**American Baptist Home Mission Societies Calls New Executive Director**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 6/25/15)**—At its semiannual meeting yesterday, the Board of Directors of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) voted unanimously to call the Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, interim senior pastor of Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Roswell, Ga., to the position of executive director. He will lead the historic mission agency following the retirement of Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III in October.

Board president the Rev. Dr. Clifford Johnson, who chaired the search committee, says, “I strongly believe that Jeff’s visibility in the faith community, his work as executive director of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention (DCBC), and development experience, along with his knowledge of the American Baptist family, will position ABHMS for a bright future.”

An ordained American Baptist minister, Haggray has deep roots in the life of American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) and the greater Baptist family. He served DCBC as executive director/minister from 2001 to 2009 and currently serves as a member of the American Baptist Extension Corporation’s Board of Directors. He is a member of ABCUSA’s Adaptive Challenge Team and chairman of the Baptist World Alliance’s Commission on Social and Environmental Justice. Haggray also serves as co-chairman of the National Planning Team of New Baptist Covenant, a movement focused on uniting Baptists in service and Christian love to promote justice and overcome racial, theological and geographic boundaries.

“As executive minister of DCBC, Jeff showed great leadership skills in reaching across the full racial/ethnic and theological spectrum,” says the Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley, ABCUSA general secretary. “He has a passion for the life of the church as it faces the challenges of ministry in North America and the capacity to lead ABHMS in its response.”

Haggray holds a doctor of ministry degree from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., a master of divinity degree from Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Conn., and a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. Alderson-Broaddus College, Philippi, W.V., awarded Haggray an honorary doctor of divinity degree in 2005. In 2006, he received the James F. Jenkins Pillar of Faith Award for outstanding contributions in the greater Washington, D.C. spiritual community.

Of his call to ABHMS, the Rev. Dr. Amy K. Butler, senior minister of New York City’s The Riverside Church and search committee member, says, “Dr. Haggray brings a unique combination of theological depth and authentic prophetic voice, as well as a history of fearless leadership and vast understanding of the important role and opportunity for ABHMS and American Baptists in this moment in history. I believe Jeff will bring a fresh, entrepreneurial spirit to the task at hand and help us embrace the future with full appreciation of our incredible history.”

Haggray is a member of Atlanta’s historic Ebenezer Baptist Church. His wife, Shelby Martin Haggray, is an ordained American Baptist minister. The couple has three children.

*American Baptist Home Mission Societies—the domestic mission arm of American Baptist Churches—ministers as the caring heart and serving hands of Jesus Christ across the United States and Puerto Rico through a multitude of initiatives that focus on discipleship, community and justice.*

*American Baptist Churches is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with more than 5,200 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God’s mission around the world.*