

## **Kansas East Annual Conference African American Strategic Plan 2006**

The African American Churches of the Kansas East Conference will fulfill their goals by initiating a transformational and revitalization learning model. The purpose of this model is to enhance congregational growth and share learning experiences with one another. This will facilitate growth, vitality and transformation. They will be effective and motivational making possible new directions and commitments for mission and ministry. The intent of this model is to build a deeper understanding between diverse congregations in urban and rural areas. We will also utilize components of the National Urban Plan of the United Methodist Church in fulfilling this strategic initiative.

### **Vision of the African American Congregations:**

Creating and cultivating culturally relevant and sustainable communities of faith.

### **Mission Statement:**

To become Christ-centered, spiritually healthy communities that grow in faith through worship, evangelism, programs, educational enrichment, and fellowship

### **Key long-term objectives:**

#### **A. Leadership Development and Training**

To educate and train pastors and congregations on the critical nature and importance of:

1. valuing clergy
2. comprehensive stewardship
3. congregational development through;
  - a. the School of Congregational Development,
  - b. Strengthening the Black Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> century
  - c. and the Congress of Evangelism
4. clergy and lay leadership
5. fostering partnerships that empower clergy and laity relationship.

#### **B. Congregational Development and Revitalization**

1. To develop culturally sensitive and relevant ministries that meet the needs of the community and the congregation
2. To demonstrate clarity of the church's mission
3. To develop an alternative preaching lectionary that addresses the needs of the African American community.
4. To document and evaluate the process of change and transformation for future consideration
5. Value Christian Hospitality, Wesleyan Heritage and Cultural History
6. Varied & Vibrant Worship
7. Enable and nurture all persons to grow spiritually, practice their faith and equip them for service
8. Provide education, Bible study, and faith formation development
9. Planning, implementing, evaluating, and refocusing ministry

#### **C. Community & Economic Development/Revitalization** (*revitalization of rural/inner-city/suburban neighborhoods*)

1. To develop a two campus site for ongoing ministry and/or plant a new church
2. To establish secure funding sources from outside the connectional setting
3. To explore opportunities for Pan Methodist shared ministry in less densely populated areas
4. Creatively and faithfully engaged with residential community

5. Act on needs, problems, and issues arising from the social-political, cultural, and economic aspects of life in the church, community, nation, and world

#### **D. Congregational Goals:**

##### **1. Topeka: Asbury-Mount Olive (AMO)**

In addition to fulfilling the initiatives of the African American plan as outlined above, AMO will also endeavor to expand and enlarge its capacity and ability to meet the needs of the community with the inclusion of an educational wing and a youth recreational facility.

##### **a. Outreach Wing-**

The educational wing will include approximately six large multi-purpose rooms equipped with multi-media capability and internet accessibility. These rooms will have the ability to be divided in half for small group meetings. We also envision two additional handicap accessible rest rooms.

The educational wing will be open and available for public consumption and we will encourage other organizations to utilize our space for community concerns.

The educational wing will be used for meetings, workshops and other learning opportunities that present itself for the betterment of the church and surrounding community.

We see older adult/children computer learning, after school programs, parenting and support classes, community based web access and many other opportunities to bring the community together.

##### **b. Youth Recreational Facility (YRF)**

The YRF will be a stand alone building that will provide safe sanctuary and structured gathering opportunities for the African American youth of the community. Currently there is no facility in the surrounding area that African American youth can go and find meaningful fellowship, nurture and affirmation. We see this facility as a partnership with the city of Topeka government, police and educational departments.

Included in this YRF will be spiritual guidance, culturally relevant activities, mentorship program, teen talk opportunities (Keeping It Real) , educational enhancement and other forms of upward mobility to equip and liberate African American Youth to be vital contributors in the community.

The YRF will be erected on a site adjacent to the church on church owned property. It may take the form of a modular building or some other new age structure.

##### **2. Kansas City: Mason Memorial**

Mason Memorial is in the process of a major revitalization and possible relocation effort. For years, the church has been operating in a financially prohibitive facility that disallowed funds for ministry and outreach. The church has also been located in an area where African American population growth is in a sharp regression and the traditional “neighborhood” is non-existent.

The congregation has realized their plight and will endeavor to move to a facility and location more suitable for their current and future growth potential. The congregation has also recognized a need for spiritual renewal that will lead to more responsible stewardship, discipleship and evangelism. It is the plan of the congregation to re-emerge as a vital congregation aggressively

prepared to meet the ever-changing and demanding challenges of the African American Community.

#### Relocation

The congregational leaders are meeting with the District Superintendent and a representative of Congregational Growth and Development regarding the feasibility of such a move. Thus far, the proposed plan is mutually agreed upon by congregation and conference leadership.

The current building will be sold and all debts paid from the proceeds of the sale. The congregation will endeavor to simultaneously find a temporary location for worship while working with Congregational Development and the DS for a permanent place to relocate. It is expected that the congregation will attempt to lease or share between two and five years in order to gain a financial and membership base and be able to secure a permanent facility that will not be a financial burden. This time will also be used for the necessary spiritual transformation and growth that is critically needed in order to be a vital and sustainable congregation.

### **3. Small Membership African American Congregations**

The strategic plan in communities where there are small membership African American congregations is to begin (as soon as the African America strategic plan is adopted) a Pan-Methodist dialogue between the appropriate Kansas East Conference personnel. The goal is:

- a. to provide qualified clergy to small membership African American local churches for the long term
- b. to combine facility needs
- c. to reduce financial liabilities while solidifying assets of both communities, whether material or financial