**THE NATIONAL CONVOCATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

**(DISICPLES OF CHRIST)**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**DRURY INN HOTELS**

**December 4-7, 2019**

**Administrative Secretary’s Report**

**Rev. Dr. Timothy James**

To President Donald Gillett, our General Minister and President, Terri Hord Owens, Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees;

Another year has passed, and we are gathered for our annual Board Meeting. 2019 has been a most eventful and productive year. We began the year riding the wave of momentum from the 25th Biennial Session in Birmingham, AL. We were blessed to take away so many positives from Birmingham that the anticipation for 2020 filled with excitement.

The National Convocation continues “to provide an instrumentality within the structure of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as a forum for the discussion of pertinent issues related to black church life in the context of the whole church”. The information shared through the worship services, Bible lectures, workshops, the Black Ministers retreat and fellowship groups was designed to be taken back to the local congregations and to regions, to better understand who we are and how we may work together.

The 2019 General Assembly in Des Moines, Iowa provided an excellent opportunity for us to highlight the 50th Anniversary of the Merger Agreement in conjunction with the observance of the 50th Anniversary of the Design. I would congratulate our Board of Directors for your determination to broaden the knowledge and understand of the Merger Agreement. The video presentation prepared by the Dr. Rick Lowery, President of the Disciples Historical Society, was both informative and inspirational. The National Convocation Heritage Dinner was listed by many as one of the most memorable events of the 2019 General Assembly. The dramatic presentation, “Standing on the Promise”, written and dir5ected by Rev. Monique Crane Spells, student recruiter at Christian Theological Seminary, depicted the purpose, struggle and gifting of the National Christian Missionary Convention to the National Convocation, and the whole church. We were moved from the edge of our seats to our feet as the performers spoke, sang and preached with power and conviction. As members of the Board of Trustees we may rightfully consider ourselves “Guardians of the Promise.”

I want to thank our Merger Staff, Rev. Sheila Spencer, Director of Christian Education and Faith Formation; Rev. Dr. R. Wayne Calhoun, Minister of Evangelism and Congregational Transformation; and Rev. Chesla Nickelson, Program Director for Disciples Women for their leadership and whole church activity during General Assembly. Their support and encouragement helped to make helped to make the 50th Anniversary Observance, Exhibit Booth, and the National Convocation Heritage Dinner positive, meaningful and well received.

The National Convocation accepts the initiative to be a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. Our desire to be a Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racism denomination is successfully being pursed as we have and participate in PR/AR workshops, the executive search process is used in the recruitment of major staff of our general ministries and our direct support of the Poor People’s Campaign co-chaired by Rev. Dr. William Barber and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharris. Rev. Dr. William Barber is Disciple, our General Minister and President, Terri Owens is most supportive, and we support the Campaign as well. The National Convocation encourages all Disciples to live into our vision; “To be a faithful, growing church, that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice”. (Micah 6: 8) – Year Book

During the General Assembly, a common theme in the ministry reports from the National Convocation, NAPAD the North American Pacific Asian Disciples and Obra Hispana, Hispanic Ministries, was the “2020 EXPERIENCE, IT’S REAL! Revelation 7: 9-17” The excitement and enthusiasm for this event, July 22-25, 2020, in Ft. Worth Texas, on TCU campus is something else. There are many persons who want to witness our experience. I am referring to local interest, national interest and international interest. To God be the glory. The National Convocation, NAPAD and Obra Hispana, are in place to be used by God in a mighty way. We appreciate and anticipate the collaboration and shared support from our colleagues and volunteers endeavoring to make this event a success. We can thank our Ministry Associate, Brenda Rossy, for her hard work and enthusiasm in the presentation of the “2020 EXPERIENCE, IT’S REAL!” After you hear her report, you will understand. Let us be dutiful to get the word out and encourage our people to show up for this show down. Please, pray for the “2020 EXPERIENCE, IT’S REAL!”, our respective ministries working with the Local Arrangements Committee, and be willing to help when called upon.

It was my privilege to have sabbatical shortly following the General Assembly. I was able to use this time for rest, reflection and travel. I was able to lead a workshop, L+C2, Laity plus Clergy to a Higher Power, designed by the Black Disciples Endowment Fund Advisory Committee. I had opportunity to travel to California, Michigan, Virginia and Kansas. Of course, Joyce and I traveled to Dayton Ohio whenever the opportunity presented itself, to be with grandchildren. I was able to get in some good reading, fishing and work in the yard. I would also add here that along with my sabbatical, my wife Joyce began a new phase in her life as a retiree. It was nice and interesting to have a preview of how things might be when we are retired together.

Shortly after General Assembly I announced my retirement. It will be effective December 31, 2020. This may appear to be rather early by some for this announcement, but due to the search process, enough time must be allotted for developing a job profile, receiving applications, screening applications, and permitting the Advisory Committee/Search Committee to establish their plan and strategy of implementation. But until then, we have much work to do and things as a Board to accomplish. I am confident that with your prayers and help, this coming year will be blessed, favored and unforgettable.

**ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT**

January 7-9, 2019 - General Commission of the Ministry, Indianapolis, IN.

January 15-17, 2019 – Disciples Development Conference, CCF New Orleans, LA

January 25, - Poor People’s Campaign Training, Disciples Center, Indianapolis, IN

January 26, - Christian Church in the South West, Leadership conference, Dallas, TX

January 30, - Executive Leadership School, Pension Fund, St. Louis, MO

February 8-11, - Administrative Committee of the General Board, Indianapolis, IN

February 12-14 – College of Regional Ministers, Indianapolis, IN

February 22, Phoenix Theatre, “Black and Twenty-Five in America”, Jeremy Gillett

February 28, - Understanding the Mystic, Howard Thurman, CTS, Indianapolis, IN

March 4-7, Black Minister’s Retreat, “Be Bold!”, DHM, Nashville, TN

March 11-13, - 2020 Planning Committee Meeting, TCU, Ft. Worth, TX

March 19, - General Cabinet, Disciples Center, Indianapolis, IN

March 20-22, - Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, Indianapolis, IN

April 4-6, - Global Ministries Board of Directors, Indianapolis, IN

April 27, - Poor Peoples Campaign Justice Tour, Cincinnati, OH

May 8-11, - Culver-Stockton College, Board to Trustees and Graduation, Canton, MO

May 31- June 1, Greenwood Cemetery Board of Trustees, Nashville, TN

June 9, - Light of the World Christian Church, Morning Message, Indianapolis, IN

June 11, - General Cabinet, Light of the World, Indianapolis, IN

June 24, - Funeral for Chris Hobgood, National City Christian Church, Washington, D. C.

June 30, - The Ordination of Sheila Spencer, LWCC, Indianapolis, IN

July 10-13, - Texas Christian Missionary Fellowship, Workshop Leader, Dallas, TX

July 18-24, General Assembly of the Christian Church, Des Moines, IA

August 9-11, PSW, National Convocation Pastors and Lay Conference, Los Angeles, CA

August 11, - McCarty Memorial Christian Church, Morning Message, Los Angeles, CA

August 14-17, - Chrystal Lake Christian Camp, Rest and Relaxation, Chrystal Lake, MI

August 25, - The Ordination of Rev. Lee Ivey, LWCC, Indianapolis, IN

September 9-12, Mixed Methods Preaching Conference, CTS, LWCC, Indianapolis, IN

November 9, Local Arrangements Committee, TCU, Ft. Worth, TX

November 14-15, DHM Board of Trustees, Crowne Plaza, Indianapolis, IN

November 16-17, Central Woodward Christian Church, Morning Message, Troy, MI

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy James