



## Executive Board 2022-26

### **Council Chairman**

Suffragan Bishop Theron S. Wiggins

### **Council Vice Chairman**

Suffragan Bishop Luke McClendon

### **General Secretary**

Suffragan Bishop Reginald Freeman

### **General Assist. Secretary**

Suffragan Bishop Phillip Johnson

### **General Treasurer**

Minister Angie Holman

### **General Assist. Treasurer**

Suffragan Bishop Theophilus Burrell



# NORTHERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

*Fifth Episcopal District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.*

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**Bishop Ira Combs, Jr. D.D. – Diocesan Bishop**

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## OFFICE OF THE DIOCESAN

To the distinguished, gifted, brilliant, and intelligent, dedicated and faithful members of the Northern District Council. This includes the Elders, District Elders, Suffragan Bishops, Bishops, Ministers Wives and all willing workers of the kingdom of God.

The recent events that have consumed the media, social media, and the contemporary court of public opinion have instigated much worldly discussion about the following subjects:

1. Free Speech
2. Freedom of Religion
3. Freedom of Expression in the universe in the *court of public opinion*.

The assassination of the charismatic Charles James Kirk has left a chilling impression on all of those on all sides of the aisles of politics, as it relates to speaking one's truth (whatever that may be) in a civil society and without fear of retribution or personal annihilation by one's antagonists. Charles James Kirk joins the unfortunate list in America's dubious history of those assassinated for their position on political, social, and civil rights issues.

From Abraham Lincoln's assassination by John Wilkes Booth for ending slavery, to William McKinley (1901), killed by anarchist Leon Czolgoz. To John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1963), killed by sniper Lee Harvey Oswald for his pro capitalist anti-Marxist views. To Martin Luther King Jr., killed by assassin James Earl Ray (1968) for his magnificent orations for civil rights for all. To Robert F. Kennedy Sr. killed by Palestinian assassin Sirhan Sirhan for his support for Israel. And now Charles James Kirk, killed for his political views on conservative values by assassin Tyler Robinson.

There appears to be a multiplicity of opinions and rhetorical outburst on social media outlets mocking, criticizing, and in some cases mitigating to justify the assassination of a human being for exercising his free speech rights and speaking his truth and religious beliefs.

[www.ndcpaw.org](http://www.ndcpaw.org)

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." Colossians 3:23 KJV



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All of the aforementioned national personalities were within their rights to exercise their freedom to speak and to express themselves openly in public discourse. Each believed deeply as many of us do in the platforms upon which we stand. All were gifted communicators and able to marshal through their influence multitudes to listen, consider, and embrace their message. John F. Kennedy's message carried him to the White House as the 35<sup>th</sup> President of our country. Dr. Martin L. King Jr.'s carried him to global prominence in changing the fabric of American society culminating in the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights act. Robert F. Kennedy's took him to serve as the 64<sup>th</sup> U.S. Attorney General. Charles James Kirk's message has resonated around the globe with millions of people from diverse backgrounds honoring his legacy and promising to expand his mission while celebrating his faith and his dedication to his belief in what a better America could be. Whether some believe in Kirk's positions on social political issues or not is irrelevant. Charles James Kirk, John. F. Kennedy, Martin L. King Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy, should never have had their rights to speak freely taken away by an assassin's bullet.

- In legal context, assassination is criminally illegal.
- In the context of ethics, assassination is unethical.
- In the context of morality, assassination is immoral.
- In the context of civility, assassination is uncivil.
- In the context of right and wrong, assassination is wrong.
- In the context of godliness, assassination is ungodly.
- In the context of good and evil, assassination is evil.
- In the context of constitutionality, assassination is unconstitutional.
- In the context of *comparative religious theology*, assassination is sinful and unholy.

The response to a perceived injustice suffered by the assassin to commit the act of murder to silence his enemy or opponent is a violation of the law of God given to Moses. In Exodus 20:13 "Thou shall not Kill" is the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment of the law of Moses which was amended by Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount in St. Matthew 5:21-24 "Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: <sup>22</sup> But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. <sup>23</sup> Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; <sup>24</sup> Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

The late Bishop James Archie Johnson said of this scripture that God is calling for the New Testament born again believer to live a higher standard of life called *holiness* because we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

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In the court of American jurisprudence, the crime of murder is defined in Black's Law Dictionary 12<sup>th</sup> Edition "The willful killing of any subject whatsoever, with malice or forethought whether the slain person be an American or a foreigner". For the believing Apostolic Christian, the Apostle Peter wrote I Peter 2:13-15 "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; <sup>14</sup> Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. <sup>15</sup> For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

In conclusion, the 340 million Americans in our country are supposed to enjoy:

1. Freedoms guaranteed by the U.S Constitution. Signed by George Washington June 21, 1788.
2. Freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. Ratified by the original 13 States December 15, 1791.
3. The Declaration of Independence. Signed by 56 members of Congress. Authored by President Thomas Jefferson July 4, 1776.
4. The Emancipation Proclamation. Authored by President Abraham Lincoln January 1, 1863.

These 4 documents are supposed to guarantee:

1. The Freedom of Speech
2. The Freedom of Expression
3. The Freedom of Religion
4. The Freedom of Press
5. The Freedom of Association
6. The Freedom of Assembly
7. The Freedom to vote
8. The Right to petition the government through the process of legislation

And finally, freewill is a divine gift given to all by the Almighty God.

The construct of our democratic republic is designed to allow its citizens to vote in favor or against the aforementioned laws which define our freedom. And for the courts of jurisprudence to adjudicate matters of legal dissention or contention.

Scriptures both, Old and New, support this process as clearly in the Old Testament wisdom of God; Proverbs 16:33 "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD." and Proverbs 18:18 "The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty."

The idea originated with God to assist mankind in governing himself in a civil society void of violence, injustice, war, and other inhumane acts of men against their fellow man. Even the Apostles used this method in Acts 1:26 to cast their



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lots (votes) in electing Matthias as the replacement to the Apostleship of the infamous Judas Iscariot. This process calls for respect and civility, especially for those of us called to be saints (I Cor 1:12). It is the hope of all true Apostolics in leadership that those of us who profess New Testament salvation will observe with sincere conviction the scriptures as required by our Lord Jesus Christ. St. John 14:15-31 “If ye love me, keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; <sup>17</sup> Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. <sup>18</sup> I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. <sup>19</sup> Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. <sup>20</sup> At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. <sup>22</sup> Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. <sup>24</sup> He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. <sup>25</sup> These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you...” And further, the instruction of the Apostle Paul, Romans 12:18-21 “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. <sup>19</sup> Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. <sup>20</sup> Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. <sup>21</sup> Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

I remain the Master's servant,

*Bishop Ira Combs, Jr., D.D.*

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Diocesan – 5<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District

Northern District Council