

BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF VIRGINIA

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RECLAIMING OUR TRUTH AND CLAIMING OUR POWER

The past few years have been revealing both our culture and our world. It has become clearer year after year that the desire for truth in conversations and discourse has been shrouded by who presents the conversations and discourse over what is the actual truth. Our churches stand firm to truth in following the words of Jesus Christ in his affirming, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32, NIV). Therefore, it is incumbent for the congregations of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia, Inc. (BGCVA) to stand firm against efforts to shift the truth and dismantle the intellectual capital of our communities. These twin threats have impacted and will continue to impact our communities.

We have witnessed efforts to remove both the narratives and the writers contributing to informing our world and our future generations about the struggles of the African-American community. We have witnessed pressure for conformity over presenting one's authentic voice in both the church and the academy. We have witnessed targeting of our black intellectuals with speculations of authenticity. We have witnessed the dehumanization of African-American women, while being distracted by challenges facing others. We have witnessed all of this with a large silence from the church while the open season on targeting and deconstructing the work of the black church and black intellectuals. Truth serves as our moral compass, and we have sphered away from the truth because we have lost the courage to speak truth to power. Alice Walker surmises our sense of power when she offered that "the most common way for people to give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

We, BGCVA, Inc., call for our churches and associations to re-understand, reassess, and retool how to engage these present and emerging challenges. It is inclusive of voting, but it is a larger need to organize and resist the shifted tide of the atmosphere to become true to the Gospel and solid on truth. This is not a gesture as a response to the world that surrounds us, but rather is an action of witness to the world that we don't just profess the love of Jesus Christ, but we also practice the life of Jesus Christ. We must gather in conversation as churches, associations, and the BGCVA to shift the atmosphere in a space to reaffirm truth, value authenticity, and nurture conciliation within our community, Commonwealth, and country.

Finally, with influence comes responsibility; therefore, there is a sense of urgency to act now. Please be on alert for a virtual gathering in the coming weeks to discuss reclaiming our truth and claiming our power. What does claiming our power look like as we the Baptist General Convention of Virginia serve the Lord in truth in 2024 and beyond?

For The Kingdom of GOD, We Are,

M. P. Bunting
Reverend Milton P. Bunting, President

Dr. Leo Whitaker, Executive Minister

We are BGC…Bringing People Together, Growing Churches, and Changing Communities!
~ Act 1:8; Matthew 9:35-38; Mark 10:13-16