

## NBA Board of Trustees Meet in Portland

November 2016

Members of the Board of Trustees for the National Benevolent Association of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) met together November 10-12 in Portland, OR, for their Fall 2016 meeting.

On Thursday evening, board members joined with NBA staff for dinner and presentations. Rev. April Lewton, NBA vice president of development and marketing, opened the meeting with a prayer, “Grant Us Not Peace, O God,” written by Rev. Dr. Benjamin F. Burns\*, Disciples minister and Navy chaplain:

*“... Grant us not peace, O God,  
Grant us your love,  
to transform us, to enable us, to dwell in us,  
to involve us as co-laborers with you in the making of peace.  
Grant us not peace, O God, (so that)  
we may become your peacemakers. Amen.”*



Jackie Compton Bunch, chair of the NBA Board of Trustees, led the evening’s devotion, “Called into Service,” from Exodus 3:10-12. Acknowledging this “age of wisdom, and age of foolishness; season of light, and season of darkness; spring of hope, and winter of despair,” Bunch reminded the group that “we are called to this board to help make a difference in the world” and encouraged all to “keep playing; don’t stop; don’t quit.”

Mark Anderson, NBA president and CEO, shared his president’s report, “Let Us Not Grow Weary in Doing Good.” Referencing Galatians 6:9-10, Anderson highlighted several of NBA’s activities and collaborations during 2016 and presented NBA’s narrative budget for 2017, which accompanied the financial reports before the board for approval. As NBA prepares to celebrate 130 years of ministry in 2017, Anderson recalled our six women founders and recognized the strong board and staff leaders who continue to take NBA into the future.

On Friday morning, the staff and board participated in an interactive strategic planning exercise, exploring key questions for NBA in 2017 and beyond. A guide and design team of NBA staff is currently facilitating the strategic planning process with input from NBA staff, board, partners, and key stakeholders across the church, with a goal of implementing a new strategic plan later in 2017.



Committee meetings were held Friday morning, followed by the plenary session convening Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. During Friday lunch, Rev. Ayanna Johnson Watkins, director of the NBA Incubate Initiative, presented on the evolution of this mission area and introduced the board to Larry J. Morris III, NBA Incubate’s new part-time program associate. The board and staff split into three groups to enjoy dinner together at downtown restaurants Friday evening.

To close the meeting on Saturday morning, trustee Barb Scamman shared a timely and meaningful prayer:

*In this time of great unrest and newly kindled fears of what the immediate future holds, we are grateful to be present with you, God, and with these, your people, who continue to believe in and work diligently towards your kingdom of equality and justice on earth.*

*God, we ask that you continue to fill our bodies with your strength and our hearts with your love. Be with us as we move through our fears into concrete actions of compassionate justice towards all your peoples*

*...We are grateful that you hear and respond to our prayers by guiding the work of our hands, feet, and hearts in this work that is the NBA.*

*In the name of the one we call the Christ, our brother Jesus, Amen.*

The NBA Board of Trustees will meet again via conference call on February 16, 2017. The next in-person meeting is scheduled for June 8-10, 2017, when the NBA board and staff will meet in St. Louis.

\*Published in *Winged Words: Prayers for Common Worship and Common Life*, by the Disciples Divinity House at the University of Chicago, 2006.