



Dr. C. Dennis Edwards, CMBSC President

Dr. D. L. Richardson, Congress President

Delegates of the Consolidated Missionary Baptist State Convention

Greetings:

As Dean of our State Congress, I am excited and most appreciative for the confidence you have extended to me and the Dean's staff to serve in the capacity of providing an avenue for Christian Education for another year. We are grateful to you for your support as we continue to promote Christian Education as the cornerstone of the Consolidated Missionary Baptist State Convention (CMBSC).

What would Church be without Sunday School? What would a Sunday School class be without a trained teacher? Trained and equipped teachers who can effectively teach God's Word are vital to the ministry in our churches. That is why it is of the essence that this Congress prepares our teachers to fulfill that role.

When one is called to the ministry of teaching others, he is fulfilling the commandment of Christ, which is to make disciples. ("Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things as he has commanded us"—Matthew 28:19-20). I believe Christian educators are called by God to teach His Word (1 Corinthians 12:28). He is the one who calls, equips, and uses women and men to teach and proclaim His word to others.

The Theme for our 2018 Congress of Christian Education is "*Envisioning the Future Exceptionally--Leading Disciples to Christ by Re-engaging, Re-visioning, and Revitalizing Under the Cross of Christ.*" Our scripture references are Matthew 10:1; Romans 12:4; 1 Corinthians 12:7; and Ephesians 3:11. Christian disciples are not solely followers of our Lord Jesus Christ but also leaders for our Lord in every aspect of Christian service, witness, mission, and proclamation. This begins first and foremost in the church, evidentially and incidentally, and spreads throughout the kingdom of God in this present world.

As we prepare to envision our place in history in the next few years, Christian Education will be the main forum that undergirds our initiatives. Our goal is still to provide diverse educational opportunities for pastors, lay leaders, and church members to be exposed to the best ministry resources available.

The CMBSC Congress of Christian Education affords opportunities for relevant and innovative models of ministry that both enlighten and inform. It provides initiatives that support the Convention's charge of equipping pastors and churches to be more effective in ministry to lift our voices on behalf of the voiceless.

There will be 31 Certified Classes and three Enrichment Classes offered in this year's Congress. This will include the music class taught by Dr. Kenneth Harris and Sis. June Rogers; "Staying Focused and Faithful in a Dysfunctional Society" taught by Rev. Sidney Milton of Longley Baptist Church; and a new enrichment class, "Genesiology: Understanding the Pneuma, Charisma, and Do Terra of God", taught by the Moderator of East Arkansas District, Dr. Leo Adams. There will be two other new classes offered this year, "Introduction to the Bible" taught by Rev. Bobby Patterson, and "Process of Practices of Biblical Interpretation" taught by Rev. Pierce Moore.

The Lecture Series will be as follows:

Tuesday—Equipping the Saints: I Got To Get You Ready For This (Luke 22: 31-32)—
Moderator Vernon Thompson, Lecturer

Wednesday— Mental Health/Grieving Counseling: What Works in the Community—Rev.
Frederick Anthony, St. Paul Baptist Church, West Memphis, Lecturer

Thursday— Pastoral and Congregational Care: Financial Planning—Rev. Jameel Wesley, Eighth
St. Baptist Church, North Little Rock, Lecturer

Congress Focus and Goal

The Church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is still being challenged with the same old enemy. He is disguising himself in a new way which threatens the sacred foundation of which the church was founded. *Matthew 16: 18*. Christian Education continues to be the bedrock of this Congress. The mission and vision of the Consolidated Missionary Baptist State Convention (CMBSC) is to combat the force of evil that has revealed itself on every level of human existence.

This Congress continues to move forward in achieving and succeeding the standard, and we are constantly being challenged to equip pastors and lay persons in effective ministry. Our goal is to provide diverse Christian Education resources to **re-engage, re-vision, and revitalize under the cross of Christ** to help make our churches stronger and more influential. It is our belief that our Congress of Christian Education is blessed to have gifted and skilled instructors that will provide relevant and innovative models of ministry.

I believe that our education components offer workshops and courses that are on the cutting edge and meet the challenges of our community today. The goal of the Congress is to continue to be intense to ensure that pastors and laypersons are offered the courses that lead them to relevant and transformative ministry. We still want to be the "work horse" and the workforce that promotes global Christian education to meet the needs of God's everywhere

Dean F. L. Smith