



PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, INC.

*"It's Time! To empower – one another through love,
casting off and putting on Christ". Romans 13:10-14*

Dr. David R. Peoples, President Dr. Keith W. Byrd, Sr. 1st Vice President

Dr. Jacqueline A. Thompson, 2nd Vice President

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Progressive National Baptist Convention Affirms Women in Ministry and Leadership

Washington, DC — The Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC) reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the full inclusion of women in ministry and leadership throughout the life of the Church.

At a time when some Christian bodies are moving to further restrict the role of women in pastoral leadership, we offer a different witness grounded in Scripture, shaped by the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, informed by the rich tradition of the Black Church, and animated by the conviction that God calls whom God calls.

Throughout the biblical narrative, women have served as prophets, teachers, evangelists, leaders, and bearers of God's liberating word. Throughout the history of the Black Church, women have preached the Gospel, organized communities, sustained congregations, advanced justice, and strengthened the witness of the Church in every generation.

The Black Church would not be what it is without the faith, leadership, sacrifice, and spiritual wisdom of women. Their contributions are not secondary to the mission of the Church; they are essential to it.

"The Progressive National Baptist Convention affirms that God calls whom God calls," said Rev. Dr. David R. Peoples, President of PNBC. "Throughout Scripture and throughout the history of the Black Church, women have preached, taught, organized, led, and transformed communities in the name of Jesus Christ. We celebrate their gifts and remain committed to creating space for all whom God has called into ministry."

"I am proud to be part of a denomination, the Progressive National Baptist Convention, that affirms the inclusion of all people in the Gospel narrative and embraces the contributions and leadership of women. Women were the first to proclaim to both the Church and the world the good news that He is risen. We celebrate their witness, their leadership, and their continuing impact on the life of the Church," said Rev. Dr. Keith W. Byrd Sr., First Vice President of PNBC.

Women have never been absent from God's work. The gifts, leadership, and witness of women have helped shape the Church from its inception. Despite barriers, resistance, and exclusion, women have preached, taught, organized, led, and sustained the Church through every season of its history.

When women answer God's call, the Church is strengthened, communities are transformed, and the Gospel is advanced.

The future of the Church does not hinge on whether God calls women to lead. Scripture, history, and the life of the Church have already answered that question. The challenge before the Church is whether we will recognize, nurture, and celebrate the gifts God has already given.

We celebrate the women who have gone before us and remain committed to opening doors for those who will follow," said Rev. Dr. Jacqueline A. Thompson, Second Vice President of PNBC.

From the women who sustained the freedom movement and nurtured generations of believers, to the women who lead congregations, classrooms, mission fields, seminaries, and denominational ministries today, the Church continues to be blessed by women who have faithfully answered God's call.

PNBC remains committed to cultivating leadership opportunities for women at every level of ministry and to supporting all who answer God's call to proclaim the Gospel, serve God's people, and advance the work of justice, reconciliation, and beloved community in the world.

To deny the call of women to pastoral ministry is to lose the plot of the Gospel and commit an unforced error of exclusion that further fractures the already broken Body of Christ.

As we seek to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we celebrate and welcome the gifts of women, affirm their leadership, and give thanks for their indispensable role in the Church, the community, and the Kingdom of God.

Rev. Dr. David R. Peoples
President
Progressive National Baptist Convention

Rev. Thomas L. Bowen
General Secretary
Progressive National Baptist Convention

ABOUT PNBC

The Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., (PNBC) is a vital Baptist denomination with an estimated membership of 2.5 million people. PNBC was formed to give full voice, sterling leadership and active support to the American and world fight for human freedom. The convention was the convention-denominational home and platform for the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who addressed every annual session of the Convention until his death in 1968. New generations of Progressive Baptists are continuing the struggle for full voter registration, education and participation in society, economic empowerment and development, and the realization of universal human rights and total human liberation for all people.

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