



Southeast Region of NBPC

Post Office Box 245
Hollywood, South Carolina 29449



August 20, 2022

Report from the 2022 Southeast Region's Biennial Meeting National Black Presbyterian Caucus

After more than four years the Southeast Region of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus was able to meet for three full days (July 14-17) in Jacksonville, Florida. The Covid-19 Virus caused the Region to not hold its meeting in 2020. The Steering Committee, after seriously considering the guidelines and precautionary guidance of the Health Agencies involved, decided that the 2022, Bi-Annual Meeting of the Regional Caucus could be safely held with approximately fifty people gathering in person.

With that as a plan of action, a Conference Planning Committee was elected. The committee proceeded with plans for the conference. As a result of months of planning and coordinating, plans came together. After securing conference leaders and accommodations, notices went out to the region about the particulars of the planned event. Seventy-five people registered for this Bi-Annual event.

Programs, workshops, and worship were all parts of the conference. Thanks to the leaders from the National Church, the Regional Chapters, and members across the southeast, the Conference was a great success. The evaluation forms reported very positive responses to the Conference and positive remarks about future events.

The preconference events began in the afternoon of July 14th, with a meeting with the National President, Rev. Charles Heyward, and the Region's Steering Committee. He shared with the committee his vision for the Caucus and encouraged the Region to support it. The preconference workshops continued on Friday morning with the National Vice President, The Rev. Doris Evans. She conferenced with ministers and the Regional Steering Committee about chapter development and support of the caucus.

The opening session of the conference was held on Friday afternoon. The group was welcomed by Rev. Dr. Joe Rigsby, Southeast Region Convener. Rev. Rigsby called the first session to order. The conference's theme was **"Reflecting on the Past, Changing the Present to Make a Better Future"** (*Proverbs 3:1-6*).

Rev. Dr. Joe Rigsby shared the state of the Region and had all the presenters to introduce themselves. Great information was shared from the presenters, led by the National Vice President, Rev. Doris Evans. Other presenters were Rev. Michael Moore, *Associate for African American Intercultural Congregational Support and Racial Equity & Women's Intercultural Ministries*; Ms. Deidre Allen, *Seminarian and Youth Leader with the Youth Advisory Volunteers Program*; Rev. Dr. J. Oscar McCloud, *Honorable Retired*; Rev. Carlton D. Johnson, *Coordinator for the Office of Vital Congregations for the Presbyterian Church USA*; Rev. Dr. Franklin Colclough, *Honorable Retired*; Rev. Dr. Ella Busby, *Staff of New Harmony Presbytery*; and Rev. CeCe Armstrong, *Associate Pastor of St. James Presbyterian Church*.

Rev. Doris Evans encouraged us to tell the stories of NBPC! She referred to Psalm 78:1-4 and Proverbs 3:1-6. Issues that are being worked on at the national level are: Family Leave Benefits, Sexual Misconduct, and the repercussions from the overturning of Roe v. Wade. The **Vision 2020 Task Force** that was set up in 2016 produced a vision for PC (USA); **Prayerful-Courageous-United-Serving-Alive**. It was presented to the 2022 General Assembly along with the NBPC Logo for its consideration.

She reported that the Southeast Region of the NBPC is one of the largest in the denomination. She also shared how we must reach back and discern our best practices, bringing them to be presented for future consideration. We must change the present in order that we may have a future. Included in the ways to a better future was the use of technology, science, and faithful discipleship of Jesus Christ. She urged us to please read the Constant Contact emails you receive from National, Regional and Chapters. And she encouraged our youth to read and understand the importance of correct and helpful information.

The first adult workshop was titled “**How to Recruit Members**” and was led by Rev. CeCe Armstrong of *St. James Presbyterian Church* on James Island. Rev. Armstrong described information in a presentation on Self-Interest Training. As described in the presentation, “The session on self-interest is designed to think about how to engage people more effectively” to recruit membership in the NBPC. A Circle of Relationships was discussed, where categories of personal relationships, voluntary relationships, and relationships of necessity were described. We’re responsible for taking it forward, we need to be connected/routed in relationships. We took part in small group exercises to determine common interests and make use of things we have in common. The goal was to get an understanding of how people interact based on their relationship to one another, and how to find common ground to create an opportunity to communicate.

Participants were divided into groups of three where each member named individuals in their lives that fall in the categories of personal, voluntary, and necessity-based relationships. The group members listed things that they liked to do and shared with other group members. Members engaged in role-playing where they used information learned about other group members to start conversations and discuss the benefits of NBPC membership.

The youth attended a workshop which was led by Ms. Deidre Allen, a student at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. The workshop was titled “**You Are Chosen/I am Black and Beautiful.**”

Donovan White, a youth from the Charleston-Atlantic Chapter, had this to say about the youth workshops:

“During the weekend of July 15-17, 2022, I went to the NBPC Southeast Region conference in Jacksonville, Florida with my Mom Stephanie White, Elder Edna Nesbitt, Neveah Bailey, and Kinsley Nesbitt from the St. Paul Presbyterian Church. When we got there, I went to a Youth workshop which was led by Ms. Deidre Allen, who is currently studying to become a Minister. The workshop was titled ‘**You Are Chosen/I am Black and Beautiful.**’ We learned about the seven fruits of the Spirit, what to do when God chooses you, and more. We ate dinner and attended a worship service.

“On Saturday, July 16th, we attended a morning service and went to another Youth workshop titled ‘**How to Tell Your Story/Find your Destiny/Say Connected and Committed**’. I participated in a TikTok video as well. We had a nice lunch and then went to another workshop with the adults. We had some free time and went to the pool, then we went to a banquet. The food was delicious.

“Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to go to the NBPC regional conference. I and many others needed to know how we can follow God’s example of who He wants us to be.”

Rev. J. Oscar McCloud led a workshop on “**Negro Spirituals or Slave Songs,**” which are the first original American music. The Spirituals told a story-lament. They were sung acapella. They were not written but set in memory, had to know the words. There were no hymnbooks for them to refer to. It was about having hope in faith and culture of African Slaves, re-imagined. The African American preachers tend to preach from the Old Testament. The Spirituals represented themes such as adoration, aspiration, invitation, and affirmation. The songs were inspirational and encouraging. They were like tears, a relief to a broken heart.

The first night ended with dinner and a worship service. The sermon was given by Rev. Carlton D. Johnson, *Coordinator for the Office of Vital Congregations for the Presbyterian Church USA*. The sermon was based on **Matthew 18: 23-35**, which was about the servant that refused to show mercy on his debtor. Rev. Johnson stressed the need to show compassion to one another.

On Saturday, July 16th, morning devotion was led by Rev. Dr. Ella Busby of *Second Presbyterian Church* in Sumter, SC. The message was based on **Luke 10:30-37**, which was about the Good Samaritan. The group was encouraged to remember and follow the Lord’s example of compassion.

The first workshop on Saturday was about “**Evangelism/Vital Congregation,**” which was led by Rev. Carlton Johnson. Rev. Johnson stressed that every church cannot do everything; however, there are several attributes that all churches can have to make evangelism a priority. He also stressed that being an evangelist is not a special calling – **we are all evangelists.**

One of the quotes he shared was “Vital congregations and big congregations are not the same.” We must help congregations look at themselves and the communities around them. He spoke about evangelism, discipleship and the Great Commission. There is Good News and food for our Maturing Process. Scriptures shared were Luke 4:16-19, Isaiah 61:1 and Matthew 28:19-20. He also spoke about Intentional Authentic Evangelism. Scripture quoted was 2 Corinthians 4:7. We must Watch, Fight and Pray! Other points from the presentation were Lifelong discipleship formation vs. Christian piety (Phil 3:9b), Outward Incarnational Focus vs. Inward Focus (MT 7:14), Empower Servant Leadership vs. The pastor’s job (MT 9:37-38), Spirit Inspired Worship vs. High spirited, self-gratifying worship; devoid of meaning or consumer entertainment, Caring relationships, and Ecclesial Health.

The following Seven Marks of an Evangelizing Church describe the attributes of a vital congregation:

1. Understanding that evangelism is announcing the good news of Jesus Christ, while discipleship involves a maturing process (Scripture references: Luke 4:18-19; Matthew 28:19; Isaiah 61:1; 2 Corinthians 4:7). Historically, evangelism has been about getting people to come to church; however, Jesus aimed to draw people to God.
2. Lifelong discipleship formation should be enhanced - not simply teaching piety and good morals (Scripture reference: Philippians 3:9b). Discipleship should awaken and engage us in issues facing today’s culture (injustice, inequality, divisive segregation; suffering, abuse of creation, etc.).
3. Outward incarnational focus, vs. inward institutional survival and closed communication and exclusion (Scripture reference: Matthew 7:14).
4. Empower servant leadership, vs. monopolized leadership, burning out good volunteers, etc. (Scripture reference: Matthew 9:37-38).
5. Spirit-filled worship, vs. high spirited, self-gratifying worship or stale rituals with little meaning, or consumer entertainment worship (Scripture reference: Isaiah 29:13).
6. Caring relationships, vs. social clubs, facades, hypocrisy, and judgement (Scripture reference: John 13:35).

7. Ecclesial health, vs dysfunctional and toxic environments. (Scripture reference: 1 Corinthians 12:14, 24b-25).

The youth attended a workshop titled “**How to Tell Your Story/Find your Destiny/Say Connected and Committed,**” led by Ms. Deidre Allen.

The third workshop on Saturday was an intergenerational workshop titled “**The Post Pandemic Church.**” The workshop was led by Rev. Dr. Franklin Colclough and members of the New Harmony Chapter.

They shared with the attendees how innovation was used in the use of church facilities. We gather differently and better! The topic of yoking and merger was brought up to show how we can be stronger together. We were encouraged to not to be afraid to merge and plan to grow.

Other points shared are: a) Think of innovative ways to use the building in a way that has never been done. One way was to partner with schools. b) Seize opportunities to reach the digital world. c) Learn lesson on prayer from the Early Church on how to come together and reconnect with the community near your church. d) Understand that churches are started for specific reasons. e) In addition to asking, we must listen. f) Take prayer to a new powerful level, do things differently from how we used to do it, (Psalm 91). Have praying hearts and hands!

The workshop ended with the following points of what some of the markers of the Covid-19 quarantine are. The method/acts prayer, rethinking your facilities for emerging opportunities, new mindset, partnerships with the community, making lasting changes that make a difference understanding that God is in Charge. Some things to avoid in leading change included always doing things the way they were done in the past, not utilizing influential allies, not having a clear vision that goes out 3-5 or 10 years, failure to communicate and offices/officers that get in the way and giving obstacles too much attention.

The group highlighted topics discussed in the book “The Post Quarantine Church” by Thomas Rainer. The main challenges are:

1. Gather Differently and Better (partnering with other congregations, innovative use of facilities, etc.)
2. Seize Your Opportunity to Reach the Digital World (Zoom meetings, social media, etc.)
3. Reconnect with the Community Near Your Church
4. Take Prayer to a New and Powerful Level
5. Rethink Your Facilities for Emerging Opportunities (schools the community using church spaces)
6. Make Lasting Changes That Will Make a Difference

The **Lawrence W. Bottoms Awards Banquet** was held Saturday night. The keynote speaker was Rev. Michael Moore, *African American Intercultural Associate for Racial Equity and Women’s Ministry* at the Presbyterian Mission Agency in Louisville, Kentucky. Rev. Moore’s sermon title was “**Don’t Let Anyone Write Your Epitaph.**” He emphasized that Black Presbyterian tradition is unique peculiar, and problematic. He warned congregations of the danger of **EGO** – Easing God Out. He stressed that congregations need to focus on the purpose they need to fulfill and write their story, not simply giving the church history (Scripture references: John 11:38-43, Habakkuk 2:3).

The general offerings from the worship service and the banquet go to the Southeast Region’s Endowment. Each Regional Conference recognizes with a presentation those who have taken out a Life Membership with a \$500.00 investment with the Presbyterian Foundation. The Banquet honored Rev. Oscar McCloud, Mrs. Kathy McCloud, Rev. Danny Murphy, Elder Lydia Willingham, and Mr. Elliott Willingham (*Posthumously*) this year for Life Membership since the last gathering.

Elder Lucille Martin received the **Lawrence Bottoms Award** for the meeting year 2020. The New Harmony Chapter received the **Lawrence Bottoms Award** for the 2022 meeting year. Congratulations to both for being recognized for their outstanding work and faithfulness to the goals and mission of the Black Caucus.

The Southeast Region also received four new Life Members at this year's Banquet (*Mrs. Linda Andrews, Mrs. Carrie E. Hampton, Rev. Carnell Hampton, and Elder Darren Wilson*). The Region also received two new pledges toward Life Membership (*Rev. Ella Busby and Elder Evelynne Freeman Singleton*).

The attendance at the conference was 75 members. The Charleston-Atlantic Chapter had the highest number of members present with 17 adults and 11 youth members. Kinsley Nesbitt was recognized as the youngest member in attendance at age six. The oldest member present was Elder Laura Powell who is ninety-six years old. A total of \$3,448.00 was collected for the NBPC Southeast Region Endowment, which is managed by the Presbyterian Foundation. It was mentioned that the endowment for the region has grown by \$75,000.00 since 2010.

The Steering Committee of the Southeast Region is very thankful to Toni Griffin-Fields, Stephanie L. White and Donovan White for their record and contribution to this report of the 2022 Southeastern Regional Meeting of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus.

We hope you will share this summary with members and friends of your church. Included is a Membership Application for 2023, and information about becoming a Lifetime Member of the Southeast Region by supporting the Region's Endowment. The Executive and Planning Committees **thank you** so much for your prayers, advocacy, and support of the caucus.

Submitted by,

The Executive and Planning Committees of the SER

Rev. Dr. Joe W. Rigsby, Convener, *Acting President*

Marshall Washington, *Vice President*

Evelynne Freeman-Singleton, *Secretary & Planning Committee*

Mary B. Porter, *Treasurer & Planning Committee*

Isabelle L. Dubose, *Planning Committee*

Toni Griffin-Fields, *Planning Committee*

Dorothy McBride, *Planning Committee*

Linda McLeod, *Planning Committee*

Rev. Dr. Franklin D. Colclough, Sr., *Ministerial Advisor, Editor*

Rev. Dr. Richard F. Dozier, *Ministerial Advisor, Editor*

SOUTHEAST REGION ENDOWMENT MISSION STATEMENT

The Southeast Region is guided by a fundamental belief in Jesus Christ and a commitment to the promotion of social righteousness. While the programs and agenda may change, the Southeast Region will work to achieve the following goals:

1. The full and equal participation of Black Presbyterians within the Southeast Region in the life of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and the society at large.
2. To promote the spiritual, cultural, social and economic growth and development of Black Presbyterians in the Southeast Region.
3. To speak and act on racial justice and other issues that impact Black People in the Southeast Region.
4. To be an effective support system for Black pastors and Black Congregations.
5. To be an effective support system for building strong chapters in the region.

What is an endowment?

An endowment is an investment of a sum of money to generate interest income for a particular group or purpose. Endowments are usually managed by financial institutions with investment expertise.

Who manages the Southeast Region Endowment Fund?

The Southeast Region Endowment Fund is managed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, located at 200 East Twelfth Street, Jeffersonville, Indiana 47130. It has a long impeccable record and is one of the best managed foundations in the nation.

What kind of endowments are there? There are generally two types of Endowments, regular and permanent. Regular endowments are those where both the principal and interest income can be spent. Permanent endowments are those where only interest income can be spent.

What kind of endowment does the Southeast Region have?

The Southeast Region has a Permanent Endowment wherein only the interest can be spent. The principal remains invested indefinitely providing interest income for generations.

How was the Southeast Region Endowment started?

The endowment was started by the Southeast Region in 1987, during which time The Late Rev. Cornelius Campbell was President. It was inspired by the vision of Dr. Otis Turner who gave several hundred dollars to establish the endowment fund.

What is the value of a permanent endowment?

Permanent endowments are powerful financial instruments that can provide a reliable source of income for generations. The principal of a permanent endowment fund cannot be spent. Thus, it will be there indefinitely generating income for the region.

Why did the Southeast Region start an endowment fund?

The Board of the Southeast Region realized that if the region is to become a strong viable organization, it must achieve financial independence and stability. Thus, when Dr. Turner shared his vision, the Board saw the value of an endowment for achieving financial stability.

How are funds raised for the endowment? Funds for the endowment are raised through a variety of means such as individual donations, special offerings, life memberships, bequests and through institutional contributions.

How do I become a life member?

You can become a life member by completing and submitting a life membership application. The fee is \$500 payable in lump sum or in installments of at least \$100 annually.

How do I obtain a life membership application?

You can contact your local chapter president, the Convener of the Southeast Region or the Treasurer at 843-889-3290. Send the completed form along with your first installment to the treasurer of the Southeast Region.

If I chose the installment plan, how will that work?

Once your application for a life membership is received along with an initial installment of \$100 or more, you will be entered into a data bank that tracks all installment payments and balances. Each year you will receive a letter noting your balance and informing you that the next installment is due. You can pay the remaining balance at any point. When your membership is paid in full, you will receive a life membership plaque.

If I am a life member of the Southeast Region, what about chapter and national dues?

Life members of the Southeast Region are exempt from regional dues but shall pay applicable national and chapter dues (See Bylaws, Article II, Section 4).

What happens to fees for life memberships? All fees for life memberships are deposited into the Southeast Region Endowment Fund without exception.

How do I make a donation to the endowment?

Make your check payable to the Southeast Region Endowment Fund and send it to the treasurer of the of the Southeast Region: Mary B. Porter, PO Box 245, Hollywood, SC 29449.

You may also make your check payable to the PCUSA Foundation. On the bottom of the check write **Southeast Region Endowment Fund # 52004891** and send it c/o Permanent Funds Manager, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, 200 East Twelfth Street, Jeffersonville, Indiana 47130. You will receive acknowledgment from the Foundation.

How do I make a bequest to the endowment?

Put a clause in your will designating an amount of money to the **Southeast Region Endowment Fund #52004891**, and send it c/o Permanent Funds Manager, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, 200 East Twelfth Street, Jeffersonville, Indiana 47130. When your will is executed, your gift will be deposited into the Southeast Region Endowment Fund.

What are special endowment offerings? These are offerings taken at various events and in congregations in the region that are designated for the endowment.

What are institutional donations?

These are donations made by governing bodies, congregations, and other organizations that wish to support the mission of the Southeast Region.

What happens to income from the endowment?

Income from the endowment supports the programs and activities of the region. For example, the newsletter of the Southeast Region is underwritten by income from the endowment.

Thank you for whatever consideration you may give to becoming a Life Member of the Southeast Region of the

National Black Presbyterian Caucus. The caucus is the only forum where people of color are invited to come together and dialogue and work to make the church responsive to the particular needs of minorities and racial ethnic people.

Luke 4:17 And Jesus was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

September, 2022 (Southeast Region Caucus of the Presbyterian Church (USA))



Southeast Region of NBPC

Post Office Box 245
Hollywood, SC 29449

Membership Form for the Year - 2023



To: The Southeast Region of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus

Please find enclosed my ___ or the church's ___ contribution for support of the goals and missions of the NBPC in the southeast (*Synod of South Atlantic*). I pledge to keep the **goals** and **mission** of the caucus in our prayers and to give whatever support (I can) ___ (We can) ___. Make checks Payable to the **Southeast Region of NBPC**.

(Please check all that applies) Rev. ___ Dr. ___ Mr. ___ Mrs. ___ Ms. ___ Miss ___ Elder ___ Deacon ___
Pastor ___ Pulpit Supply ___ CLP ___ Retired ___ Friend of the Caucus ___

Name: _____ Church: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: ___ ZIP _____ - _____ Home Ph.: ___ - ___ - _____ Work or Cell Ph.: ___ - ___ - _____

Fax: ___ - ___ - _____ e-mail address: _____

Church Web Address: _____ Presbytery: _____

1. My Membership Dues in NBPC: \$50.00 ___ (*Of this fifty-dollars, twenty five is for National, ten is for Southeast Region and fifteen is for my Chapter.*)
2. My Youth(25 and under) or Seminarian Membership Dues in NBPC: \$25.00 _____
3. My special Tax Deductible Contribution of: \$ _____ is enclosed for the support of the goals, mission and ministry of the **Southeast Region**. *Personal* ___ *Church* ___ *Organization* ___ *Other* ___
4. My Contribution to the Southeast Region's Endowment: \$ _____ (*The endowment fund is a permanent fund. That means the principal earns income, but the principal can never be spent. The region will receive income from the endowment's earnings. But the Principal will always be there for the benefit of present and future generations of the Black Caucus. The endowment is owned by the Southeast Region and it is invested with and managed by the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation {Fund Account #1021004891}. The Foundation has a reputation in money management and investment that is impeccable. (All of the income from this endowment will be used in the Southeast Region and every cent you give is completely Tax Deductible.)*)

Please Remit to: Southeast Region of NBPC
C/O Southeast Region Treasurer
Post Office Box 245
Hollywood, SC 29449

(Please return this universal remittance form with your Check ____, Money Order ____, Other ____, to the Above Address.)

Thank you for whatever your response may be!

NOTE: This form may be copied/reproduced as needed.