

## WE'RE IN THIS THING TOGETHER

*By: Rev. Dr. Timothy James, Associate General Minister and Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation*



**“I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” - John 15:5**

Tis the season to give God glory and praise for the wonderful and marvelous gift of Jesus Christ to the world for our eternal salvation. Easter is a most significant observance in the life of Christians around the world. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the crux of our faith and the foundation stone of Christianity. It is the thread of faith that unites Christians across denominational lines. A mark of our celebration and appreciation is the reception of a special offering.

The Easter Offering, received through Disciples Mission Fund, on behalf of the general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, not only connects our congregations to one another by faith but we share in the transformative ministries offered by the general ministries of the Disciples of Christ. An offering is that which is offered, especially as a contribution, donation or gift. We know these offering may come from generosity and scarcity. For this offering the general ministries are very thankful.

These offerings enable the work of the church to be carried out through our general ministries. In the story of the Vine and the Branches, Jesus was simply saying “You need me, and I need you.” That is the reason I can humbly pray, “Lord, I can do nothing for You without You.” But as the whole Church, in all expressions we need each other to survive. The Easter Offering is an acknowledgement of appreciation to the whole Church. The resources and services offered to our congregations and pastors are many and needed. Advice and resources are available for pastors in crisis; planned-giving for our members; program resources for the Christian year; accounting services for regions and other General Ministries; instruction and guidance in congregational vitality and transformation; support for diversity and inclusion; leadership development for our congregations, and so much more, is provided through our general ministries. Your support is crucial for these ministries.



The National Convocation, the African American arm of the Church, is blessed to be a part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. We share a rich history and relationship. Our presence and leadership, at all three expressions, are clear indications that we are a movement for wholeness, in what could be a fragmented Church. Our support, given and received to and from each other again exclaims, “Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift” - 2 Corinthians 9: 15.