

AFRICAN-AMERICAN TASK FORCE

The African American Task Force is grateful to the South Carolina Annual Conference for the adoption of The Comprehensive Plan of Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century. This plan is the product of the needs and direction given from a series of four (4) Tri-District listening sessions held with African American clergy and laity across the state.

Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century is the national plan or initiative of the whole church supporting the continual inclusion of African and African Americans in its life. The Comprehensive Plan has ten (10) focus points:

- 1) Strengthening the relationship between the Bishop and Cabinet and the local church
- 2) Strengthening the Ministry of Ordained Clergy
- 3) Strengthening the Ministry of Laity
- 4) Strengthening the Ministry of Christian education and formation in the African American congregation
- 5) Revitalization of existing congregations and new church starts.
- 6) Ethnic Sensitivity and Training Events
- 7) Funding Resources
- 8) Communications with clergy, laity and congregations
- 9) Presence of African Americans on Conference and District Staffing Positions
- 10) Leadership Development for Clergy and Laity

The African American Task force will place emphasis on three of the ten focal points as a starting point.

- 1) Revitalization of existing congregations and new church starts. We will affirm the usage of Natural Church Development as a tool for revitalization in existing congregations and make recommendation of areas for new church starts for evangelizing African Americans.
- 2) Strengthening the Ministry of Clergy and Laity by affirming The Bishop's School of Ministry, the Granville Hicks Lecture Series and the development of The SC African American Church Convocation as vehicles to learning and equipping for ministry.
- 3) Communication with clergy, laity and congregations through the position of the African American Congregational Specialist, African-American Task Force and Black Methodist for Church Renewal to form a positive coalition to disseminate information to inform and educate the African-American congregations.

Reverend Ellis White, Jr., Chairperson