events. "We hope to have a lot of visitors stop by to pray with us and learn more about what the Lord is doing globally through IM."

The annual IM luncheon will be held on Saturday. The program, which will be presented as parody of a network TV news program, will highlight the ministries of IM's global servants and partners. Guests will enjoy learning and much laughter as IM sheds light on how it is responding to human needs globally while spreading the good news of the gospel. With gratitude to the generosity of the Christian Community Credit Union, IM will be able to provide reduced-priced tickets to this event to pastors who are part of the Orientation to ABC Life program.

IM will offer two workshops on Sunday afternoon, July 2. In the first, IM global consultants Dan and Sharon Buttry will be speaking about "Being the Hands and Feet of Christ to our Muslim Neighbors." This should be a lively discussion in which questions and differing viewpoints are welcomed! The Buttrys' work focuses on global peace and justice.

In a second workshop, given at the same time, IM missionaries Glen and Rita Chapman will provide an in-depth look at "Innovative Models of Leadership in the Democratic Republic of the Congo." IM has been doing mission work in the DR Congo since 1884 and dozens of IM missionaries have served there since then. The Chapmans' ministry focuses on discipleship and theological education.

Sunday evening will be a grand celebration of the connections within the ABCUSA family, recognizing American Baptists who have served in various capacities for years and honoring pastors who serve at local churches. The evening will culminate with a Communion service led by the new general secretary and the other members of the National Executive Council as well as the president and vice president of the Board of General Ministries of ABCUSA.

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[International Ministries](#), founded in 1814 as the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, works cross-culturally to invite people to become disciples of Jesus Christ and to proclaim, through both word and deed, God's reign of justice, peace and abundant life for all creation.

For more information about the Biennial Mission Summit and to register, visit www.americanbaptists2017.com.