

**A MANUAL FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
NATIONAL CONVOCATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

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 adopted in the principles of the Merger Agreement are stated in the Articles of Operations 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 made up of congregations that are predominantly African American in their membership. The National Convocation is therefore recognized as one of our Racial Ethnic Ministries. Going forward in the life of the church, serving together in the spirit of unity and wholeness, our vision statement is as follows:

“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, in December. We meet usually on the first full weekend of the month. The Executive Committee of the Board, comprised of the four officers, will meet in December, prior to the Board Meeting and also March, usually 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, meal functions and activities at the General Assembly. Board Meetings and the Biennial Session may be the forum for the discussion of pertinent issues and concerns impacting the Black community or the Black Church. Called meetings, for the Board or the Executives, may be arranged by the President.

The Responsibility of Board Members

The role of Board members is most important and your presence signifies your ability to be able to handle this responsibility. We are most appreciative of your willingness 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 the 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 of your communications. When contacted by email, please respond to the communications when requested. Share your wisdom, skills and insight on matters pertaining to the mission and vision of the National Convocation. It is important that we, the Board Members, the President and the Administrative Secretary are informed and are all on the same page of understanding. Board members are asked to volunteer to support the National Convocation in its participation in National events such as the Biennial Session, the Black Ministers Retreat and the General Assembly.

Board members are encouraged to ask questions. It is important that you know who we are as the National Convocation. It is important that we know where we have come from and where we are going. Board members help to keep the board focused on the mission and goals established by the Board.

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 is comprised of members of the Board of Trustees of the National Convocation who do not represent the Fellowship Groups. The NCMC Board would be made of twelve members including the executive officers. Their work is to hear the reports to 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 that is managed by the Christian Church Foundation and the African American Leadership Development Program which administers the Preston Taylor Institute.

Board of Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention Meetings

The Board of Trustees of the National Christian Missionary Convention meets once a year at the end of the National Convocation Board 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 serves as Corporate Secretary to the Board of Trustees of NCMC; the Greenwood Cemetery Board; The Board of Trustees of the Black Disciples Endowment Fund.

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 housed in Disciples Home Missions; 1.) Christian Education (Director of Christian Education, Faith Formation and Assistant to the President for DHM); 2.) Program Staff for the Office of Disciples Women and 3.) Evangelism (Congregational Transformation and Director of Black Ministry).

The fourth 4.), position provided by the Merger Agreement is the Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation who also serves as the Associate General Minister in the Office of the General Minister and President. A brief description of these roles follows:

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 mission and vision 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 of the Church.
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 each 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 accomplished the work.

The Work of the Associate General Minister

The Merger Agreement called for participation of the Administrative Secretary in Office of the General Minister and President as an executive serving African American congregations, as well as the whole church. The Associate General Minister serves to further the mission and vision of 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 OGMP
2. The Justice Team or our inner office Pro-Reconciling/Anti-Racism team
3. The General Assembly Planning Committee
4. The Worship Planning Committee of the General Assembly

The 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 Advisory Committee

Appointments as a Leader of a Racial Ethnic Ministry:

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 Missions Board
7. The Reconciliation Commission
8. The Team Leadership Committee (TLC)