

NATIONAL BLACK PRESBYTERIAN CAUCUS
Report of the President
For the Period: June 26, 2021 to June 14, 2023
To the 47th Biennial Conference
N. Charleston Marriot Hotel, N. Charleston, S.C
June 15-17, 2023

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1, NIV)

To: The Board of Directors, Members, Institutional Mission Partners, Denominational Agencies and Conference Partners

From: Rev. Dr. Charles, C. Heyward, Sr., HR; President, NBPC

Introduction:

WELCOME! On behalf of the National Board of Directors and The 47th Biennial Conference Planning Committee, a sincere Welcome is extended to each of you for your presence and participation in The Gathering of Black Presbyterians. Our time together is not just a traditional Caucus meeting, but more. It is a gathering of Black Presbyterians and those who support our: purpose, mission, worship, and fellowship, while learning together the reimagining of our shared ministries into the future. King David’s words highlight the kindred spirit of our time and purpose: “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1) Enclosed herein are some brief reflections and ongoing facts from our last biennial meeting: June 26, 2021 to June 14, 2023.

Themes:

Our Biennial Theme will continue until year end, 2023: “The Black Family in the Presbyterian Church USA: Navigating Identity, Equity, ad Economics.” The National Annual Vision: (2021-2022) – The Year of Reality and Hope; (2022-2023) – The Year of Reimagining and Church Growth. The 47th Biennial Conference Theme: “The Gathering of Black Presbyterians!”

Purpose:

Our Purpose: To Support Congregational Enhancement and Church Growth for all of our congregations within their particular social, economic, and geographic context. The significant experiences and skills of our church leaders nationwide make this possible.

Vision:

Our Vision: To reimagine how we do ministry in these contemporary times, equipping Pastors, Commissioned Lay Elders (CLE) and Active Session Members, (the Congregation) to become the essential basic operating unit of the Caucus. This will require two essential activities: (1) having Pastors, CLE and Active Elders become members of the Caucus with “Voice and Vote; and (2) growing the NBPC to ten percent of our Black/African American constituency in the PCUSA.

Thanks:

My sincere thanks is extended to the Leadership Team and Volunteers of The 47th Biennial Planning Committee for their professionalism and sacrifice of time, energy and personal resources in making this Conference a success. In working with the Committee, we can not go without recognizing support and team efforts that come from: The Membership Committee, The IT and Media Relations Committee, The Chapter and Regional Co-Directors, The Regional Representatives, The Constant Contact Community News Coordinator and our Website Service Bureau. To All: You have done a Masterful Job Well. Thanks a million!

The Conference:

The 47th Biennial Conference will have the traditional activities: worship, fellowship, connecting with old friends, networking, approval of reports and election of officers. Added is your opportunity to experience Charleston, the Sea Islands and the South Carolina Lowcountry. However, central and essential in addressing: "Congregational Enhancement and Church Growth," the Conference is built on three interlocking plenaries:

- (1) "Reimagining": How Today's Youths and Young Adults are Feeling and Interacting with the Church.
- (2) "Eight Essentials for Growing an African American Congregation"
- (3) "Evaluating Congregational Models": What Does the Future Hold for Your Congregation?

Membership:

Two years ago, our participating membership was less than one per cent of our national constituency. Immediately a goal was set for 1.5% by the convening of the 47th Conference. At June 3, 2023 membership numbered 391 of at total constituency of about 42,500 or .92%. The goal is set of 2.5% by June 30, 2024; and 10% by June 30, 2026. You will be receiving a full report from the Membership Committee during the conference for your action.

Fiscal Affairs:

The good financial health of the Caucus has come in part from the generous support of Institutional Partners, Denomination agencies and reduced travel during the Covid Pandemic. The General Operating Budget is balanced; however, the 47th Biennial Budget is at a deficit. We are thankful for the Denominational Agencies, Conference Partners and Vendors who have invested in this Conference. In so doing, the deficit is reduced. You will be receiving a full report from the Finance Committee during the conference for your action.

Communications:

Our goal is to communicate with: "Every Member Sitting in the Pews on Sunday Mornings." In times past, we did not have the infrastructure, resources nor skill sets. Today, we do. The I.T. and Media Relations Committee, Semi-Monthly Constant Contact Community News, Website, Regional Representatives, and coordination with the Associate for African American Intercultural Congregational Support of Racial Equity & Women's Intercultural Ministries, have us well on our way of doing just that. As Session's make their approvals for their membership participation, information of interest, importance and updates can be electronically shared with all. They would not have to be members of the Caucus to receive the information.

Children:

Presently, there is an ongoing group of leaders working together to develop and propose an African American Children's Curriculum designed to help parents give leadership to the faith development of their own children.

Youth and Young Adults:

A great deal of time, energy and resources have gone into establishing a separate track of activities for our Youth and Young Adults at this 47th Conference. Truly, they are, "the Church of Today." Equipping them for leadership, and then, allowing them to lead is crucial to the future health of our congregations. We will look forward to hearing a brief report from both groups at the closing business session.

Presented By: *Rev. Dr. Charles C. Heyward, Sr., HR; President*