

**139<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina**  
**Annual Report to Convention by**  
**Historically Black Congregations of the Diocese of East Carolina**

The Historically Black Congregations in the Diocese of East Carolina consist of the following congregations.

- St. Andrew's - Goldsboro
- St. Augustine's – Kinston
- St. Cyprian's – New Bern
- St. Joseph's - Fayetteville
- St. Mark's - Wilmington

The Historically Black Congregations had its initial meeting in 2019 organized by the Diocese under the leadership of The Reverend Canon Ronald Charles Byrd, Sr., Presiding Bishop Staff Missioner, Black Ministries, The Episcopal Church, to discuss common issues and challenges, as well as opportunities and future vision.

Thanks to **Jimi Paderick**, the Ministry Coordinator for Diocesan Life & Leadership, we have continued to meet and discuss common concerns and joint opportunities. Some include:

- Declining and Aging congregations
- Demographic changes in surrounding communities
- Lack of full-time Clergy
- The necessary support for community
- Reduction of available financial resources
- Impact of the COVID pandemic
- Cost of maintenance and repairs to aging buildings
- Lack of younger congregants
- The lingering impact of recent hurricanes

The future efforts include:

- Identify available grants to eligible Historically Black Congregations
- The Diocesan staff will lead a Strategic Planning initiative for each congregation.
- The organization of the Absalom Jones Service - St. Joseph's Fayetteville on Sunday, February 20, 2022 at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyrone Francis – Co-Chair

Kenneth Chestnut, Sr. – Co-Chair