



Fellowship of Black Disciples Clergywomen Report

The Fellowship of Black Disciples Clergywomen (FBDCW) was established in 2014 at the 23rd Biennial Session of the National Convocation in Columbus, OH. It is a network of African American ordained ministers, non-ordained ministers and seminarians of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Our mission is *Commitment to excellence in ministry, connection, encouragement, and mentoring*. The Fellowship *Vision* for the next two years is to **Discover** who we are as a collective of black women in ministry, **Mobilize** our network of Disciples sisters across North America, and **Resource** one another with tools of wisdom and care.

On the evening of March 11, 2020, FBDCW met at the Embassy Suites Nashville during the Black Ministers Retreat. Past President Rev. Dr. Delesslyn Kennebrew led the meeting in updates, a reading of the slate of new officers, and a vote. The Fellowship elected the following officers:

Rev. Monique Crain Spells (Fort Worth, TX), *President*
Belinda King (Fisher, IN), *Vice President*
Rev. Kelli Beatrice X (Nashville, TN), *Secretary*
Rev. Paula Pettis-Garrett (Indianapolis, IN), *Treasurer*

Following the election at Black Ministers Retreat, a wisdom exchange meeting was held with outgoing and incoming officers in April. The next FBDCW meeting led by new officers was scheduled for May via Zoom. Since then, the following meetings have taken place:

MAY 19: *Discovery Survey #1 Launch & Introduction of Officers*
JUN 16: *Soul Care: A Time to Pause and Process* with Rev. Angela Whitenhill
JUL 23: *Comedy Confessions of Quarantine* w/ Greta Adams
(Survey results, DHM Sawubona grant announcement, & Website launch)
OCT 22: *Invoking the Affection of Our Ancestors*
(Ancestral Reflections, Care Box Deliveries & Group Reading Schedule)

Summary:

Our *Discovery Survey* in May was designed to help determine where many of us are located, how we are connected to the Christian Church, our educational levels and what amount of engagement our sisters have had with regional and general church leadership. There were 33 survey respondents representing 12 regions. Also during May, we applied for a Disciples Home Mission Black Leadership Grant and started designing our new website (www.blackdisciplesclergywomen.org). The first meeting and *Discovery Survey* were followed by our June gathering where we held space to address the heaviness of brutality against black people in the public square. This time of reflection was led by NBA's Rev. Angela Whitenhill.

In July, the Fellowship hosted comedian Greta Adams during their meeting and received notification DHM had granted us an award of \$3,998 to fund our Sawubona Box and Book Read. The project resources up to 50 women from the Fellowship with a journal, candle, and copy of *Too Heavy A Yoke* by Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes. After reading and reflecting together over the winter months of quarantine, our project will conclude with an FBDCW roundtable discussion led by the author in March. It has been a strong year for us and there is fatigue. Our priority is to focus on care during the pandemic through spring 2021. We are excited to have our inaugural book discussion December 17th and the second on February 11, 2021.