

## Report of the Director of African American Leadership Development Program 2017

- We sponsored the Preston Taylor Institute at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Black Minister's Retreat convening in Saint Louis, **March 7-9, 2017**. The Rev. Dr. Chris Dorsey, President of Higher Education and Leadership Ministries was our institute facilitator. The theme for the institute was, ***"Theology for Transformation." According to Chris, "One of the most striking promises of the Gospel is change. But what does that change look like in the life of a church leader? How is that change developed? What part does the church play in the process of transformation?"***
- We had fifty (55) persons participate in the institute and all received eight (8) hours of CEU's.
- I assisted in the planning, coordinating and hosting of the National Convocation after session with our General Minister and President, Rev. Terri Hord Owens. We provided 500 flyers to help promote the event.
- Contacted by Bethany College during their search for new Dean of the Chapel for possible African American candidates. I gave names of persons that I felt should be highly considered.
- Invited to preach the church anniversary of First Mount Zion Baptist Church, Dumfries, Virginia (4200 membership) on **January 29, 2017**. Rev. Dr. Luke Torian is the pastor. He also serves in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing the 52<sup>nd</sup> District (Prince Williams County). Pastor Torian was gracious enough to allow me to interview him at his office on the State Capital concerning bi-vocational ministry, especially in a church the size of First Mount Zion. He did not see himself as a bi-vocational minister. The political position was in his words, "an extension of my ministry." Throughout my report you will see me referencing **bi-vocational ministry**.
- I have sent letters of encouragement through the Regional Offices of SW and Florida to clergy as they minister during and after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.
- Invited to preach the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of United Christian Church in Detroit, Michigan **April 1 – 3**. Pastor Gregory Bryant and I talked about the reality and challenges of **bi-vocational ministry**.
- Invited to preach revival, led one-day retreat with Rev. Dr. William Barber and leadership at Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro, North Carolina **June 23 – 25**. Dr. Barber talked about the definition of **bi-vocational ministry**. ***What is full-time ministry in today's African American Church Culture? How many African American Disciple Churches consider themselves full time ministry stations?***
- Attended the Baptist General Convention of Virginia in Roanoke, Virginia **June 25 – 29**. Continuing to study their model of ministerial recruitment, continuing education for clergy and clergy wellness. Interviewed Rev. David Chapman Interim Executive Minister and Rev. Dr. Gregory Howard, President of Baptist General Convention of Virginia concerning **bi -vocational** ministry in the Baptist context in Virginia. They concluded that bi-vocational ministry was the form in their convention and was the hope of their churches for sustainability.
- Attended General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada **July 8 – 13**.

- Had a lengthy conversation with Bishop Valerie Melvin about **intentional bi-vocational** ministry as the salvation of many disciple churches.
- Attended Piedmont District Convention, Reidsville, North Carolina **July 27 – 29**. Met with leadership concerning the future viability of Piedmont. Also met with clergy to discern their primary needs in pastoring in this present culture. I have attached a document that I am sharing with clergy and churches entitled, “Leading through the Fog.” I am asking several questions when we work our way through this document. ***Have you pulled over? Are you charging forward although visibility is very difficult? Have you slowed down? What is causing the fog? What fog lights do you have available to help you creep through the fog?*** Piedmont District has 25 Churches and 23 are considered **bi-vocational**.
- Invited to preach at Wildwood Christian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on the occasion of Rev. Dr. William W Simms retirement **August 29 – 31**. Wildwood Christian Church is transitioning for a season to **bi-vocational ministry**.
- Invited to Michigan Park Christian Church, Washington, D.C. to preach in their Champions of the faith Revival **August 13<sup>th</sup>**. Pastor Marvin Owens is trying some novel ways to attract persons to an urban church context. We also talked about the **reality and necessity of bi-vocational ministry** due to the high cost of living in certain urban settings, such as Washington, DC.
- Planned the next Preston Taylor Institute for the Black Ministers Retreat to be held at the Hilton Landmark Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, **March 6-8, 2018**. The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Buckhannon Crowder will be our Facilitator.
- Serving on the Regional Minister Search Team for Virginia.
- I keynoted and presented a workshop on “Creating a Community Church – The Loudon Avenue Christian Church Model,” at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Assembly of LaConvencion Hispana Y Bilinque Del Sureste, in Lake Placid, Florida, **November 3-4, 2017**.
- Preached at Iglesia Cristiana Central (Central Christian Church), Coral Gables, Florida, Sunday, November 5, 2017, Rev. Jorge Cotto, Pastor.
- I serve on the Pension Fund Excellence in Ministry Committee. We are still recruiting African Americans to participate in the program. Below is a synopsis of the EIM program:

### Excellence in Ministry

#### What is the Excellence in Ministry program?

At its core, the **Excellence in Ministry** program seeks to reduce or alleviate some of the key financial pressures that inhibit effective pastoral leadership, and improve the financial literacy and management skills of pastoral leaders through education (increasing their ability to provide capable leadership for congregations and ministries under their care).



Among other benefits, this program has the potential to:

- Help pastors remain in and be more effective in ministry over a longer period of time

- Benefit congregations by having more effective leadership and less turnover
- Benefit the church by having pastoral leaders who are more engaged
- Enhance the relationship between seminaries, seminary houses and foundations, and the church
- Enhance long-term participation in Pension Fund programs

How does it work?

### **FINANCIAL LITERACY**

- Educational events for pastors, seminarians, spouses and lay leaders
- *Individuals:* Personal stewardship, budgeting, theology of money and dealing with debt
- *Employers:* Congregational financial identity, budgeting and stewardship, and the congregation as an employer
- *Financial courses:* Savings strategies, ministerial taxes, family and personal care, retirement and financial planning

### **FINANCIAL RELIEF & ASSISTANCE**

- Modest grants to pastors with 1-5 years of experience (funded, in part, through the Lilly Endowment grant)
- Eligible participants may qualify for financial assistance for student debt relief or other points of financial stress
- Grants made in two installments over the life of the program, after satisfying the participation requirements of the financial literacy program
- Potential maximum of 20 participants per year (and possibly more if additional funds are raised)