

A MANUAL FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL CONVOCATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

What is the National Convocation?

The National Convocation came into existence following the Merger Agreement between the National Christian Missionary convention and the International Convention of the Christian Churches in 1969. The purpose of the National Convocation is stated in the Principles of Merger Agreement as follows:

“...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 total church life, for fellowship, program promotion, leadership training, and such other general purposes as shall support and strengthen the congregations in the total mission of the church.”

The National Convocation is the African American expression of faith in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We serve together in the spirit of unity and wholeness as articulated in our vision statement:

“We are the National Convocation, a leaven in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) recognizing and strengthening leaders for the empowerment of African American congregations and the total church.”

How often does the Board of Trustees meet?

The Board of Trustees meet once a year, like an annual meeting, in December. The meeting is usually held on the first full weekend in December. The Executive Committee of the, comprised of the four officers, General Minister and President and the Merger Staff, will meet in December prior to the Board Meeting and also in March, normally the third week. The Executives meet to continue the work and service of the Board. Special attention is given to preparation and planning of the Biennial Session, the agenda for the Board Meeting, and meal functions and

activities at General Assembly. Board Meetings and Biennial Sessions may also be the forum for the discussion of pertinent issues and concerns impacting the Black Church and community. Called meetings for the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee, may be arranged by the President or the Administrative Secretary.

As a Board Member what are my Responsibilities?

The role of Board Members is most important and your nomination and willingness to serve signifies your ability to handle responsibility. We are grateful of your desire to volunteer and serve the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on this particular Board. Attendance is mandatory, your presence is needed at each meeting. Board members determine and plan the mission and help to reach goals of the National Convocation. Board members serve with their time, talent and resources. As a Board Member, you represent the National Convocation with your integrity, commitment and love for the church. Please come to the meetings informed. You must read all your communications. When contacted by email, please respond to the communications. We want you to share your wisdom, skills and insight on matters pertaining to the mission and vision of the National Convocation. It is important that we, the Members of the Board, the President and the Administrative Secretary are informed and on the same page of understanding. Board Members will be appointed to serve on Standing Committees to further the program planning of the National Convocation and involvement in broader church activities.

Board Members are encouraged to ask questions. It is important that we know our story, knowing where we have come from, in order to now where we are going. Board Member help to keep the Board focused on the mission and goals established by the Board of Trustees.

What is the National Christian Missionary Convention?

The National Christian Missionary Convention is the preceding organization to the National Convocation. The integrity and ownership of the assets are maintained under the name of the National Christian Missionary Convention and serve to support and undergird the National Convocation. The Board of Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention is comprised of those Board Members

of the National Convocation who do not represent Fellowship Groups. The NCMC Board consists of twelve Members including the Executive Officers. Their work is to hear reports, monitor and assess the progress of the entities representing the assets of the NCMC. These entities include the Greenwood Cemetery of Nashville, Tennessee that was bequeathed to the NCMC by our founding father, Rev. Preston Taylor; the Black Disciples Endowment Fund which is managed by the Christian Church Foundation; and the African American Clergy Leadership Development Program which administers the Preston Taylor Institute.

How often does the NCMC Board Meet?

The Board of Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention meet once a year during the National Convocation Board of Trustees meeting. IN the event that it is necessary for the NCMC to meet in called session, this may be done so, by the President, the Administrative Secretary who serves as Corporate Secretary of the Board of Trustees of NCMC; the Greenwood Cemetery Board of Trustees and the Board of Trustees of the Black Disciples Endowment Fund.

Who are the Merger Staff?

The Merger Agreement allowed provision for four staff positions for African Americans to serve African American congregations and the whole church. Three of these Positions are on the staff of Disciples Home Mission. The first position is the Director of Christian Education and Faith Formation. The second position is Evangelism and Congregational Transformation. The third position is the Program Director for Disciples Women. The fourth position provided by the Merger Agreement is the Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation who also serves as Associate General Minister in the Office of General Minister and President. A brief description of these roles:

The Work of the Administrative Secretary

The Administrative Secretary is assigned to the National Convocation in the cooperation of the Board of Trustees and the General Minister and President. The Administrative Secretary endeavors to further the vision and mission of the National Convocation. The Administrative Secretary is an advocate and voice of

the silent and marginalized, serving with a passion for justice. The responsibilities of the Administrative Secretary are as follows:

1. Administer the work of the National Convocation office including the management of all funds, including the corporation funds.
2. Develop consultative procedure designed to provide adequate and effective structures, programs and services for African American congregations in the various General Administrative Units and Regions.
3. Develop an operational and Biennial Session budget; when approved, implement.
4. Serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention, serving as Corporate Secretary and maintain custody of the corporate seal.
5. Serve on or resource all committees, boards, task forces, and commissions of the National Convocation.
6. Develop and plan the Executive Committee meetings in consultation with the President.
7. Initiate planning for reach Biennial Session. Following approval of the plans, implement and execute as directed by the Board.
8. Review the work of the Manager of the Greenwood Cemetery and report any operational weaknesses to the Board of Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention.
9. Publish SELAH, the periodical for the National Convocation.
10. Other duties that may arise in the course of service in order to successfully accomplish the work.

The Work of the Associate General Minister

The Merger Agreement called for the participation of the Administrative Secretary in the Office of General Minister and President as an Executive serving African American congregations as well as the whole church. The Associate General Minister performs on Boards, Committees and Task forces designated by the General Minister and President and performs other duties as assigned.

As a member of the Office of General Minister and President the Associate General Minister serves on and with:

1. The Senior Staff of the OGMP
2. The Justice Team aka the inner-office Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racism team
3. The General Assembly Planning Committee
4. The Worship Planning Committee of the General Assembly

Board Appointments include:

1. The Administrative Committee of the General Board
2. The Committee on Council and Mediation of the General Board
3. The Finance Committee of the General Board
4. The Division of Overseas Ministries Board of Directors
5. The Board of Trustees of Culver-Stockton College
6. The Churches Uniting in Christ

Appointments as Leader of the National Convocation

1. The College of Regional Ministers
2. The Pastoral Table
3. The General Commission on Ministry
4. The General Cabinet
5. The General Board of the Christian Church
6. The Disciples Home Mission Board
7. The Reconciliation Commission
8. The Team Leadership Committee