CELEBRATING OUR STORY
SEARCHING THE HORIZON

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN for God
WATCH for His works
BE ALERT for signs of His presence
REMEMBER the world of wonders He has made
His miracles, and the verdicts He’s rendered

2020
PRESIDENT’S ANNUAL REPORT
By now, you may be tired of hearing me say it, but I am compelled to repeat it this one last time before I pass the ABHE leadership baton:

The original impetus for ABHE member institutions and our Association—as well as its present vitality and future relevance—is bound up in our identity as products of and catalysts for spiritual movements.

It is impossible to explain our past fruitfulness or justify our future relevance apart from that reality. Whether the Lord has yet another Great Awakening in store for our Continent, our movement is only worth sustaining to the extent we draw upon and continue to participate in the awakening and mobilizing work of His Spirit.

There is much for ABHE to celebrate as we consider the past year. Although not a few of our member colleges struggle mightily in terms of enrollment and financial strength, many are bucking contemporary trends and reporting robust growth in students and finances. More importantly, everywhere I travel throughout our far-flung continental membership landscape, I observe clear evidence of biblical faithfulness, spiritual vitality, and missional mobilization.

Meanwhile, our Association itself continues to enjoy what I can only describe as a season of God’s unusual favor in virtually every aspect of our collective endeavors.

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MEMBERSHIP GROWTH: ADDITION AND MULTIPLICATION!

At our 2018 annual meeting, we enacted Constitutional changes that positioned us for growth. At the time, we anticipated growth might occur primarily through addition to our Association’s membership roster. Some growth by addition has occurred and more may yet occur but, in God’s infinitely wise plan and providence, the vast majority of growth has come this past year and will likely come in the future through multiplication as we have actively collaborated in the formation of an alliance that encompasses Christian educators of all kinds and at all levels globally. As a new year and
decade unfolds, a new flag for fully and faithfully Christian education has been unfurled: the International Alliance for Christian Education [IACE, www.iace.education].

Thanks largely to the Lord’s favor and providence and the tireless efforts and personal statesmanship of IACE President, Dr. David S. Dockery, this new global alliance’s charter members include 7 partner organizations and nearly 60 individual postsecondary institutions, together encompassing 6 continents, 21,000 institutions, and 5.6 million students. ABHE is among IACE’s founding partner networks and four ABHE representatives (Tracy Davis, Ralph Enlow, Ken Kemper, Peter Teague) have been chosen to serve on IACE’s inaugural 18-member board. We are honored that IACE has chosen to convene its initial membership gathering concurrently with ABHE’s February 12-14, 2020 Annual Meeting.

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GLOBAL LEADERSHIP. At the postsecondary level, the eight regional theological education accrediting agencies comprising the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE; www.icete.info) are crucial to substantiating IACE’s desire and claim to be a truly global community. As ABHE president, I have had the joy and privilege of partaking in ICETE board governance alongside executive leaders from each of the other networks. I continued throughout 2019 as ICETE’s acting Board Chair, working with select global colleagues to identify ICETE’s new International Director, Dr. Michael A. Ortiz. Of Cuban-American descent, Michael’s ministry record includes leadership involvement in a local church plant soon after his early adult conversion; engagement in international Bible college and seminary teaching in Spain, Latin America, and Cuba; fruitful efforts to unify and upgrade the quality of theological schools in Cuba and to broker ties between Cuban theological schools and the Caribbean Evangelical Training Association (CETA); and completing Ph.D. studies in Theological Education in the Latin American/AETAL regional context at Seminario Teológico Centroamericano [SETECA]. Having served since 2016 as Director of DTS en Español where he led a team to begin Spanish online master’s degree programs for Dallas Theological Seminary, Michael presently serves as Chair of the DTS World Missions and Intercultural Studies Department. By the way, it is worth noting that DTS’ next President (effective July 2020) will be Dr. Mark Yarborough, an alumnus and former faculty member of ABHE-member Dallas Christian College (TX).

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COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION (COA)

ABHE’s Commission on Accreditation (COA) continues, as it has since our 1947 founding, to occupy a central role in our work and the COA continued once again this year to be the primary driver of ABHE’s new member growth.

ACCREDITATION TRAINING. Our inaugural May 2019 Achieving Accreditation Standards training event—targeted for accreditation liaisons and institutional
teams representing institutions beginning the accreditation process as well as those preparing for accreditation reaffirmation—was an early sell-out. We plan to repeat the conference May 18-19, 2020, followed by a September 28-29, 2020 Accreditation Journey training event for potential or novice COA Applicant institutions.

RECOGNITION AND SCOPE EXPANSION. This past year has to be our busiest and most ambitious ever in terms of recognition renewal and scope expansion efforts. COA Director, Ron Kroll, and his team “aced” (i.e., no deficiencies cited, no revisions requested) a required Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) interim report on 10 of CHEA’s new recognition standards. Our success was such that, instead of submitting a second interim CHEA report on the balance of the new recognition standards, the Commission elected to accelerate our recognition renewal (now on a seven-year renewal cycle) by submitting a complete recognition renewal petition one year ahead of schedule! Meanwhile, Dr. Kroll and his team followed through on plans to move forward in submitting a long-deferred and long-anticipated US Department of Education (USDE) Expansion of Scope petition in 2019. Before 2019 ended, the COA staff submitted an extensive response to the USDE staff’s technical review of our petition. We anticipate hosting staff representatives from CHEA and USDE at the February 2020 Commission on Accreditation meetings. The USDE Scope Expansion petition will be reviewed sometime in 2020 by the National Advisory Council for Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI). As a reminder, USDE scope expansion pertains only to participation by ABHE member colleges’ graduate students in USDE Title IV federally-subsidized student loan programs.

COA STAFFING. Diligent and dedicated COA staff member, Jane King, resigned in 2019 due to family relocation. She was succeeded last July by Sarah Starks, who joined our COA team on a full-time basis as Accreditation Services Coordinator. Sarah, a graduate of Southern Wesleyan University (B.A., Music Education) and Stephen F. Austin State University (M.M., Music) and a veteran school music educator in Manitoba’s far northern First Nations region, has assumed her new responsibilities with a flourish, mastering the many intricacies of accreditation and rapidly endearing herself to fellow ABHE staff and member institutions through her can-do, servant spirit. ABHE- COA Research Associate, Dr. Michael Jackson, continued this past year in his pioneering efforts to develop and maintain accurate, up-to-date Institutional Fact Sheets—including outcomes data URLs for each institution. This capability is crucial to meeting new CHEA recognition standards in connection with the renewal petition we submitted one year ahead of schedule. With regret and profound gratitude, we acknowledge the departure from the Commission on Accreditation of COA Chair, Dr. Stephen Roy (President, Emmanuel Bible College, ON), whose tenure limits expire in February 2020.

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**3 PILLARS STRATEGIC FUNDING CAMPAIGN**

Last year, the ABHE Board authorized focused pursuit of substantial funding for three initiatives we deem of strategic importance to ABHE and its member colleges: (a) Board Governance Certification, including design and implementation of a comprehensive training program for institutional governing boards, yielding for each participating institution a professional governance mentor-facilitated strategic board development effort;
(b) Identifying associational and institutional **Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)** and securing means and methods for systematic data collection and analysis that increases ABHE’s **strategic intelligence** capacity; and (c) **Executive Leadership Certification** including curriculum design and training opportunities for institutional chief suite leaders, especially toward their increasingly effective use of KPI's for institutional thriving.

**BOARD GOVERNANCE.** Providential promptings from ABHE Senior Fellow Dr. Jim Barnes and connections facilitated by ABHE Senior Fellow Dr. Scott Rodin propelled our efforts to develop and secure funding for the most extensive and robust board governance training initiative we have ever undertaken. In May 2019, we received word from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust that they had approved our $390,000 major grant proposal that would exponentially increase our capacity to offer board governance training and certification. This grant—distributed subject to performance contingencies over a three-year period—represents the largest financial gift commitment in ABHE’s nearly 75-year history! In July 2019, six program coaches met to map out the training program in detail. The resulting 142-page *Board Governance Training Handbook*—expertly designed and beautifully illustrated by ABHE’s Director of Communications and Events, Carol Dibble—has met with raves from both Murdock Trust and participating institution leaders. Subsequently, in October 2019, the first cohort of 10 ABHE member colleges’ governance teams and their individually assigned coaches began their cumulative 5 days of intensive training, diagnostic, and dialogue sessions. The resulting “strategic governance improvement priorities” will be the focus of subsequent coaches’ engagement and a board retreat in the year to come. Institutions from this initial cohort that complete the training and document achievement of improvement goals will be awarded certification at ABHE’s February 2021 Annual Meeting. We are currently enlisting institutional commitments for limited 2020-21 and 2021-22 cohorts.

**KPI: BIBLE KNOWLEDGE.** I doubt there is any more fundamental ABHE Key Performance Indicator (KPI) “brand promise” than this: **ABHE graduates know the Bible.** ABHE's normed and validated Standardized Bible Exam has for decades served as one way our members assess Bible knowledge outcomes, but its content has frequently been criticized as too trivial, its administration too cumbersome, and its analytics too superficial. That is why we are thrilled to announce that through the personal effort of Board member Terry Munday, ABHE has received a $150,000 grant from *Hobby Lobby* to underwrite our proposal to collaborate with Classic Learning Initiative (CLI), expert developers and deployers of the acclaimed *Classic Learning Test* for college admissions, to produce and administer a new ABHE Bible Exam. A distinguished Senior Editorial Committee met in December 2019 to finalize the exam’s primary objectives and architecture. In early 2020, more than 50 ABHE faculty experts will contribute and curate exam items and involve their students in preliminary exam validation. CLI’s team of IT and psychometric experts will then develop exam algorithms for digital delivery and scoring and prepare the new exam for administration by Fall 2020. Results will be available to support analysis by students (performance benchmarks), institutions (student learning outcomes and effectiveness improvement) and ABHE (brand promise validation and member support).
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATION. A third major facet of our 3 Pillars Campaign involves ramping up professional development opportunities for every C-Suite office: Presidents, Chief Academic Officers, Advancement Officers, Enrollment Officers, Student Development Officers, and Financial Officers. The path to certification involves 8 full days of training (Fall and Annual Meeting, 32 sessions in all) over a 2-year period; and creation and extended supervisory engagement with a personal assessment and development plan. Our vision is that the performance of every senior executive in ABHE member colleges will be elevated by means of their engagement with these top-flight professional development opportunities — including Fall conferences.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT. Each of the above initiatives has a substantial price tag. We have projected total campaign funding of $780,000 over a three-year span. Yet again, God’s provision has eclipsed our meager faith. As of this writing, 3 Pillars Campaign gifts and commitments already total more than $600,000. We are trusting that additional three-year Leadership Development Offering gifts and pledges will soon carry us over the top of our campaign goal and beyond. In addition to our 3 Pillars Campaign success to date, Executive Vice President, David Medders, has led the way in extending our financial resources through sponsorships and partnerships. Virtually every leadership training event is subsidized by the generosity of a sponsor and total sponsor/partner revenue of $124,750 has again exceeded previous records.

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ENRICHED MEMBER BENEFITS

In our constant quest to identify more ways to enhance the value we deliver to our members we have implemented measures this year to convert several key ABHE services from their previous user-fee basis to member benefits. Beginning this year …

- ABHE accredited member institutions will no longer pay for scholastic and honorary certificates for the Delta Epsilon Chi Honor Society. Recognition awards may continue to be purchased from the ABHE website.

- ABHE members do not pay for subscription access to the curated professional development resource library that is the ABHE Knowledge Center.

- ABHE members will no longer pay for individual or bulk ABHE Job Board listings.
Beginning Fall 2020, ABHE member Institutions will be able to annually administer the ABHE Bible Exam free of charge to all first year and graduating students. Exam results and analytics will be available free of charge to both students and institutions.

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FINANCIAL MARGINS

For the past several years, we have striven to secure greater long-term financial stability for ABHE. In the wake of the 2007-2008 “great recession,” ABHE’s modest—but healthy relative to the size of annual operations—unrestricted financial reserves were almost entirely depleted. I am grateful to report that prudence on the part of ABHE’s Board of Directors and fiscal discipline on the part of our ABHE leadership team has enabled us to recover healthier unrestricted operational financial margins. As of the end of FY18-19, ABHE’s Unrestricted Net Assets are approaching $500,000, approximately one-third of core annual operations.

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SUCCESSION AND TRANSITION

In February 2019, I informed the ABHE membership that I intended to retire at the August 2020 expiration of my current 5-year contract. During the past year, a Board-appointed Search Committee chaired by Vice-Chair Dr. Randy Carman has engaged with The Dingman Company in conducting a needs assessment, developing and disseminating an opportunity profile, soliciting prospects and screening candidates. I am delighted and grateful to report that the Board’s prudent executive search plan and transition timetable has resulted in the selection of Dr. Philip Dearborn to succeed me effective July 1, 2020. Per our Constitutional requirements, Dr. Dearborn’s election by the ABHE Board was ratified by members of the ABHE Presidential Congress in December 2019.

Dr. Dearborn’s background is remarkably similar to my own. Each of us is an ABHE member college graduate. Each of us served at our alma maters for more than two decades, beginning in the admissions/enrollment offices and eventually leading to service in academic leadership and to the role of Provost. As Provost, each of us had the privilege of overseeing curricular program and educational facility expansion encompassing campus-based, extension and distance education, including degree-granting international locations. I am persuaded that Dr. Philip Dearborn is an exemplary product, an experienced professional, and an articulate proponent of biblical higher education.

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I am grateful to look back on the past year—indeed upon my entire 14-year tenure as ABHE President—and recognize the unmistakable marks of God’s favor upon ABHE. My heart swells with gratitude and wonder at the Lord’s goodness and grace.

The Psalmist, however, exhorts us not merely to remember with gratitude and wonder but—in light of God’s long record of faithfulness—to watch for his works; be alert for signs of his presence. (Ps. 105:4, The Message). But wait … in light of the multiplying and intensifying vulnerabilities and impending threats on our horizon, can it be possibly realistic to have a confident and hopeful outlook?

I recently encountered an article by Mark Ward that references a similarly paradoxical viewpoint recorded by Luke, the divinely appointed and inspired New Testament historian. Luke records that Paul, restrained under house arrest in Rome, welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance (Acts 28:30-31). Without hindrance!?! Are you kidding? What can Luke possibly mean? Ward comments:

What Luke must mean by saying that the kingdom of God was proclaimed “with all boldness and without hindrance” is that, in God’s power and providence, his love is never hindered from expanding. Every seeming hindrance stacked against God in this world—our sin and weakness, the world’s brokenness, every evil power—cannot ultimately stop the steamroller of God’s love from advancing in our lives and to the nations. Consider his promise through Malachi: “For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations” (Mal. 1:11). [Mark Ward, The Gospel Coalition, January 4, 2020, emphasis added]

As we obey the Psalmist’s exhortation, may it be said of us—whose present and potential constraints could not possibly be greater than those Luke records about Paul—that ABHE and our biblical higher education movement is ever and always, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

Your partner in serious Bible learning that shapes a life of godly influence and service,

Ralph E. Enlow, Jr.
President
ABHE BY THE NUMBERS
[does not include CAO applicant institutions]

MEMBERSHIP

130 Membership Total
110 COA Accredited
5 COA Programmatically Accredited
3 Accredited-Other
12 COA Candidate

ENROLLMENT

*127 institutions reporting

55,662 Total 2018-19 Unduplicated Headcount for all terms
46,235 Fall 2019 Total Enrollment Headcount
36,800 Fall 2019 Total Enrollment FTE
6415 Total traditional new undergraduate students enrolled for Fall 2019 – headcount
6686 Total traditional new undergraduate students enrolled for Fall 2018 – headcount
4% Percentage decrease Fall 2019 over Fall 2018

FINANCES

*111 institutions reporting

$ 207,724,452 Net tuition revenue
$150,472,404 Total unrestricted contributions
$49,954,135 Total restricted contributions
$200,426,539 Total of all contributions
$408,150,991 Total of tuition and contributions
$693,537,317 Total expenses
$584,258,066 Total education & general expenses (Excludes auxiliary enterprises)
$619,491,861 Total unrestricted net assets
$1,762,873,447 Total assets
$268,635,190 Long Term Debt

2018-2019 FINANCIAL REPORT

Revenue

$1,766,000
- Association Dues $856
- Event Fees/Support $3248
- Contributions $184
- CDA Dues & Fees $1273

Expenses

$1,648,000
- CDA Operations $556
- Administrative $895
- Training/Travel $287
NOTES FROM THE FIELD

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019 PRESIDENTIAL VISITS

ALLEGHENY WESLEYAN COLLEGE (OH)
President Daniel Hardy welcomed me to the small, picturesque AWC campus in Ohio’s Northwest corner. I met with several campus leaders, toured the spacious almost-completed new D.R. Kauffman multi-purpose field house/auditorium, viewed how a new clock tower will reorient the entire campus around its iconic structure, enjoyed a lovely choir and orchestra concert and spoke briefly to assembled students, faculty, and staff, and topped off the visit with a luncheon of homemade soup, muffins and more in the President’s home.

ASIA THEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (ATA)
At the invitation of my counterpart, ATA General Secretary, Dr. Theresa Lua, I represented ABHE and the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE) at ATA’s General Assembly in Singapore, offering professional development workshops and addressing a banquet to mark the launch of the 50th anniversary of ATA’s founding. I met many ABHE member college alumni who serve in theological education across the vast and diverse Asian Continent.

CAROLINA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE (NC)
President LaTanya Tyson welcomed me for a brief visit and tour of Carolina Christian College. The college is unique in that it is the Christian Church’s only majority African-American serving and presidentially-led college.

CAROLINA COLLEGE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES (NC)
At the invitation of President Bill Korver, one of ABHE’s longest serving presidents, I had the privilege of delivering a commencement address to CCBS’ largest ever graduating class. It was a trip down memory lane, since I have been familiar with the institution since my days as an 82nd Airborne Division soldier in the 1970s. During that time, I met founder Ralph Richardson and learned of the college’s vision for and impact upon active duty and veteran military service persons on the outskirts of Fort Bragg. Former College of Biblical Studies-Houston President and ABHE Biblical Higher Education Award honoree, Dr. Bill Boyd, now works closely with President Korver and has played a major role in the college’s growth in facilities and community impact.
EMMAUS BIBLE COLLEGE (IA)
I joined a half-dozen ABHE Presidents for the September 2019 ABHE Midwest Presidents Fellowship gathering hosted at Emmaus Bible College (Dubuque, IA) by President Philip Boom. Peer-to-peer exchange and encouragement was supplemented by Emmaus VP/Dean of Academic Affairs (and ABHE Board member!) Lisa Beatty’s informative session on the subject of expanding academic programs and resources through creative inter-institutional educational collaboration initiatives.

GRACE COLLEGE OF DIVINITY (NC)
In connection with my visit to Fayetteville, NC to speak at Carolina College of Biblical Studies Commencement, I spent a few hours with Grace College of Divinity President, Steve Crowther, who extended warm and gracious hospitality despite having just returned from an extensive overseas ministry trip, something he does often as an authentic model of GCD’s commitment to *Transforming Lives, Mobilizing Leaders*.

GOD’S BIBLE SCHOOL AND COLLEGE (OH)
President Rodney Loper, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Aaron Profitt, and the entire GBS leadership team rolled out the red carpet for my September visit to this venerable ABHE institution—one of our oldest—among whose early faculty members was Oswald Chambers of *My Utmost for His Highest* renown. A little-known fact about GCS is that its founder, Martin Wells Knapp, was an ardent crusader against vice and sexual trafficking and intentionally sought to locate the ministry on the doorstep of Cincinnati’s abominable 19th century red light district. Following a campus tour and lots of professional dialogue, I had the privilege of enjoying a luncheon with about a dozen GBS leaders.

HUDSON TAYLOR UNIVERSITY (GA)
Richard and Linda Yoon, both successful attorneys, dedicated themselves to establishing a college that, in the words of HTU President and renowned Korean missionary educator, Dr. Kwang Sun Lee, *is to be known as a powerhouse institution that is Christ-centered, Bible-centered, and “bio-centric” (people-centered), bringing all people from different walks of life the opportunity to practice and learn missiology and transnational missions. Our curriculum, instruction, and practice are theologically grounded with a missiological perspective and fosters students to be leaders for the mission field.* My good friend and ABHE colleague, Grace Kook, introduced me to HTU’s leaders and facilitated my tour of the institution’s modern suburban Atlanta campus.
**KINGSWOOD UNIVERSITY (NB)**

Our entire senior ABHE team had the privilege once again in 2019 of holding our annual Team Leaders retreat at a member college. Since this was my last such retreat as ABHE President, we asked Kingswood University (NB) President, Dr. Stephen Lennox and his team if they would host our retreat—a special gesture to ABHE Executive VP and former Kingswood President, David Medders. The Kingswood family extended legendary hospitality, including a memorable devotional exposition of Psalm 45 by Steve Lennox and a VP for Student Life, Kirk Sabin-led hike in Fundy National Park, followed by a sunset dinner in the quaint fishing village of Alma.

**LIFE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY (CA)**

I had the privilege of attending and offering ABHE greetings on the occasion of the inauguration of Life Pacific University’s (CA) 11th President, Angie Richey. An LPU alumna, licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and the institution’s Vice President for Enrollment and Chief Communications Officer, Richey is the first woman to serve as LPU President since its legendary founder (1923), Aimee Semple McPherson. Former LPU presidents Jack Hayford, Robert Flores, and Jim J. Adams were also present to welcome and commend President Richey.

**MID-SOUTH CHRISTIAN COLLEGE (TN)**

At the invitation of President Larry Griffin, I had the privilege of offering ABHE greetings and congratulations on the occasion of celebrating Mid-South Christian College’s 60th anniversary. Bob Russell, who spoke so powerfully and memorably at ABHE’s 2019 Annual Meeting, challenged the college’s alumni and friends gathered on that occasion, to ensure that the institution’s mission and distinctive track record of serving and mobilizing needy and educationally disadvantaged students is sustained.

**MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE (IL)**

I had the privilege of representing ABHE and offering brief greetings on behalf of our membership at the inauguration of Moody Bible Institute’s 10th President, Dr. Mark Jobe. I enjoyed meeting and re-connecting with former Moody presidents Joseph Stowell and Paul Nyquist as well as interacting with scores of dignitaries in attendance at this transitional moment in the life of one of ABHE’s oldest flagship institutions.
NATIVE AMERICAN BIBLE COLLEGE (NC)
Though Spring commencement was already past and the college mostly dormant for the summer, President James Keys met me and led me on a brief tour of the 100-acre Native American Bible College campus. Founded in the 1960s by regional Assemblies of God pastors and “home missionaries,” the college uniquely serves the 60,000-population Lumbee Indian tribe and other nearby clusters of Native Americans.

STARK COLLEGE AND SEMINARY (TX)
I met with the remarkably diverse and professionally impressive Stark College and Seminary governing board at the institution’s McAllen, TX campus. I had the privilege of engaging the SCS board along with President Tony Celelli and members of his executive team on the subject of best practices for good governance. SCS subsequently enrolled as a member of the first cohort in ABHE’s new Board Governance Certification training program and I have the privilege of continuing my engagement with the institution as its program coach. I anticipate meeting with the board again in that capacity in April 2020.

VANGUARD COLLEGE (AB)
President Eric Dirksen invited me to engage the Vanguard Board of Directors in a retreat setting. Over the course of a day and a half, I had the privilege working with board members who represent the college and its sponsoring denomination (PAOC) in stimulating discussion of the following topics: *Biblical Higher Education’s Context: Historical & Contemporary; Principles and Practices of Good Governance; and Board Strategy Formation and Follow Through*. I also enjoyed interacting with members of Vanguard’s enrollment management, academic, and registrar/student records teams. Vanguard’s Board has also enrolled in the first cohort of ABHE’s two-year Board Governance Certification training program. They will continue their professional development journey in the coming year under the capable and dynamic leadership of governance coach Dr. Scott Rodin.

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