



Nation's Largest Historic African-American Religious Body to Make Historic Journey to the Vatican, Switzerland, South Africa, and Kenya

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The National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. announces the departure of its national delegation of twelve to the Vatican, Switzerland, South Africa, and Kenya today. The journey will take place April 22-May 5, 2007. The Rev. Dr. William J. Shaw, President of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. states, "Peacemaking and reconciliation includes building stronger relationships within and outside of the churches and the United States that are responsive to the changing dynamic landscape of Christendom and the unrelenting violence in our world." Therefore the journey will include meetings with evangelicals, historic churches, Roman Catholic Church leaders, racial-ethnic churches, Orthodox Church leaders, government officials and other community leaders who are concerned to work locally, nationally and globally to address this. The journey also seeks to be more responsive to the changing dynamic landscape of Christendom.

The journey will include meetings with church leaders at the Vatican, including being a part of the Papal Audience, the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches and related leaders, the Chief of Staff for the President of South Africa, the Rev. Frank Chikane, the General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Bishop Mvume Dandala and related leaders, and related members of the African Union.

The delegation looks forward to: a) exploring and engaging local, national and global partnerships appropriate to resourcing and networking local ministry and mission effectiveness; b) exploring and engaging the changing global, national and local landscape of Christendom and other faith expressions as it relates to local church ministry and mission effectiveness; c) creating dialogue among regional NBC USA, Inc. Vice Presidential districts with their local churches, auxiliaries, boards, young adults and groups about the impact and opportunities within the changing global, national and local landscape of Christendom and other faith expressions as it relates to local church ministry and mission effectiveness; d) identifying opportunities for partnerships and resourcing local ministry and mission effectiveness.

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Official Delegation of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. Ecumenical Journey:

- **The Rev. Dr. William J. Shaw, President of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. (HEAD OF CHURCH) and Pastor, White Rock Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA.**
- **The Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith**, the Convention's Ecumenical representative and the Executive Director of The Church Federation of Indianapolis (Facilitator/Organizer of the Ecumenical Journey)
- **The Reverend Dr. Harry Blake**, General Secretary of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
- **Dr. Hugh Dell Gatewood**, President of the Woman's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
- **Dr. Kenneth Lyons**, President of the Moderator's Department of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
- **Mrs. Sallie Titus**, President of the Ushers and Nurses Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention
- **The Reverend Alvin Love**, State President of the Baptist General Convention of Illinois and Chairman of the TOPIC Technology Ministry of the Convention
- **The Reverend Dr. Randy Vaughn**, President of the Texas Baptist State Convention
- **The Reverend Dr. John Ringgold**, Pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church, San Diego, CA
- **Mrs. John Ringgold**
- **Mrs. Vanessa Tavares**, President of the Women Mission Union of the White Rock Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA
- **Mrs. Jeanette Cooper**, member of the Board of Trustees of the White Rock Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA.

ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS:

April 22-24: Visit at World Council of Churches, Bossey Institute (University of Geneva), Orthodox Institute in Chambèsy, United Nation High Commission of Refugees.

April 24-26 Vatican City: Papal Audience, Pontifical Council on Christian Unity, Pontifical Council on Interreligious Concerns.

April 27-29: South Africa: Vice Chancellor's Residence of the University of South Africa, Site of the Children's Massacre on June 16, 1976 @ Hector Pieterse Museum, Anti-Apartheid Museum.

April 29-May 2: Nairobi, Kenya: All Africa Conference of Churches, Africa Union, Sudanese Refugees (Darfur Genocide)

May 3-4: South Africa: Chief of Staff of the President of South Africa, USA Embassy visit, Electoral Commissioner for South Africa, South Africa Council of Churches