



# *The* Compassion & Care Connection

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Dr. Jerry Young, President, National Baptist Convention USA, Incorporated (NBC USA, Inc.)

"Envisioning the Future Exceptionally Through Our Commitment to Christian Stewardship" Jeremiah 29:11 and Corinthians 4:1-2

A Publication of the Home Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention USA, Incorporated

Dr. Jerry Young, President, NBC, USA, Inc.  
Dr. Michael D. Warren, Chairman, HMB  
Rev. Leonard O. Griffin, Executive Secretary, HMB



**JANUARY - MAY 2020**

**get woke  
and vote**

**#votevotevote**



# *The* Compassion & Care Connection

*"Envisioning the Future Exceptionally through Our Commitment to Christian Stewardship"*

Jeremiah 29:11 and 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

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P.O. Box 2171, Sierra Vista, AZ 85636

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### Home Mission Board Statement

To promote Home Mission Ministry in partnership with the constituency of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., throughout the United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

### Home Mission Board Goal

To spread the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and advance the Kingdom of GOD in *Envisioning Excellence in Compassion and Care.*"

### Home Mission Board Vision

The Home Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., seeks to witness to the *Compassion & Care* of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy spirit and to the glory of God. We fulfill the vision through biblical messages, ministry and mission education. In keeping with our Master's Compassion & Care, we believe that Jesus Christ's ministry was restorative, reconciling, and redemptive by nature. This three-fold ministry is therefore holistic, dealing with every facet of human life. Our priorities for holistic ministry include the following foci: spiritual, mental, physical, social, financial and the environment. Only by addressing human life holistically can we be faithful in empowering others to realize the abundant life for which Jesus Christ died and arose.

We partner with the constituency of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., its State Presidents, District Moderators, Pastors, and other clergy to provide relevant resources. These resources are designed to assist in the establishment, and/or development of Home Mission Ministry in cooperation with churches across local, global, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic territories.

## Greetings from Our Chairman



**Dr. Michael D. Warren**

At the scene of most vehicular collisions there are at least three groups of people, each with a different response toward those involved. The **first group** consists of bystanders and onlookers. They are curious and watch to see what happens but have little active involvement.

The **second group** present is law enforcement. They are there to investigate the cause of the incident, assign blame, and mete out appropriate warnings and then assess punishment.

The **third group** that shows up is the paramedics. They are the people usually most welcomed by those involved in the accident. They could care less whose fault the accident was, and they do not engage in lecturing about bad driving habits. Their response is to help those who were hurt. They bandage wounds, free trapped people, and give words of encouragement.

Three groups -- one is uninvolved; one is assigning blame and assessing punishment, and one is helping the hurting.

From the very inception of our great National Baptist Convention, the Home Mission Board has served as paramedics, bandaging wounds, freeing trapped people, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, responding to churches and pastors and giving words of encouragement. For well over a century, we have humbly served as first responders, on the front line of reaching the lost and helping the hurting in our Jerusalem. Through the years, we have in the Spirit of Christ sought "to preach the gospel to the poor; to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

We have embraced the vision that Christ spoke in Acts 1:8 that "you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." We have sought to fulfill the Lord's expectation that any global mission's strategy begins with a strong home base that expands to the

global arena. Our hope, our aim has been to love with the love of Jesus not only in word but also in deed. I am eagerly excited and genuinely grateful to accept the challenge of our visionary President, Dr Jerry Young, to take up the mantle of chairing the Home Mission Board of our great National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Incorporated.

I stand on the tall shoulders of past leaders who without fear of successful contradiction led with credibility and distinction. Time and time again they were proven, patient, peaceful, proficient, and powerful. They were persons of vision, vitality, and valor. If by chance it seems that I see further, it is only because I stand on their shoulders. I join the host of well-wishers who pray choice blessings on our immediate past Executive Secretary the Reverend Gilbert Pickett, Sr., of New York who served us with credibility and distinction. He remains a vital part of the Board. We look forward to his counsel as we navigate the uncertain days ahead.

Too much can never be said about The Reverend Leonard O. Griffin of South Carolina our immediate past Chairman and our new Executive Secretary who serves with excellence. We pray for him a successful tenure in his new position.

We welcome to the Board our new Vice-Chair, The Reverend Kelcey A. West of Nevada. We look forward to utilizing the tremendous gifts and talents he possesses as we seek to cast and launch the vision and work of Home Missions. It is a joy to serve with a board that has truly become a family. From the executive team to the regional, state coordinators, field workers, Members at-Large, state representatives and staff; all who serve with a sense of urgency and commitment to the work of the board we are united in harmony, humility and the spirit of helpfulness.

This is the church's finest hour. We must now choose worship over worry, faith over fear and compassion over convenience. We must commit ourselves afresh to the work of Home Missions. We invite Pastors, Congregations, District Associations and State Conventions affiliated with the National Baptist Convention USA., and our many friends and well-wishers to join us as there is a need now more than ever to "throw out the life line."

As we embark on the work of a new tenure, may we turn our attention to the pressing issues of our time. On December 31, 2019, health officials from China alerted the World Health Organization of a new pattern of pneumonia in the city of Wuhan that they had never seen previously. By January 7, 2020, health officials announced they had identified a new virus in the coronavirus family, which they designated 2019-nCoV. Coronaviruses include the common cold and SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome). They spread by being in proximity to an infected person and inhaling droplets when they cough or sneeze, or by touching surfaces where these droplets land and then touching one's face or nose. Since January 7, this new coronavirus has spread to every nation on earth

with the WHO reporting millions of cases and tens of thousands having died.

This crisis is not an hoax nor a political ploy; it is a worldwide pandemic that has impacted Wall Street, Main Street, Church Street, business, governments, militaries, science, colleges, universities, public and private schools, gated communities and especially the hood disproportionately. Nationally African Americans make up 13% of the population in this country but 30% of those testing positive for the coronavirus. This is staggering to say the least.

**The following article appeared in the Harvard Business Review dated May 14, 2020:**

"In many respects, coronavirus has changed the world. But it also has exposed the startlingly consistent toll that catastrophe exacts from black communities. The adage that "when white America catches a cold, black America gets pneumonia" has become a chilling reality. Recent data coming out of New York, Chicago, and Louisiana indicate that deaths from Covid-19 are disproportionately high among communities of color — black and Latino patients in particular. Though blacks are only 22% of New York City's population, as of mid-April they constituted 28% of fatalities from the virus. In Chicago, where blacks are 30% of the population, they comprise 70% of those killed by Covid-19. In the state of Louisiana, blacks are 32% of the population but 70% of those dead from the disease. As some states move to reopen against the advice of public health professionals, these numbers are likely to get even worse."

**The following interview took place on CMBC MAKE IT May 15, 2020:**

"There are definitely multiple reasons why we're seeing black communities be disproportionately impacted by Covid-19," New York-based physician Dr. Uche Blackstock tells CNBC MAKE IT. She explains that when you look at the "social determinants of health," such as where a person lives, works and the quality of health care they have access to, you will see that structural racism has left African Americans "vulnerable and marginalized." "Even before this [pandemic], we had significant health inequities," she adds, while emphasizing the increased levels of diabetes, high blood pressure, hypertension, asthma, and obesity in the black community. "And what we're finding out is that these are the underlying medical conditions that result in very serious complications from Covid-19."

Due to a history of housing discrimination and redlining, which is the systemic practice of refusing government resources to predominantly black neighborhoods because they have been deemed a financial risk, generations of African Americans have been forced to live in areas that lack access to healthy food options. Many of these neighborhoods, which researchers have categorized as food deserts are filled with fast food restaurants and small corner stores that have more junk food options than fresh fruits and vegetables.



"I think it's really important to understand that dietary choices aren't moral choices," says Chinara Tate, director of nutrition at Mount Sinai Eating and Weight Disorders Center of Excellence in New York. She explains that for many black and brown people living in poor communities, the food choices they make are made through a survival mindset, and they don't have the luxury of thinking about the long-term impact of their diet. "If you have the option of purchasing an onion for a dollar or purchasing a meal for a dollar, it makes the most sense to purchase the meal, even if it's not the healthiest option because an onion is not going to feed your family." As a result, residents in these communities tend to rely on high calorie foods that are cheaper and more accessible, says Dr. Jessie Marshall, an assistant professor of internal medicine at the University of Michigan Medical School. "And we know that results in chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity," she says. "So again, Covid-19 did not create these racial disparities that we are seeing. It simply magnified these disparities in unbelievable ways." Brothers and sisters these and many other reports, interviews and statistics are but a clarion call for us to reflect, rethink and retool to do ministry during the pandemic and most certainly in the post pandemic era. Missions is about mercy and compassion and now must become a matter of justice. We must become active agents of deliverance for the oppressed.

To adequately serve the present age, we need financial support. Will you join us? Will you use your influence to encourage others to partner with this vital ministry that assists in serving as the eyes, arms, legs and feet of the National Baptist Convention? Though the night is dark, and we are far from home, I cannot close here without mentioning that morning is coming.

Although the we are at the edge of night, and all the days of our lives, we seem to be facing our secret storms, and all our children are bold and beautiful yet they are young and restless, searching for tomorrow and living in another world. As our world turns, we are sorely in need of a guiding light, with one life to live, we need a general hospital where qualified doctors have a love of life....

Darkness and despair all around us...  
But I have come to office with renewed hope and confidence...  
I believe with Carlisle that no lie can live forever...  
I believe with William Cullen Bryant that truth crushed to the ground will rise again...  
I believe with James Russell Lowell that truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne. Yet that scaffold sways the future.

I believe the Bible. Whatever a man sows that shall he also reap. He Who created a world by stepping out from behind the purple curtain of nowhere onto the platform of nothing, and just speak everything into existence.

He Who parted the waters of a sea simply by blowing His nose.

He Who sustained 4 million people on manna and water for 40 years, and none died of starvation.

He Who touched the womb of a virgin and cause her to give birth to a Son and call His name Jesus.

He Who walked on the water, opened blinded eyes, gave life to the dead, made the lame to walk, He turned water into wine, and He Who came back to life after being dead 3 days.

He can take a hell-bound, hell-deserving sinner, an outcast of society, a murderer on death row, and make him a brand new creature. He can do all of those things; but He cannot FAIL US, He cannot FLEE us, He can FORGET us, and He cannot FORSAKE us.

Though the storms keep on raging in my life,  
And sometimes it's hard to tell my night from day.  
Still that hope that lies within is reassured  
As I keep my eyes upon the distant shore;  
I know He'll lead me safely to that  
Blessed place He has prepared

But if the storms don't cease,  
And if the wind keeps on blowing, (in my life)  
My soul has been anchored in the Lord.

I realize that sometimes in this life  
You're gonna be tossed by the waves  
And the currents that seem so fierce,  
But in the word of God I've got an anchor;  
And it keeps me steadfast and unmovable  
Despite the tide.  
But if the storms don't cease,  
But in case the wind keeps on blowing, (in my life)

My soul has been anchored in the Lord.  
My soul has been anchored in the Lord.

My soul's been anchored  
My soul's been anchored

The billows may roll, the breakers may dash  
I will not stray because He holds me fast  
So dark the day, clouds in the sky  
I know it's all right cause my Jesus is nigh

And my soul -  
My soul, my soul, my soul

My soul's been anchored  
My soul's been anchored  
My soul's been anchored  
My soul's been anchored

You push me down, but Jesus picks me up  
He sticks right by me when the going gets tough

And My soul's been anchored  
My soul's been anchored  
My soul's been anchored  
My, my, my, my,

My soul has been anchored in the Lord.

## Greetings from the Executive Secretary



***Rev. Leonard O. Griffin***

Greetings, grace, peace, and mercy to you from God our Father, Christ our Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost our Comforter, Teacher and Guide! Honor to our esteemed President, Dr. Jerry Young, General Secretary, Dr. Alvin Edwards, the Executive Board, and the august Parent Body leadership team. I give honor to all of the Department Heads of our National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., honor to our Home Mission Board (HMB) Chairman Dr. Michael Warren, Vice Chairman, Dr. Kelcey West, to all of the HMB Family, and to all of the Pastors of our great convention.

I exalt the One, True, and Living God of the universe in whom we live, move, and have our being. Permit me to begin by expressing my extreme gratitude to President Young and all others who contributed to my elevation to this lofty and challenging Executive Secretary leadership position. I pledge to give my best to serve the Master through this mammoth missionary ministry. I look forward to the continued seamless working relationship experienced alongside of Rev. Dr. Michael Warren and the rest of the HMB family. We extend warm words of welcome to our Vice Chairman Pastor Kelsey West, and we anticipate that he brings a fresh spiritual fervor to the HMB.

I also want to shout out Rev. Dr. Gilbert Pickett, Sr. our immediate Past Executive Secretary. You have paved a path of leadership that will impact the HMB for years to come! Through your efforts our HMB Mission footprint remains in cities and on the hearts of the thousands served with food, clothing, health screenings, haircuts, voter registration, and many other tenets taught in Matthew 25:31-46. Under your leadership Dr. Pickett, the HMB spread the missionary brand of the NBC, USA, Inc. far and wide. Thank you again sir.

Permit me to pause here to remember and reflect on our Immediate Past Vice President At-Large, Rev. Dr. Harry Blake. Dr. Blake served with distinction. He was a prime example for many of us younger Pastors. The Blake Family, his Church Family, and our Convention Family have suffered a monumental loss in his transition to his eternal reward. We commend his soul to our Maker.

I am confident that we all share the disappointment of the necessary cancellation of our National Baptist Congress of Christian Education that annually meets the third week in June. As we have come to learn over the last several weeks, this pandemic COVID-19 coronavirus, has exacted a deadly impact on our nation and the entire world! Another most unfortunate reality from this has been the tremendous toll on the African American, Hispanic, and other impoverished populations in New York, New Orleans, Chicago, Detroit, California, Florida, and other municipalities. Our hearts are hurting, and we express our condolences to all the families, church families, and communities devastated by death and ripped apart by escalating economic losses. We are constantly praying for those: fighting for every breath on ventilators, struggling to survive this life-threatening sickness, battling on the frontlines to save lives, and comforting those in sorrow.

This issue of our *C and C* focuses on voting. 2020 is a Presidential Election year. Several U.S. Senators and U. S. Representatives seek reelection in this cycle. Every voter must take his/her vote seriously and cast that vote in EVERY election. No other election could be this pivotal. Too many of our neighbors, relatives, and friends did not vote in the last Presidential election. Due to that injurious phenomenon, our nation continues to exist under the shadow of dark clouds and division.

For example, the USA Today reported in March that Mr. Trump won Michigan by 11,000 votes while 277,000 Black citizens did not vote. As we have witnessed over these last three plus years, this nation, the world even, cannot afford a second term under this lackluster façade of leadership! The HMB has a Biblical duty to fight against injustice, especially on American soil. The injustices we have witnessed over these three plus years should sour the stomachs of us all and motivate us all to push for the vote.

Our first Guest Columnist, Rev. Dr. Nelson B. Rivers, III, has worked in Civil Rights for well over three decades! He has served in leadership with the NAACP, and he currently holds the Office of VP for Stakeholder Relations with the

National Action Network. I hope that you will read and heed the insightful and inspiring words of this hardworking drum major for justice.

Also, the HMB possesses concern and compassion for those who suffer in their physical bodies. Some suffer because of a lack of adequate healthcare, due to the increasing disparities in health and healthcare, and related to the unjust demeanor or bedside manner that some of our black and brown brothers and sisters face when treated by physicians that do not take their illnesses seriously.

Because healthcare impacts all aspects of our lives and society, I have asked Ms. Garcia E. Williams to submit some valuable information to be included in our *C and C*. Ms. Williams is the Executive Director of The Medi, “a certified 501C3 organization headquartered in N. Charleston, SC. [They] serve to provide education and technology to support the needs in our community”. Partnerships with such organizations on the local level could result in tremendous dividends for our communities. Perhaps this information will provide inspiration to others in other communities.

Additionally, I thank our former Vice Chair of the HMB, current Board member, and tremendous leader of Bread For the World, Reverend Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith for recommending me to serve as a Guest Panelist on a Webinar sponsored by Bread For the World. The Topic was “COVID-19 and Its Impact on Hunger for Communities of Color”. While over four hundred persons registered for the Webinar, nearly two hundred joined us on Thursday, April 23, 2020. Hunger has grown exponentially for people of color as a result of this pandemic. This pandemic not only brought greater attention to the everyday food insecurity faced by black and brown people, but it also increased the numbers of people who go hungry every day!

Finally, I am prayerful and hopeful that we will meet again in September for our Annual Session in National Harbor, MD. Because of the unpredictable nature of this pandemic, we can hope and pray while recognizing that the safety of our people must take precedence. Please continue to or begin to send your financial support to the HMB. Your financial support enables this ministry to reach the least, the lost, and the left outs. Soon, we expect to publicize easier methods of making your donations to this missionary effort.

## From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration



***Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith***

Did you know that the United States holds 25 percent of the world’s incarcerated people in its jails and prisons? Did you know that 13 percent of the U.S. population is African American, yet almost 50 percent of the more than 2 million people in prisons are black? One-third of black men between the ages of 18 and 28 are in prisons or jails, on parole, or waiting for their day in court. Dr. Iva Carruthers, vice chair of Bread for the World’s board and general secretary of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, cites these statistics in this month’s devotional in the “Lament and Hope” Pan African devotional.

Carruthers reminds us that this tragedy has public policy roots in 1971 with the “War on Drugs” declared by President Richard Nixon. In her book, “The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.” Michelle Alexander argues that “by targeting black men through the War on Drugs and decimating communities of color, the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control—relegating millions to a permanent second-class status—even as it formally adheres to the principle of colorblindness.... We have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it.”

Bread for the World sees mass incarceration as a hunger and faith issue. In Bread’s article, Mass Incarceration: A Major Cause of Hunger, we identify how mass incarceration increases hunger. The article refers to a study by the National Institutes of Health that points out that 91 percent of returning citizens reported being food insecure. Many face difficulties securing a place to work and live after being released. In addition, 75 percent of returning citizens report that it is “extremely difficult” or “impossible” to find a job post-incarceration. This is why Bread advocated for the First Step legislation that was passed and is still monitoring its progress and supporting further reforms.

Advocates like Bryan Stevenson, the executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), stated that “the First Step Act is important but does not go far enough in addressing the realities of mass incarceration.” He is also known for making the connection between the enslavement period of African peoples in the United States and mass incarceration. He reminds us that this year of the Quad-Centennial of the enslavement of Angolan peoples in 1619 is a root cause for the disproportionate representation of black and brown people who are incarcerated today. In other words, the brutal period of more than 250 years of unpaid labor in a system of chattel slavery—in which hunger, malnutrition and poverty became normalized—still has consequence.

Our prayerful engagement to end hunger and racial inequities by advocating for policies that lead to prison reforms is important. Recently, Bread was a part of the Annual Convocation of Christian Churches Together (CCT) held at the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, where national church leaders from the five national Christian families renewed their commitment to this.

*Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith is senior associate for Pan African and Orthodox Church Engagement at Bread for the World.*

## **BLACK CHURCH 75, Inc. “The 2020 Get Out the Vote Plan for the Black Church in America!”**



***By Rev. Nelson B. Rivers, III  
Pastor, Charity Missionary Baptist Church  
North Charleston, SC  
Vice President, Religious Affairs and External  
Relations, National Action Network (NAN)***

The November 3, 2020 general election is the most important election for African Americans in our lifetime. I know this has been said about every general election but this time it is TRUE!

The National Action Network (NAN) under the leadership of the founder and president the Rev. Al Sharpton and Board Chairman Dr. W. F. Richardson, who is also Chairman of the Conference of National Black Churches (CNBC) are supporting Black Church 75, Inc (BC75) a national voter registration movement for the 2020 elections. BC75 is designed and led by the NAN Department of Religious Affairs to recruit Black churches all across America to adopt Black Church 75 and agree to register and turnout 75% of their eligible voters for the November election. OUR TIME HAS COME!

While voting may be optional for other groups in America, we cannot afford for it to be optional for Black America! Sisters and brothers, we don't have the option not to vote. America is at a crossroads and we need to save her to save ourselves! We are in a pandemic that has caused economic, judicial, political, and social pandemics for Black Americans and other American citizens of color.

For us the right to vote is PRECIOUS, POWERFUL AND PERSONAL! Precious because it was paid for by blood! Powerful because it changed us from the enslaved into the elected president of the United States, twice! And Personal because your right to vote belongs to you and only you and no one can use your vote, but you!

### **PROGRAM**

To greatly enhance our opportunity to secure the participation of the greatest number of Black churches in BC75, we have commitments to secure Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) with the leadership of the largest black faith denominations including our own the National Baptist Convention, USA Inc.; Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc; African Methodist Episcopal Church; African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; and the Church of God in Christ. These MOAs will achieve an unequaled synergy between BC75 and the Black Church in the United States.

The program will live mostly online starting on June 15, 2020 and we are asking pastors to have their churches to participate in Black Church 75 and go to [www.BlackChurch75.com](http://www.BlackChurch75.com) and do the following:

Go online to **Blackchurch75.com**, download the sample membership roster table or Excel file.

Input their membership roster into that file and upload it to **BlackChurch75.com**.

**BlackChurch75inc.com** will email the updated membership roster to the pastor or designee listing the members who are and who are not listed on your state's voter registration rolls. Churches will be asked to use this data to register and turnout 75% of their eligible voters.

The congregation, through various suggested means such as: phone calls, door to door canvassing, texting and direct mail, bulletin inserts, in church media, websites,



and all other social media platforms, the church leadership will work to register those in their congregation who are not listed on the states' voter rolls before the states' voter registration deadline.

At the conclusion of the voter registration deadlines, churches will conduct voter contact to ensure their registered members get to the correct polling locations with appropriate identification (if needed) to vote early or on election day. Church leadership will be trained in voter registration, voter protection and voter turnout to ensure maximum voter turnout from participating churches.

Once states list their verified voter information, **Black-Church75Inc.com** will cross check that list and report back to the church on their members who voted or did not vote.

During early voting and election day every church will conduct voter turnout work! Calling, texting, emailing, and contacting members through posting on Facebook and providing rides to the polls. Churches should be creative during this time of COVID-19 to encourage the use of vote by mail options.

Thanks in large part to the Black church, black voter turnout in the 2008 presidential election was 66.1%, the greatest black voter turnout in US history! In 2012 with even more leadership from the Black church the 2012 black voter turnout surpassed 2008 with record turnout of 66.2%! But in 2016 the Black voter turnout dropped to 59.6%, and we all know what happened!

Look at the table below and note how we performed since 2008 and why the Black church is so vitally important to what happens in 2020. Please join Black Church 75, Inc. TODAY!

## Covid-19 Plus: God's Guaranteed Prescription



*Dr. Charles E. Mock*

Since many preachers are weighing in sermonically and otherwise about the Coronavirus, I thought I might add my two cents for what it may be worth.

The biblical background informing my two cents are books of the Bible: Numbers 21:4-9 and the Gospel of John 3:4-9.

I have gleaned from numerous articles on the impact of what is now called Covid19. Some takeaways from these articles are 1) patterns of marginalization, exclusion and discrimination, 2) millions of Americans are one paycheck away from being added to the desperate poverty list, 3) many Facebook posts seek to help those close to death by advocating or pointing to unscientific cures or remedies that at least slow the march of death running through the veins of the infected.

One article, in particular, related the name Trofim Lysenko. Lysenko was a Soviet biologist who had the ear and confidence of Joseph Stalin, mass murder of people. Lysenko advanced a pseudoscientific, Marxist-centered theory to biology. Lysenko's delegitimized research-based intelligence on genetics as a capitalist lie. He fostered a socialist alternative theory of biology that refused to accept that plants were bound by any such thing as "genes." Orange trees would flourish in Siberia, he promised Stalin. Lysenko purged scientists who refused to endorse his theories. Stalin's application of Lysenko's bizarre theories resulted in mass starvation and death.

President Trump is giving a green light to desperate people for the use of hydroxychloroquine, a medication used to treat malaria, as a cure for the coronavirus. Over time, who

	2008	2012	2016	2020
<b>Black VAP</b>	24,930,000	26,915,000	28,808,000	?
<b>Registered</b>	17,375,000	19,680,000	19,984,000	?
<b>Unregistered</b>	7,555,000	7,235,000	8,824,000	?
<b>Voter Turnout</b>	16,133,000	17,814,000	17,119,000	?
<b>Voter Turnout %</b>	66.1%	66.2%	59.4%	?
<b>Registered Not Voting</b>	1,242,000	1,562,000	2,865,000	?

knows, it just might prove effective. The issue is its current unscientifically proven status.

This reminds me of an old saying: **Necessity is the mother of invention.** Knowing human nature as we do, necessity caused various inventions to combat what I call Covid19 Plus. I add the word “plus” because there is something far worse than what was killing Israelites in the twenty-first chapter of the fourth book in the Bible called Numbers.

In response to God, some complaining Israelites in their wilderness journey into the Promised Land, God permitted serpents to have their way with complainers. The result of their complaints impacted non-complainers. As in all cases, innocent people are impacted by the sins of the guilty. Those who can least afford the impact are the very people that suffer the worse of the consequences of sin.

The complainers, again following human nature, did what they could to fix the serpent problem whose released venom was like a virus in the veins of all who they bit. One can only imagine what they applied to the problem:

- a) Egyptian religious rituals to the gods of Egypt
- b) Egyptian scientific knowledge
- c) Egyptian medicines
- d) Social distancing strategies

Who knows? Some may have tried homemade coverings for their ankles that were supposed to be serpent-proof. Whatever they tried it didn't work!

They finally did what pride always makes it difficult to do. They went to Moses, the very one they sinned against as well as the God Moses obeyed. They went with a confession and a prayer. The confession had to do with their sin against God and Moses, God's chosen leader for such a time as theirs. The prayer was a request for Moses' intervention to God on their behalf.

God heard their prayer and answered it by giving an answer to a problem against which all the knowledge and strategies learned in Egypt did not work against the serpents' venomous virus of sickness and death.

God's answer through Moses was a bronze serpent wrapped around a lifted pole. As many as looked up to the lifted serpent were healed. The curb was flattened, and they went on day by day with fewer cases of sickness and deaths. Fast forward to the New Testament to a conversation between a Jewish Temple Teacher and the greatest Teacher of all times—Jesus Christ.

Jesus used Numbers 21 to make a major life and

death point to the world: a world suffering from a snake bite that went back to Genesis three--the Garden of Eden.

According to Christian teaching and interpretation, Adam and Eve, God's First Couple, took a bite from fruit from the Tree of Know of Good and Evil. It was a bite that put them in conflict with God's commandment. Breaking God's explicit and well-understood commandment, in a spiritual sense, left them bitten by the Serpent. It was and continues as Sin--the Virus of Death through a venomous serpent. It is Plus because it does more damage than Covid19. Covid19 Plus leaves a trail of blood, destruction, and sickness unto death across every conceivable human and geographical boundary without the least evidence of discrimination or prejudice.

### **The Virus of Sin, like COVID-19, has its symptoms:**

1)Breathing problems.

We cannot praise God in obedience as the breath of God warrants and demands.

#### **Causes:**

2)Eating problems.

We eat what is not good for us and what we eat ends up destroying our bodies.

3)Mental problems

It leaves one with mental and emotional despair for which one can use temporary fixes for a permanent problem.

4)Social Problems

It causes distancing issues between us and others, most of whom we see as a threat to our being and wellness in a zero-sum game. Eventually, it kills all it infects. The wages of the Covid19 Plus is death.

But there is a Prescription similar to the one God described through Moses in Numbers twenty-one.

Jesus tells Nicodemus and us that faith in Jesus is God's evidence-based prescription. John, Jesus' faithful disciple, heard and reported what Jesus said about the virus of sin. Jesus words have become as familiar as the Lord's Prayer. Jesus said, "If I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me."

In the Book called Numbers, chapter twenty-one, we see how God so-loved his wilderness Servants that he gave a lifted Serpent on a pole. Whoever looked up to it would live. Jesus is saying to Nicodemus, the Serpent that had a role in human death is challenged by a Lamb lifted on a cross as God's answer for human life.

Whoever looks up to Jesus on the Cross with the eyes of faith in what Jesus accomplishes through it, will have life and abundance in this world and eternal life in the world to come.

For Christians, Jesus is God's guaranteed prescription for Covid19 Plus. Why do I say guaranteed? Because the life that comes from God through Jesus does not guarantee one will not die. It guarantees that death will not be the last word.

Jesus's heavenly Father didn't intervene to save Jesus "from" death. His Father saved His Son "through" death. From physical death, Jesus arises into a new form of life, a life all His followers share in this world, and more so in the world to come.

It takes another strong follower of Jesus, Apostle Paul to remind us of this good news. Apostle Paul said it best when he penned those two questions found in First Corinthian 15:55 -57, *"O death where now is your sting? Oh grave, where now is your victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

## Collaborating Partnerships During COVID-19



**Sis. Mary Elizabeth Austin**

This is a report of activities for the Oklahoma Missionary Baptist State Convention for the Month of April 2020. I would like to say a big Thank you to Brother Warren of the National Baptist Convention Disaster Relief Team. Dr. Frazier thank you for taking Mission Disaster Relief to a new level in our convention. I applaud you because of your leadership allows those of us working in the field under the umbrella of the National Baptist Convention Disaster Team to have a direct resource and a team that is working together. Thank You.

**We, also provided over 100 meals to seniors this month.** Partnership support for senior meals was in collabora-

tion of partnership support to the Red Cross in Tatums and Shawnee, Oklahoma. Meal were provided in collaboration with Oklahoma Missionary Baptist Convention Home Mission/ Disaster relief, Diva Creations, and Mr. & Mrs. Lewis & Shelia Thrash, Delta Community Action Seniors program. **We provided 50 emergency disaster packs that included paper goods and disinfecting items, gloves, and 62 masks made by Diva Creations, for those in need of mask.** We will continue to provide a meal once a week for seniors in Tatums, Oklahoma through the month of May.

As a member of the National Baptist and the Oklahoma Missionary Baptist Disaster Relief Team this has been by far the greatest challenge in disaster relief as we know it. I have been on over ten disasters representing the National Baptist Convention in Partnership with the American Red Cross. During this Pandemic, have had the opportunity to serve my own community of Tatums, Oklahoma. To the Oklahoma and the National Baptist Convention, USA, INC., I would like to say thank you for your generosity in providing internet service and the availability of online learning, in rural undeserved communities.

Tatums is one of thirteen all-black towns, out of more than 50 that once existed, remaining in Oklahoma. While Tullahassee is reportedly the oldest, most were established between 1889 and 1907 as blacks sought security and control of their own destiny in a segregated world. Most of the towns began to decline in the 1920s and 1930s as rural blacks faced



economic hardships and began to move to urban areas. Tatums was established in 1896 and is named for Lee Tatum, the first postmaster and a United States marshal. The Oklahoma wealth index is at 75 based on several indicators of affluence including average household income and average net worth, with an average household income of about 21,000.

In 2018, the median household income of Tatums residents was \$26,250. However, 31.0% of Tatums residents live in poverty.

Information Technology Disaster Resource Center – Nonprofit Organization ITDRC Disaster Response Team usually arrives within 24 hours of an event and remains deployed for 3-6 weeks to facilitate resources for Recovery. Once the Response Team demobilizes, ongoing support is transitioned to local volunteers, or our Remote Response Team. Our commitment to a community does not end when the TV cameras leave; we continue to provide resources and support throughout the Long-Term Recovery process. ITDRC is a volunteer driven 501(c)(3) Non-Profit dedicated to providing emergency communications and technical resources to communities affected by disaster within the United States. We are a trusted resource to local, state, and national nonprofits and emergency management agencies, and a FEMA Tech Sector Collaboration Partner.

*Sis. Elizabeth Austin the OBSC Home/Foreign Mission Field Representative | NBC/OBSC Disaster Management*

## Women's Right to Vote in the U.S. and Lessons from Ethiopian Queens

*Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith*

"Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God." —Psalms 68:31b

I recently visited Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on my way to participate in a faith workshop on the effects of conflict on Pan African women and girls.

Conflict is one of the greatest threats to ending hunger—affecting women and girls in particular, the hardest. Conflict and other issues related to the lack of empowerment of women and girls often do not have much visibility. Bread for the World's 2015 Hunger Report: "When Women Flourish...We Can End Hunger" included an interactive tool that showed the world is missing nearly 80 percent of data essential to charting women's progress on empowerment.

Also, not well-known is the historic and contemporary stories of hope, resilience, and leadership of women and girls in conflict. But Ethiopia offers an important lesson. Ethiopia is not only a biblical and secular treasure; it is a dignified location for all peoples and especially African peoples.

Ethiopia is the only African country not colonized by a European power. Ethiopia's self-governance and acceptance of Christianity was codified and practiced long before the disrupt-

tion of colonialism and colonial missionizing to other African peoples. Leadership by Ethiopian women during the ancient period and today are examples of this lesson despite conflict in their country.

Three Ethiopian women come to mind: The Queen of Sheba, Queen Candace, and current Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde.

The Queen of Sheba story can be found in 1 Kings 10 and 2 Chron 9:1–12. Queen Candace of Ethiopia's story can be found in Acts 8:26–40. Sahle-Work was unanimously elected president by Ethiopia's parliament in 2018. She is the first woman to hold the post.

Sahle-Work, along with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who recently won the Nobel Peace Prize, are leading transformative changes in Ethiopia, expanding civil society space, voting, and voice. They have also received global recognition for reforms in the country's agriculture sector.



This year, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the right to vote for women in the United States. We also lament that African American women were not beneficiaries of this victory 100 years ago due to inequitable laws and practices.

Today, many women still cannot vote—including many Pan African women. Still, these women have fought and are still fighting for their rights. So, I invite you to celebrate Women's History Month and vote!

***"Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it."***

*Susan B. Anthony*



## Connecting communities with critical and needed resources during the COVID-19 pandemic



***Ms. Garcia E. Williams***

The Medi Community Resource Center is a certified 501C3 organization headquartered in North Charleston, SC. We serve to provide education and technology to support the needs of our community.

We are heavily invested in the faith-based community, having hosted several events during the month of October in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month and in February with a focus on Women's Heart Health. Our reach also extends into other aspects of the community through the Head Start Programs in the Tri-County area - First Steps, Charleston, Dorchester, and Berkeley counties. This is an evolving partnership to support families and one that we are proud to share with measurable results. We also engage businesses to support their workforce. Each entity that we support can be considered a microcosm of the greater community, allowing us to provide an even greater outreach for support.

When visiting our website [www.themedi.org](http://www.themedi.org), just entering a zip code provides a connection to a variety of tools and resources available in local communities. One example is food deserts because that is an issue in and around our community and this tool connects community members with a list of resources at no cost or a reduced cost for healthy food choices and options.

During COVID 19, we have specialized resources that can be obtained and provide specific details on how individuals may access them. Our goal is to partner with The Home Mission Board to support your outreach efforts in the same manner we engage individuals and families in the Charleston community.

Of specific importance during this COVID 19 crisis is our presence via the Morris Street Baptist Church website, [www.morrisstreetbaptist.org](http://www.morrisstreetbaptist.org) where we are featured as a resource. We are also listed among essential COVID 19 resources with the City of Charleston and in a Community E-Newsletter, which is distributed to neighborhoods throughout the city.

Educating our community is a priority and we have expanded our efforts to provide accessible information that can be easily digested and used immediately to support the overall well-being of individuals and the community at large. The Medi's focus on social determinants of health relates to where we live and how we live as being a major factor in our health outcomes. The COVID-19 crisis, has revealed how much more serious the problem is and how it disproportionately affects people of color and those living in lower-income communities.

We sponsor a Medi Mondays broadcast on Monday mornings at 9:30 a.m., where we are in partnership with Kirkman Broadcasting through their affiliate, WJNI Gospel Radio 106.3FM or via the web at [www.wjnigospel.com](http://www.wjnigospel.com). With our co-host Terry Base, local radio personality, we engage listeners to encourage them to be both active and involved in this dialog to make a difference in their physical and mental health and wellness. We have featured a variety of leaders and other talents in Charleston, the Tri-county area, across the state, and nationally. Previous broadcasts can be accessed via our website [www.themedi.org](http://www.themedi.org) under Medi Mondays.

Being afforded this opportunity to share with the Home Mission Board is yet another chance to further our mission and goals. We remain optimistic that through this introduction we may open a dialog to further our purpose and expand our reach in hopes that we can build a sustainable model and partnership.

As we approach the migration back to some sense of normalcy, or what many consider the "new normal", we must expand our thinking. Technology and various forms of media have provided a means to deliver the word. Now, we have an opportunity to delivery resources through yet another platform. Continued blessings to all, and remember. . . **Even Apart, We're In This Together.**

*Ms. Garcia E. Williams is the Executive Director of the The Medi Community Resource Center |  
Email: [GWilliams@themedi.org](mailto:GWilliams@themedi.org) Office: 843.554.2533  
Direct Dial: 843.718.3700 | Mobile: 843.810.5137  
Website: [www.themedi.org](http://www.themedi.org) | The Medi is a 501c3 non-profit*

## Home Mission Board Celebrates National Award Given to Sister Trudy B. Grant *Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith*

I was delighted to witness our own Sister Trudy B. Grant, a former Home Mission Board member, receiving a National award for her work in South Carolina and with The Black Women's Roundtable (BWR). BWR recently hosted the 9th Annual BWR "Women of Power" National Summit in Washington, DC at the Marriott Crystal City. The event had over 150 attendees, and over 20,000 watching the event live on **#RolandMartinUnfiltered**. The weeklong Summit featured some of the nation's most influential Black women leaders from across the spectrum of politics, philanthropy, business, labor, civil and human rights, faith, law enforcement, media, academia, and community activists.



*Sis. Trudy B. Grant & Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker Smith*

Sister Grant is a native of Charleston, South Carolina and currently serves as the Manager of Religious Affairs and External Relations for the National Action Network (NAN). The National Award highlighted her work in South Carolina with Reverend Al Sharpton, Rev. Nelson B. Rivers, III and the Religious Affairs Department when they hosted the Democratic presidential candidates the morning after the National debate in Charleston. The six Democratic candidates spoke to hundreds during the South Carolina Ministers' Breakfast at Mt. Moriah Baptist Church. National pundits point out that the national direction of choosing the democratic nominee happened in South Carolina because of the primary vote of African Americans.

The Religious Affairs Division is responsible for advancing NAN's advocacy goals in human and civil rights by mobilizing prominent, influential organizations and constituencies. The Division works by engaging and motivating supporters of NAN within the faith-based community, organized labor, fraternities and sororities, and professional associations.

Trudy also serves as an ambassador for the documentary "Emanuel" about the Charleston church shooting that killed nine Emanuel AME church members in an act of terror. Her role is to ensure that the documentary is viewed in communities across the country.



## Contributors by State January through May 2020

<b>ALABAMA</b>				
Elizabeth Baptist Church	Dr. Vernon Swift	Tuscaloosa	AL	\$ 750.00
Aimwell Baptist Church	Dr. Michael Jackson	Mobile	AL	\$ 500.00
Revelation Missionary Baptist Church	1711 Taylor Lane	Mobile	AL	\$ 1,000.00
<b>ARIZONA</b>				
Dr. Warren H. Stewart, Sr.	First Institutional Baptist Church	Phoenix	AZ	\$ 500.00
Mrs. Geraldine Reed		Williams	AZ	\$ 100.00
First Institutional Baptist Church	Dr. Warren H. Stewart, Sr.	Phoenix	AZ	\$ 2,000.00
<b>ARKANSAS</b>				
Dr. William Boone		Sherwood	AR	\$ 500.00
First Baptist Church	Rev. D. L. Richardson	North Little Rock	AR	\$ 1,000.00
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (DC)</b>				
Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith	Bread for the World	Washington	DC	\$ 500.00
<b>FLORIDA</b>				
Dr. Michael D. Warren	Pleasant View Baptist Church	Apopka	FL	\$ 100.00
<b>LOUISIANA</b>				
McLain, Rev. Asriel G.	Little Union Baptist Church	Shreveport	LA	\$ 100.00
<b>NEW MEXICO</b>				
Dea. Glen E. Chelf		Albuquerque	NM	\$ 25.00
<b>NEW YORK</b>				
Greater File Chapel Baptist Church	Rev. Geraldine Harris	New York	NY	\$ 300.00
Greater Hope Baptist Church	Rev. James C. Blackburn	Buffalo	NY	\$ 325.00
<b>OHIO</b>				
Dr. Orlando B. Yates	Union Baptist Church	Cincinnati	OH	\$ 250.00
<b>OKLAHOMA</b>				
Oklahoma Baptist State Convention	Rev. Anthony Scott			\$ 100.00
<b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>				
Mount Carmel Baptist Church	Dr. Donald Moore	Philadelphia	PA	\$ 2,500.00
Sis. Gwendolyn Ware		Pittsburgh	PA	\$ 10.00
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>				
Rev. Leonard O. Griffin		Goose Creek	SC	\$ 350.00
<b>TENNESSEE</b>				
Castalia Baptist Church	Rev. Randolph M. Walker	Memphis	TN	\$ 200.00
Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church	Rev. J. L. Van Buren	Memphis	TN	\$ 100.00
Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church	Rev. Bassil G. Brooks	Cordova	TN	\$ 400.00
New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church	Dr. Donald R. Ester, Sr.	Germantown	TN	\$ 200.00
New Zion Baptist Church	Rev. Donald Collins	Memphis	TN	\$ 100.00
Dr. Roosevelt T. Joyner		Memphis	TN	\$ 100.00
<b>TEXAS</b>				
Mt. Sinai Baptist Church	Rev. John Mark Stevens, Sr.	Orange	TX	\$ 350.00
<b>VIRGIN ISLANDS</b>				
Bethel Missionary Baptist Church	Dr. Bentley Thomas	St. Thomas	VI	\$ 200.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 12,560.00</b>



*Congratulations!*

to the newly installed officers of the  
Home Mission Board of the  
National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.



**Rev. Kelcey A. West**  
Vice-Chair

**Dr. Michael D. Warren**  
Chair

**Rev. Leonard O. Griffin**  
Executive Secretary