

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP

Presiding Bishop Blake's Statement on February 23, 2021 Election

February 26, 2021

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." – 1 Peter 2:9

I greet you in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is always a joy to come before the saints of God and I certainly miss our fellowship and corporate worship together. I long to see the saints again, but I can no longer be silent, awaiting that day. I have watched, and I have prayed. It is now time for me to speak.

This is a critical time in the life of our Church. This very moment is one that will be recorded in history. How did the Church of God in Christ emerge from the ashes of a global pandemic, heightened social injustice and a crude presidential election? Did we collapse under the olive press? Did we mirror the tragedy of hopelessness, faithlessness, injustice and corruption like the world? Or will we be found leaning on the Lord, standing in unity, and better coming out than when we went in?

I'm grieved by what I see. I have a responsibility to you both ecclesiastically as the Chief Apostle of our denomination, and civilly as the President and CEO of our beloved Church of God in Christ, to speak the truth in the midst of lies; to speak peace in the middle of confusion; and to speak order to chaos. I am a defender of our faith and I vowed to uphold the Constitution of our organization. Saints, please hear my heart.

The Holy Bible - the Logos Word is the lamp unto our feet and the light to our path. We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God. I love the Word, and I've spent over 60 years of my life defending it. The Constitution of our great Church was ratified by our Founder himself and contains the fundamental principles, structure, values and operational excellence for which our Church has been admired. We have been a model for countless denominations and churches to emulate around the world. With a heavy heart, I'm witnessing the slow and systematic compromise of both the Word and our Constitution.

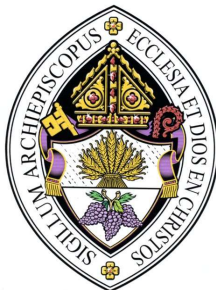


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The spirit of our election and the public display of our campaigns challenges the fundamentals of the Word. The unsuccessful attempt to conduct the Quadrennial Election on February 23, 2021 challenges our Constitution.

At the heartbeat of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, our Savior reminded His disciples, *"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."* Church, I implore you to be sober and alert, for the world is watching. Can they see a difference between us and them?

I cannot leave my charge as the Presiding Bishop of our great Church without sharing with you my heart and standing, with the General Board's support, to call our great Church back to holiness and upholding the integrity of our Constitution.

I'm asking for every Bishop, Superintendent, Pastor, Elder, Supervisor, District Missionary, Evangelist, lay member--all of you, God's children--to join with the General Board and I as we call for a postponement of this virtual election. The present agenda of forcing an election in the coming days despite consequences and without transparency is unacceptable. Postponing the election will give us time to address this matter. **Under the constitutional authority of the General Board, Section B, 4(b), the General Board and I are calling for a Special Session of the General Assembly on April 6, 2021 to discuss the Quadrennial Election and other related matters.**

At present, the entire integrity of the Church is at stake. As such, no public platform to announce any such *"cyberattack"* is authorized nor appropriate. No one has directed the Chairman of the General Assembly to hold such a conversation. In fact, no such actions on the part of the General Assembly are in order until the Presiding Bishop and General Board have sufficient information, consult with our attorneys, and ascertain the level of exposure.

It is my responsibility and privilege to speak on behalf of the Church. It should be further noted that I did agree to the postponement of the election. However, I did not agree to the rescheduled election date or to anything further; nor was I or the General Board informed of any information concerning an alleged cyberattack or improprieties.

To be clear, the Presiding Bishop and the General Board conducts and executes the business of the Church, not the Chairman of the General Assembly. Additionally, the Chairman of the General Assembly does not have the authority or power to make decisions and take actions on behalf of the Church. The Presiding Bishop has the constitutional power and authority to conduct the operational

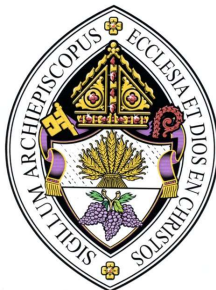


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functions of the Church of God in Christ when neither the General Board nor the General Assembly are in session.

This is the Church of God in Christ. We have always operated with excellence and integrity. We can do better and we will do better. I am still on watch and I will not leave my post as your Chief Apostle until we are assured that technological due diligence has been done and constitutional efficacy has been observed. In the meantime, let's stop campaigning and start praying and believing that the sovereign will of God will be done in our Church. Pray, that righteous leadership will prevail and our beacon of light will be strengthened.

Let us sanctify our minds and turn our hearts towards the duty and privilege of "*strengthening the things which remain.*" This is all we have. Yet, time has proven over and over again, it is all we need. My beloved children, I adoringly see you in the future--and you look so much better than you do right now.

Sincerely,

Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.
Seventh in Succession
Presiding Bishop & Chief Apostle
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.



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