

FALL 2023

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES
OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH INTERNATIONAL

THE VOICE

A Digital Magazine

Convocation Recap:

IHC23 OWES US NOTHING!

Plus:

UPCOMING CONFERENCES
AND EVENTS
SAVE THE DATES

STATE OF THE UNION
THE PRESIDER'S
2023 ADDRESS

INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONS DAY 2023
PREPARE TO GIVE



CONNECT WITH US



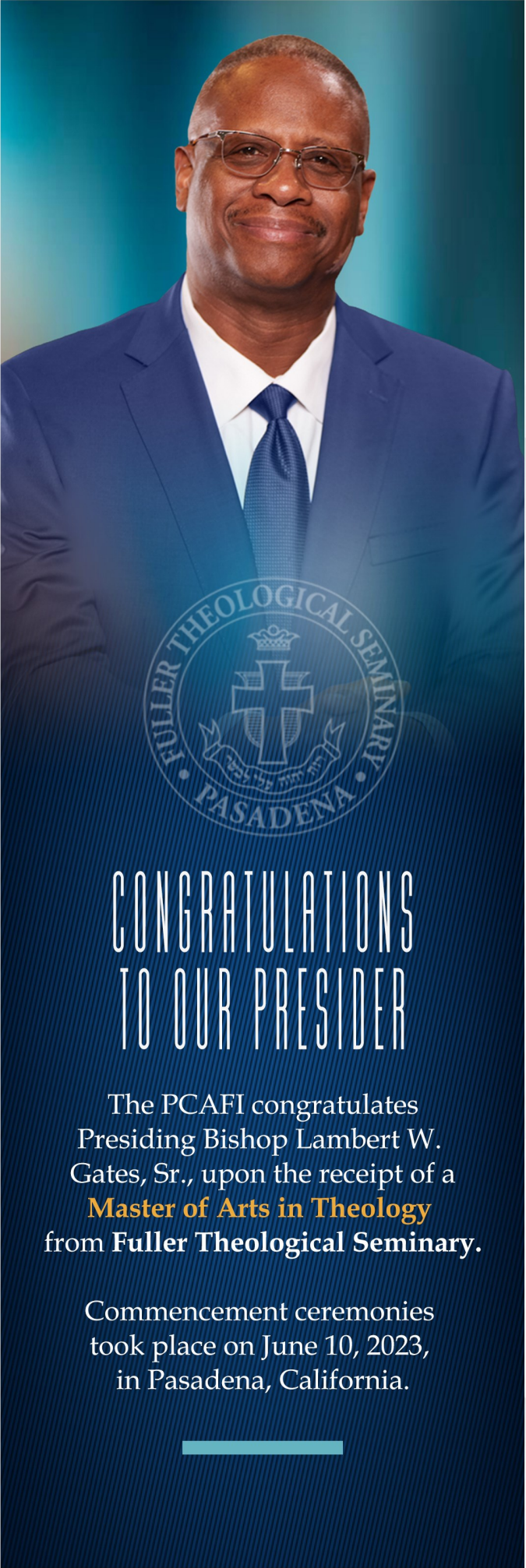
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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PRESIDER

The PCAFI congratulates Presiding Bishop Lambert W. Gates, Sr., upon the receipt of a **Master of Arts in Theology** from Fuller Theological Seminary.

Commencement ceremonies took place on June 10, 2023, in Pasadena, California.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Anita Franklin Preddie
apreddie@pcfaintl.org

The Voice is once again calling upon the membership of the PCAFI to help fill our magazine with relevant and newsworthy content. As I peruse social media, I often come across posts that catch my attention and think, “Wow, that would make a great article” or “That was really interesting.” Sometimes the posts are funny, other times, somber. Many times they are inspirational – based on testimonies, or church-family-school-work experiences. The poster is not necessarily trying to present anything professional, they’re just sharing an experience or a thought or a story that is meaningful to them. The passion behind the post is what makes it interesting, and the more interesting or relevant the topic, the greater the response is from the online community.

I have to believe that among all our pastors, leaders, and lay members, there is a plethora of stories waiting to be told and an abundance of talented writers who can produce articles for our edification. We would love to share your contributions on the *Voice* platform. Our readership has increased since we went solely digital because it is now accessible to a broader audience, therefore, we are seeking submissions from all ages and ministry groups. Can we count on you?

This magazine has survived for more than a century because there has always been someone in the wings ready to take ownership and push it to the next level with purposeful content to keep it alive. As editor since 2013, I’m now on the lookout for people of the younger generations who have strong graphic design skills, writing and communication skills, and a commitment ethic, and are ready to lean in and inspire new audiences with a fresh perspective pertinent to the changing times. Let’s go!



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THE VOICE is the official publication of the Pentecostal Churches of the Apostolic Faith International and is published as a periodic digital-only resource. Our mission is to promote the life of the PCAFI through a unique mix of photography, reportage, and commentary for the uplift and inspiration of all readers. This magazine was founded in 1910 by Bishop Garfield T. Haywood as *The Voice in the Wilderness*.



STATE OF THE UNION

THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S ANNUAL ADDRESS



Presiding Bishop Lambert W. Gates, Sr.

CHICAGO, IL, Friday, July 28, 2023 – Today, I greet this august body in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What an honor it is to stand before the beautiful saints of God as we celebrate our 66th annual Holy Convocation and Growth Conference of the Pentecostal Churches of the Apostolic Faith International, in the great Windy City of Chicago!

As we gather in what I choose to believe is primarily a post-COVID world, I think it fitting that as we prepare to celebrate God in a freer atmosphere than we have in the last few years, we remember that many among us lost loved ones and friends to the deadly virus which wreaked havoc upon our world for nearly three years. May we all now bow our heads in a moment of silence in honor of them who have gone on into glory over the course of the three previous years.

I am happy to report to this body that on this day, the PCAFI is vibrantly alive and well! This is not a statement of pride or arrogance, but rather in the spirit of the great Apostle Paul: we are simply but excitedly, reveling in the fact that *Having therefore obtained help of God, I [we] continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come* (Acts 26:22, KJV).

Let's now briefly ponder the state of the union of local churches of which the PCAFI is comprised. This can be done concisely by considering our heritage, along with our purpose, our health, our impact, and our vision. God admonished Israel through these words from the lips of the Prophet Jeremiah, intimating: *But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me* (Jer. 3:19). I remind us today that we rest upon and remain informed by the initial vision for the PCAFI as given to us in our rich heritage by our founding presiding bishop, the sainted and honorable Bishop Samuel Nathan Hancock. That vision has been cultivated and enhanced through the efforts of his successors in the persons of Bishops Willie Lee, Elzie Young, D. Rayford Bell, Alfred Singleton, and J.E. Moore. I can only hope and pray that when my tenure as presiding bishop has concluded as seventh in succession, the vision and path of the PCAFI will shine even more clearly with a brightness that radiates the shekinah glory of God.

This is a great pivoting point to highlight the production of our new indepth history book (*On Record: The History of the PCAFI*) of which I pray all of us will make a part of our reading libraries. I challenge each of us to purchase and study this book. We cannot know where we are going if we do not know and appreciate our heritage. A strong testament to our being alive and well is to reiterate our being unabashedly an Apostolic Pentecostal holiness church.

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Bishop Hancock himself at the founding of our great church is quoted as having said “The aim and purpose of this union is to maintain the standard of holiness and to perpetuate the principles of the Apostolic doctrine.” I want to go on record today as the sitting presiding bishop by restating what most of us already know: holiness is still right! Hebrews 12:14, wherein the writer enjoins believers to *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*, is still an operative mantra of our body. Indeed, the pursuit of holiness should be a lifelong quest of all believers. Yet we must understand that pursuing holiness and being progressive are not opposing constructs of their own accord. Both can be done while not sacrificing the other. The PCAFI remains committed to the Apostolic tenets of water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38) and receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues (Acts 2:4). I especially challenge our young pastors, ministers, and leaders to not allow a thirst for numeric growth to cause you to morph into something other than that for which God is calling. While increasing the size of our congregations is a worthy desire with scriptural basis when steeped in proper motives, numeric growth should not necessarily be prioritized as our prime motivation. It is the seeking of God’s Kingdom with all being done for His glory that truly matters. It is the fundamental ministry gifts as outlined in Ephesians 4:12, buttressed by all other gifts of the Spirit that will result in . . . *the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*. May God release all of His people from the desire to be superstars and replace it with a heart of servanthood!

An expanding mindset of servanthood most certainly contributes to the PCAFI being alive and well. Our international auxiliary leaders are continually challenged to lean away from being program facilitators and instead become equippers to the corresponding leaders they oversee at both the district council and local church levels. While hosting conferences and events can have their place, I remind them that growth is not an event

but rather it is the fostering of an environment that promotes lifetime learning, spirituality, and Kingdom strategies that will lead to sustained growth. Leadership throughout every tier of our worldwide body should not center around the aggrandizement of individuals and their personal fiefdoms and ego insecurities. Everything leaders do should be for the glory of God, the edification of His body, which is the church, and the winning of souls for Christ.

What does servanthood, in a corporate sense, look like in the current construct of the PCAFI? I suggest to you that it rests upon four (4) purpose pillars which are:

- Advancing God’s Kingdom
- Leveraging our worldwide influence
- Building exceptional experiences (both in person and virtually)
- Enabling an enhanced impact of pastors and churches

The more the PCAFI builds upon and practices the underlying implications of each of these pillars, the stronger our international church will be, thereby ferreting the spirit of excellence out into our district councils, various regions, and local churches.

“The PCAFI remains committed to the Apostolic tenets of water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues.”

Let’s briefly take a closer look at the health of the PCAFI. Our financial health has never been better. You will find when the financial report is given this week, that for the first time, we can truly praise God for having funds that extend into the seven-digit figures—God be praised! The footprint of the PCAFI is steadily growing with a constituency of churches that span the globe crossing six continents and various regions. Our roster of churches worldwide has now swollen into an excess of 800 plus churches with approximately 400 in the United States alone, as an example. We have new support partners such as the Lilly Foundation and Fuller

STATE OF THE UNION

THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S ANNUAL ADDRESS

Theological Seminary, just to name a few. We continue to build strong communities between churches within our PCAFI body and compatible entities outside the church, all of which results in a greater span of influence. We also continue to engage our pastors and leaders on a consistent basis, enhancing skill sets to more effectively serve God's kingdom and His people. The impact in our current construct is more robust now than in other time in our history. During this administration, we have effectuated the following:

Experienced exponential denominational growth

Established the executive office

Married Bell Apostolic Bible College and PCAFI to form the PCAFI Ministerial Institute (PMI)

Raised the profile of pastors

Received grants totaling \$2.5 million

Received advanced training through Fuller Theological Seminary

Established the Ministerial Excellence Center (MEC)

Improved the experience of our annual conferences (GROWTH and LEAD)

Expanded the PCAFI footprint



MINISTERIAL EXCELLENCE CENTER

A grant-funded initiative of the Pentecostal Churches of the Apostolic Faith International

Ministerial Excellence Center (MEC)

One of our shining new initiatives (designed and implemented) is the Ministerial Excellence Center:

- Developed as a result of a \$1,000,000 grant from the Lilly Foundation and matched by the PCAFI with \$500,000 to bless pastors with economic challenges.
- Hired staff that reports to the executive office.
- Facilitated two grant/scholarship cycles.
- 23 U.S. grants distributed totaling \$173,500.
- 118 non-U.S. grants distributed totaling \$52,500.
- 11 scholarships totaling \$27,500.
- \$253,500 total monies awarded through the ministerial excellence fund

The MEC program has been acknowledged by cohort peers as inspiring.

Faith at Home Initiative

This is a brand-new program that is in the developmental stage and has already been funded with a \$1,250,000 grant.

PCAFI Community Impact Empowerment Program (PCIE)

I encourage all of our churches to take advantage of our PCIE program for training and leveraging our local church leadership to carry their Holy Ghost endowed influence into their surrounding communities, even into the marketplace. Presently, we have approximately 30 churches participating. I pray that number will burgeon at this convocation.

I want to intimate to this body that the PCAFI always has skin in the game due to the generosity of executive leadership. All grants that we have been blessed to receive have required that we expend hundreds of thousands of dollars in matching funds from the parent body. The PCAFI is committed to the advancement of our local churches and their leadership. To this end, we have put our money where our mouth is!

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I reiterate my vision of a few years past, which is for our church to be vibrant, nimble, responsive to the times, and forward-looking. While respecting our rich past, heritage, and legacy, I refuse to bow down at the altar of yesterday's glories and past successes, hence, making an idol of what was but no longer is. In truth, such a mindset stifles vision and inhibits us from clearly seeing where the glory cloud of the presence of the Lord is now traversing. I don't want us to miss where God is now while being fixated on where He was. Our forces, instead, must be mobilized to stay in sync with the divine presence. Our organization has changed, is changing, and must change, to engage the world for Christ and advance His kingdom in the most effective way. It is important that we see the Holy Spirit, God's agent of change, as more than just divinity personalized or manifested as Spirit, but moreover we also must see the Holy Spirit as the implementer of change in the present construct of the church, thereby retooling us and freshening our face or outward veneer to appeal to our present age. The Holy Spirit can be trusted to facilitate change in the body of Christ while maintaining its timeless mission.

Sometimes an unwillingness to change or modify points to a lack of trust in God. I'm reminded of the words of Jesus spoken to Peter highlighting the stability of the church in a world that will only become more unstable. The Master told Peter that Jesus has built His church so strong until it is able to withstand changes within while handling the pressure of the forces wherein it finds itself surrounded. The church can change and still be holy. The church can change and still be Apostolic in terms of pure doctrinal belief. Please note my emphasis on pure doctrinal belief! Pecdillos, personal preferences, man-made standards and rules are not doctrine. The church is built on the divine revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ through the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers and the world at large, which will ultimately result in the restoration of God's Kingdom.



“The church can change and still be Apostolic in terms of pure doctrinal belief.”

In closing, I challenge each of us to take the PCAFI seriously. Our connection with it must not be one of casualness, if truly we are to be a force of maximum impact for the cause of God's Kingdom. I say to all of us who make up this great reformation, let us come and stay at our mid-winters and convocations throughout their entirety. May we support its efforts with our time, treasure, and talent. We must be pliable and open to Spirit-driven change. We have to do the work of the ministry outside of our corporate gatherings, out in the regional and local fields. We must continue to commit ourselves to training that is of substantive quality. We must be unified and not divisive. Let me interject here with a little vigor: international auxiliaries, district councils, and dioceses must not view themselves as individual fiefdoms—but rather understand that they are part of a larger, greater whole and must galvanize around our common vision. A house divided against itself cannot stand! Our vision must incorporate the great commission and our world view from the local church through the regional dioceses and councils to the international body must be worldwide and missional in nature. We must be positive in mindset. We must believe!

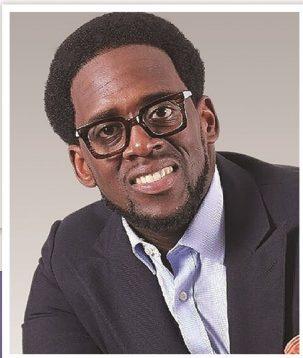
The #KOTeam

Kingdom Operations Team



Thank you!

On behalf of Presiding Bishop Gates, we want to say thank you to all of our Kingdom Operations team workers, aka “The #KOTeam” for all your hard work, sacrifices, and labors of love at IHC23. You made this event all that God intended for it to be! The #KOTeam form is online at pcafintl.org for all who desire to work with us in Dallas, Texas, for IHC2024. Please fill out the form now and our #KOTeam staff will be in touch with you soon. Thank you again and we can't wait to see you!



Sincerely
Elder Aaron Porter, Sr.
Executive Assistant of Logistics

Serve

About KO

The #KOTeam is our call to serve—whenever or wherever we are needed to lend our gifts, time, talents, and abilities for Kingdom advancement. Our motto is “We will do whatsoever our hands find to do to fulfill the vision of the PCAFI!”

SUNDAY
OCT 1
is

International
MISSIONS **DAY**

A FUNDRAISING AND AWARENESS EFFORT FOR

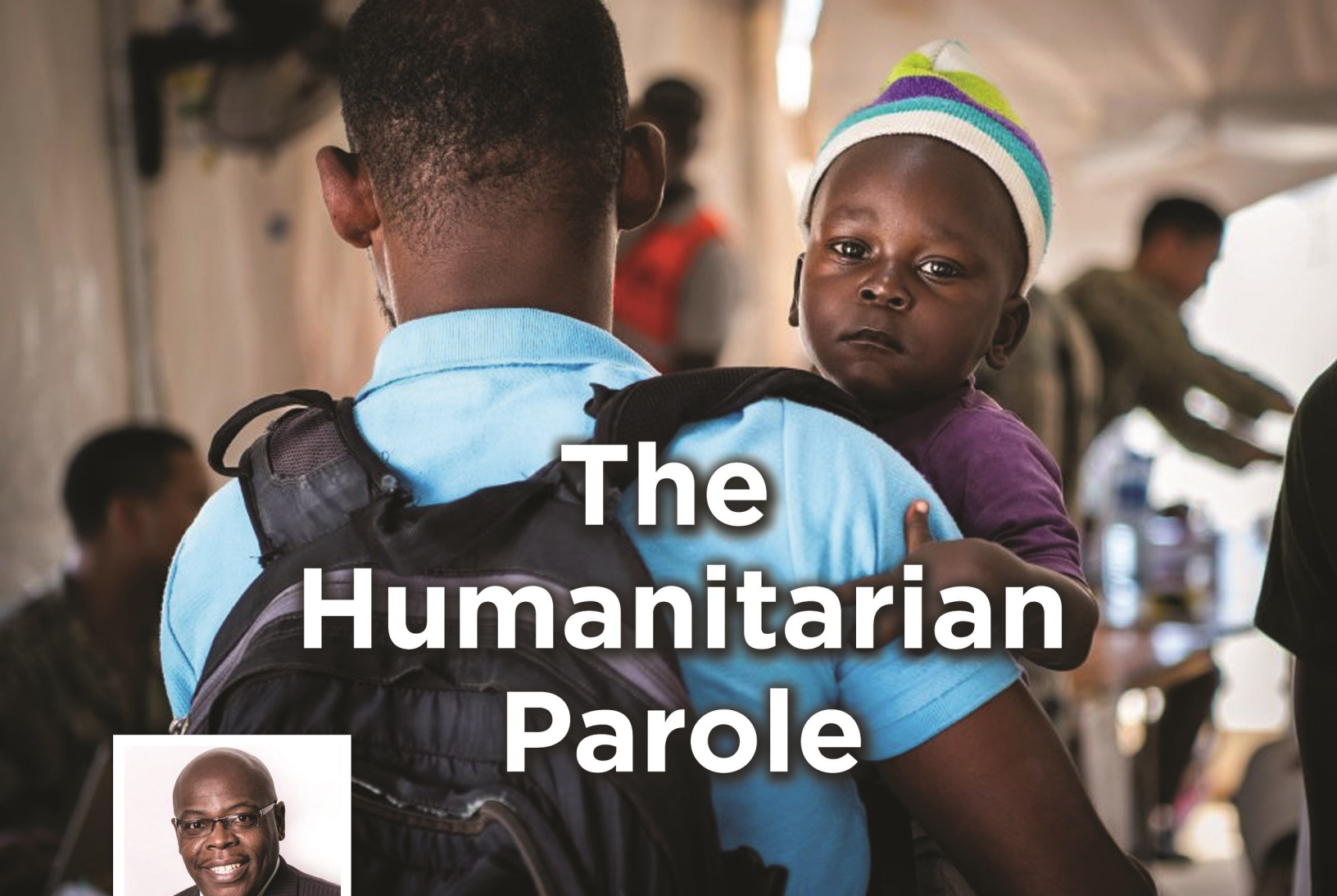
CHURCH DEVELOPMENT
GLOBAL MISSIONS
EVANGELISM & OUTREACH



“We’re galvanizing all of our churches and members across the globe to raise awareness of our organization’s efforts in missions and outreach. We’re also fundraising to support the international auxiliaries of Global Missions, Church Development, and Evangelism and Outreach. Save the date and make plans to share your support on Oct 1!”

Maggie Stevenson
Assistant Director of Global Missions
Coordinator, PCAFI Cares

Be a part of something great!



The Humanitarian Parole



Global Missions Auxiliary
Suffragan Bishop Melvyn Little, Jr., Director

The U.S. Government recently announced a Humanitarian Parole program for nationals of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela who are seeking safe haven within the United States due to the conditions in their countries. With this program in place, the PCAFI Global Missions Auxiliary announces a unique opportunity for you to support immigrants from these countries. As a supporter, you will demonstrate that you are a U.S. citizen that has the financial resources to maintain and support a beneficiary for the duration of their parole period. Your support will help immigrants have a better quality of life through housing, food, employment opportunities, and more. Bishops Jean Ernest Chervil and Jean Bony D’Aout of the PCAFI Haitian Diocese are working in conjunction with Global Missions to coordinate eligible beneficiaries. If you are interested in sponsoring a beneficiary or want to learn more about this program and the process, contact Suffragan Bishop Melvyn Little, Jr., at mlittle@pcafintl.org or Maggie Stevenson at mstevenson@pcafintl.org. Detailed information will also be on the PCAFI website soon. Please give prayerful consideration to this great need.

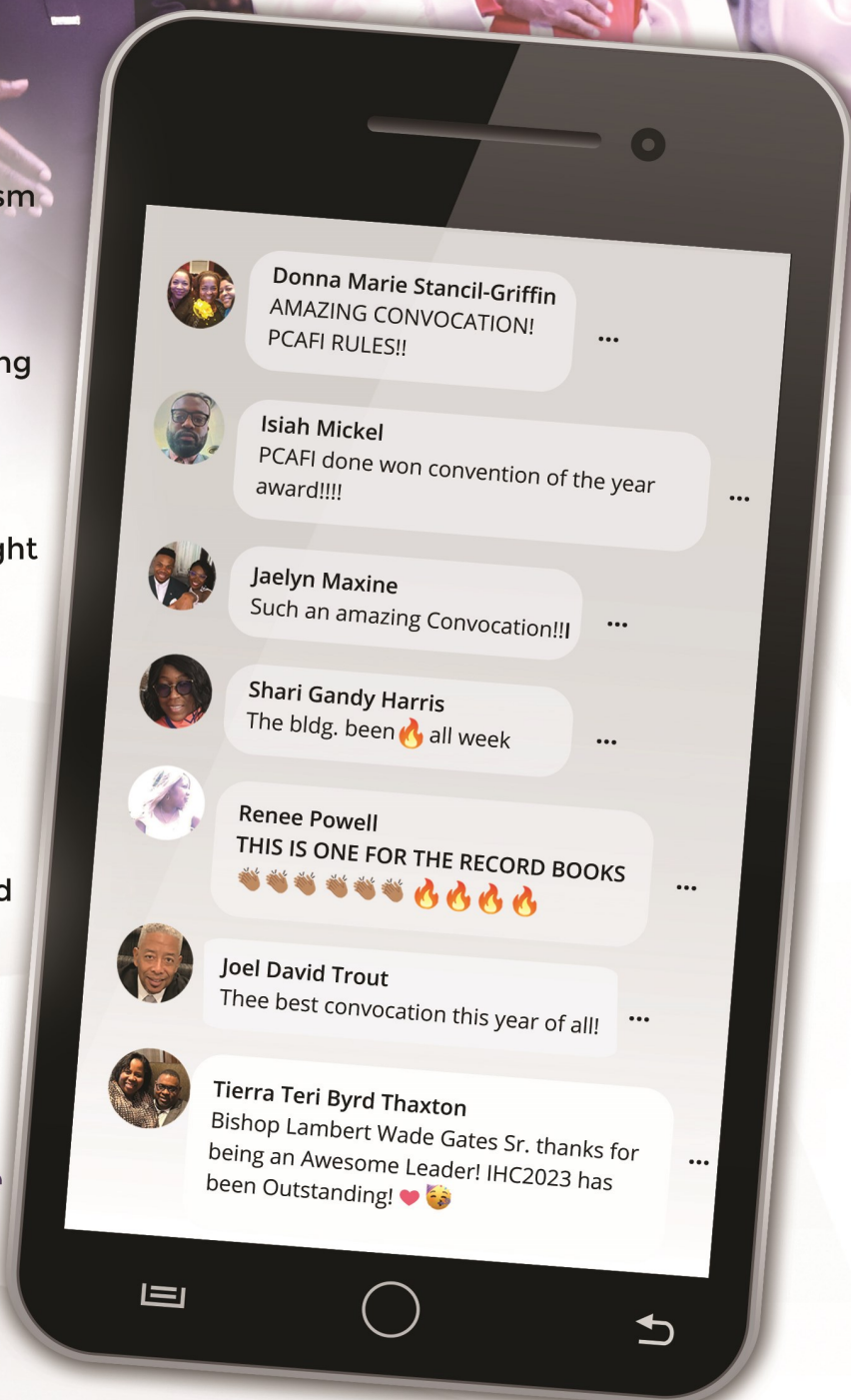
CONVOCATION RECAP



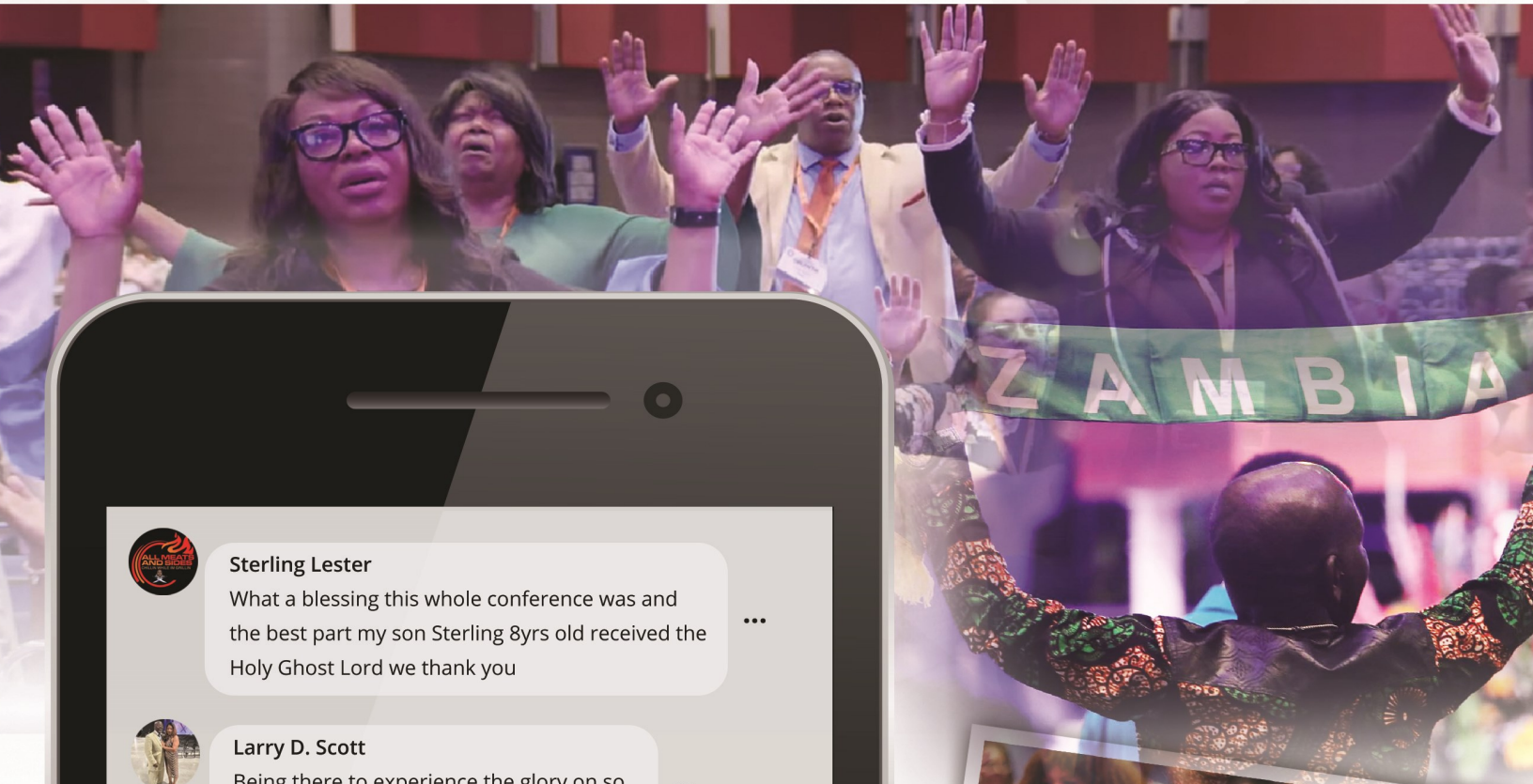
- 50 souls won to Christ through the baptism of the Holy Ghost
- The powerful move of God through Presiding Bishop Gates on Sunday morning
- Evangelism and Outreach's "Let's Heal Chicago"
- Bishop Tudor Bismark's unforgettable "Light of the World" moment
- Global Missions' colorful and inspiring International Day
- Dr. Myron Williams and Gospel Music Heritage Night
- The powerful and anointed preachers and teachers –both guests and home alike
- The iconic Bishop T. D. Jakes on closing night

We say IHC23 owes us nothing!

To help share this story, the Voice turned to social media to find some of the best reviews!



CONVOCATION RECAP



Sterling Lester

What a blessing this whole conference was and the best part my son Sterling 8yrs old received the Holy Ghost Lord we thank you ...



Larry D. Scott

Being there to experience the glory on so many levels was phenomenal. ...



Kathy Leverette - Sanders

I watched online and God knows it blessed my whole life!! Sunday morning was an Holy Ghost explosion ...



Myleita Williams

50 Souls for the Kingdom of God !! ...



Martha Donahue

The presence of the Lord saturated the atmosphere the entire week. ...



Galen Carlos Nelson

An UNDESCRIBABLE experience this 2023 IHC, that NO WORDS can describe - you had to be there to fully understand the ESSENCE and POWER of THIS IHC... PERIODT!... FULLY-STOP!!! A MORE-THAN PHENOMENAL experience of GOD'S HAND!!! ALL the descriptive words on this post CANNOT collectively describe the 2023 PCAFI IHC experience!!!!!! Simply put... GOD ORCHASTRA EVERYTHANG!!!!!!!



CONVOCATION RECAP



Teresa Gray

Three words, it was lit!!! ...



Scherrie Mitchell

Wooooooo! The whole week was just FABULOUS! There was wonderful singing and preaching! And when Bishop T.D. Jakes was preaching it was everything. He looked like he was REALLY enjoying himself. If I had actually been in the building, hmpf, ain't no telling! Everything that I saw was great! Wonderful job. ...



Gerald 'jj' Johnson

- 1.) This was my first Convention experience as a newly joined pastor of The PCAFI and what I was really most impressed by was simply the outpouring of LOVE shown to me and my wife Jytone Johnson.
- 2.) The hunger of the saints, especially young people, that lead to an undeniable outpouring of the baptism of the Holy Ghost "I Can't Stand It!"
- 3.) All of the pastors that cried out and got "ALTERED ON THE ALTAR" ...
- 4.) All of the volunteers and people who worked tirelessly behind the scenes
- 5.) finally ,BISHOP LAMBERT GATES SR ...he has certainly been ordained to lead in these times and in this season. Very impressed with his leadership.



CONVOCATION RECAP



#IHC23 RECAP



Darlene Love

When I tell you God has been showing out in this convention 🙌🔥🙌🔥🙌🔥



Joyce Haynes

This was a a wonderful, spirit filled, anointed convention. I am so glad God provided me an opportunity to attend.



Smile Daja

Outstanding!!!! This has been a phenomenal week!



First Lady Lawrensa Saucer

Have you ever gone somewhere and the directional signage were miles apart and you questioned if you were heading in the right direction? Well, that wasn't the case at Pentecostal Churches of the Apostolic Faith International, Inc. Holy Convocation. They had signs at least every 30 feet guiding us to the right direction. So many establishments could use this as great example. PCAFI had us covered.



Bible Jones- Gardner

I won't miss another one. California was fun but this one was better. I'll be in Dallas next year!



Robyn Shivers

See y'all in Dallas!



Shardy Shard Wagner

Oh is that right? Toronto in 2025? Oh I'm there!



CONVOCATION RECAP

Clergy Elevations

CONSECRATIONS

Bishops

James Edwell, Jr.
Pittsburg, PA

Michael E. Ford, Jr.
Louisville, KY

CONFIRMATIONS

District Elders

Larry Jones
Chicago, IL

Andre O'Neal
Phoenix, AZ

Daryl Stedham
Inglewood, CA

Suffragan Bishops

Melvyn Y. Little
Hopkinsville, KY

Jevonn A. McIntosh, Sr.
Mobile, AL

ORDINATIONS

Elders

Eric Campbell, Buffalo, NY
Beatrice Crandell, Washington, D.C.
Marlene Jones, Joliet, IL
Rickey Kearney, Buffalo, NY
Sean Kelly, Detroit, MI
Darren Kimbrough, Lansing, MI
Renee Nance, Buffalo, NY
Gwendolyn Orndorff, Louisville, KY
Debra Simms, Baltimore, MD
David Street, Sr., Washington, D.C.
Latoia Russell-Williams, Joliet, IL

Two Longtime Servants Honored



Bishop John T. Leslie, Jr., PCAFI general secretary, was honored at a ticketed tribute dinner on Sunday, July 30 in recognition of his nearly 50 years of service to the Board of Directors and the Executive Bishops Cabinet. He is the senior pastor of the Church of Jesus Christ in Washington, D.C. and is married to Lady Louise Leslie.



Deacon Gene Claxton was honored at a private dinner on Monday, July 31 hosted by the International Christian Education Auxiliary where he served for more than 40 years as assistant superintendent and general superintendent, closing out his tenure as director emeritus. He and his wife Rosetta are members of Unity Temple Church in Detroit.

ETA GRADUATES

The International Christian Education Auxiliary announces the 2023 graduates of the Evangelical Teachers Association (ETA)

Megan Battle Baltimore, MD	Wilma Lawrence (Advanced) Rocky Mount, NC	Reginald Qualls, Jr. Parkville, MD
Garesa Commings Eau Claire, WI	Oswald Marsh Wake Forest, NC	Chantay Ward Rocky Mount, NC
Doris Gibson Rochester, NY	Stacy Fleet McDonald Parkville, MD	Kimberly Wilkins (Advanced) Rocky Mount, NC

Elzie W. Young Scholarship Recipients

The International Youth Conference (IYC) awarded a total of \$2,000 in scholarship funds this year. The recipients are:

- **Charmaine Brown**, attending Wayne State University; Major: Nursing
- **Trinity Edwards**, attending Morgan State University; major: Musical Theater
- **Mercedes Ellis**, attending UC Santa Barbara; Major: Studio Art
- **Nicholas Paxton**, attending Morgan State University; Major: Accounting

CONVOCATION RECAP

Deaf Ministry at Kingdom Work



A video posted to social media by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Auxiliary went viral with more than ten thousand likes, showing the ministry in action at the Wednesday night service. The video captures sign language interpreter Corrine King using tactical signing, a method of hand touch communication for people who have both hearing and vision

loss. Evangelist Claudia, who is deaf and losing her eyesight, understood everything that was being signed and was able to enjoy the service via this method of communication. Viewers noted the passionate commitment to the work by King in spite of the uncomfortable position on her knees, and noted Evangelist Claudia responding to the rhythm of the song “Late in the Midnight Hour” as if she could hear the beat. Through God, the interpretation allowed Claudia to feel His anointing and respond to what she could not see or hear. The auxiliary is on post at every annual event to provide sign language at the conference worship services and welcomes others to join the ministry. Elder Andrea Wallace is the auxiliary director.

The Church Nerds Podcast



If you’re on social media pretty regularly, you’ve probably come across a new podcast called The Church Nerds Podcast. This ingenious show features conversations

around what the creators call the 4Cs: Comics + Cinema + Community + Christ. The idea was conceived at IHC22 in Palm Springs, California, and is the collaborative brainchild of seven longtime friends—Jeriman Baldwin, Andre Buford, Bryan Evans, Norman Heath II, Gabriel Jordan, Brandon Travis, and Derrell Walls. During the convocation, the group found themselves shooting the breeze late into the night, discussing a variety of topics they all shared a love for and the rest was history. While the podcast is not PCAFI-affiliated, some episodes feature PCAFI-related stories such as the recent IHC23 recap, and the group members are all a part of the organization, serving in various ways in technology and media. The show airs every Friday at 7:00 p.m. (EST) on Facebook and YouTube and can be found on Spotify, Apple Podcast, and Google PodPodcast. Check it out!

— THANKS TO OUR IHC23 SPONSORS! —



Virtual Platform Access

This year’s registered conference attendees can access the 6Connex virtual portal until October 3, 2023, to relive and enjoy many aspects of the conference over and over again.

Resources for Churches

Pew Research Center Releases Survey on Online Religious Services

About a quarter of U.S. adults regularly watch religious services online or on TV, and most of them are highly satisfied with the experience, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. The survey of more than 11,000 U.S. adults was conducted in November 2022, well after the height of the coronavirus pandemic but before the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention declared an end to the COVID-19 public health emergency. It's been clear for more than two years that the video technology that helped Americans stay in touch with relatives, friends and colleagues during COVID-19 lockdowns was also helping many to connect with houses of worship. From kitchens or living rooms, in their Sunday best, pajamas, or something in between, those with an internet connection and a screen could pray along with other virtual attendees, listen to sermons, and sing along with choirs, all in real time. What wasn't clear, though, was how people felt about these virtual experiences. Would they keep watching services on screens, even after they thought it was safe to attend in person? What did they like about joining services remotely? What didn't they like? The survey was designed to explore these kinds of questions.

Broadly speaking, the survey finds that most Americans who watch religious services on screens are happy with them. Two-thirds of U.S. adults who regularly stream religious services online or watch them on TV say they are either "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the services they see. Similar shares express satisfaction with the sermons they hear during virtual services. In addition, a little more than half say they are highly satisfied with

the music at worship services they join online or watch on TV. At the same time, Americans tend to give higher marks to worshipping together in person. While majorities express satisfaction with virtual services, even bigger shares of physical attenders say they feel extremely or very satisfied with the sermons (74%) and music (69%) at the services they attend in person.

—Source: Pew Research Center at [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org)



Presiding Bishop Gates's Sunday sermon at Kingdom Apostolic Ministries in Indianapolis is live-streamed to the online community during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, September 2020.

Something to think about

As church attendance numbers fade across the nation and online services become very convenient, it's important to remember why church attendance for you and your family matters so much. You can't serve from your sofa. You can't have community of faith on your sofa. You can't experience the power of a room full of believers worshipping together on your sofa. Christians aren't consumers. We are contributors. We don't watch. We engage. We give. We sacrifice. We encourage. We pray by laying hands on the hurting. We do life together. The church needs you. And you need the church.

Resources for Churches

Why the Church Must Address the Mental Health Crisis of the Next Generation



The mental health crisis of the next generation has become an increasing and significant concern, and mental health professionals are sounding the alarm. Recent studies have shown that young people, especially those in their teenage years, are experiencing increased levels of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation.

It is well known that people often seek out a faith leader before they will see a mental health professional. The church is a place of refuge and support and can provide a safe and supportive environment where young people can express their feelings and receive help without fear of judgment. It can help them develop healthy coping mechanisms and improve their quality of life. Moreover, the Bible calls us to care for one another: *Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ* (Gal. 6:2).

How churches can address youth mental health

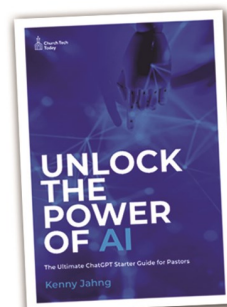
- Educate church leaders and members
- Partner with mental health professionals
- Offer resources and referrals
- Provide opportunities for service and connection
- Provide education and awareness
- Encourage healthy lifestyle habits
- Promoting spiritual growth

—Source: The American Association of Christian Counselors. Visit aacc.net.



A Brief Introduction to Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence, commonly known as AI, is the ability of machines to replicate, simulate, or enhance human intellect. It has been used in computer programs for years but is now applied to many other products and services. Simply put, AI is what operates the devices we just can't live without. Every time you use a smart device or some sort of slick technology—be it a smartwatch, smart speaker, security alarm, or even customer service chat box—you're engaging with AI. If you've ever asked Siri to help find your AirPods or told Amazon Alexa to turn off the lights, then you've interacted with one of the most common forms of artificial intelligence permeating everyday life. Other examples include manufacturing robots, self-driving cars, healthcare management, automated financial investing, virtual travel booking agent, and social media monitoring. AI will increasingly take over our lives, in all its facets. It is a complex topic that can provide interesting and perhaps necessary conversations by church leaders to think through the potential impact, and gauge understanding, receptivity, moral belief, ethical use, and other sentiments.



If you're wondering how you can use AI in a ministry context or if you're wrestling through implications and ramifications, this brand-new guide, developed in part by Church Tech Today, provides practical steps to take.

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Elder Michael Wilson, Director
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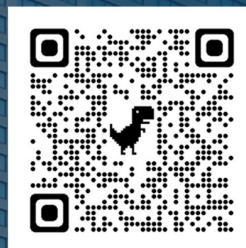
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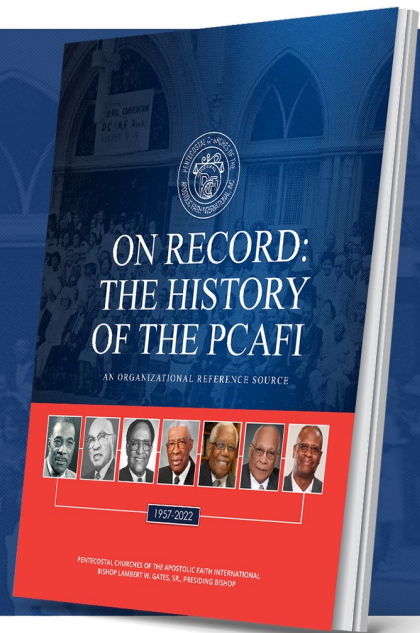
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