



INTERDENOMINATIONAL THEOLOGICAL CENTER

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SOUTHEAST REGION'S ONLY HISTORICALLY BLACK, THEOLOGICAL CENTER PREPARES FOR NEW ERA, FOCUSING ON FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES AND NEW PATH FORWARD.

The Interdenominational Theological Center will remain operational, performing a hard reset in order to ensure the sustainability of the institution.

Atlanta, GA – On April 14, 2023, The Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) Board of Trustees declared financial exigency, effective immediately. Financial exigency is a term used by institutions to indicate a state of significant financial crisis that requires immediate and significant corrective action to ensure the sustainability of the institution.

"It's important to note that ITC is NOT CLOSING. This is a difficult and challenging time for everyone in the ITC community. However, we are committed to transparency and open communication throughout this process and will provide regular updates as we move forward towards creating an institutional strategy that is fully sustainable, with the plan to "REBOOT" as a strong, fiscally healthy, and responsible institution. We must, at last, bring an end to an unsustainable model which has generated a spin-cycle of institutional crisis. Our shared calling to the mission of this beloved institution requires this courageous action." – ITC President Matthew Wesley Williams

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This painful but necessary decision to declare financial exigency was made after a thorough review of the institution's current financial situation, continued historical challenges and projections for the future. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on ITC, as it has on many other institutions across the country. The pandemic, exacerbated other longstanding institutional challenges of deferred building maintenance preventing on-campus learning, pre-existing debt, decreasing enrollment, reduced revenue, increased expenses, and increasing debt loads for our students and their families.

In response to these challenges, ITC has taken steps over the last two years to reduce expenses, including prior salary reductions and closing of buildings that are too compromised and too costly to renovate and repair in short order. Despite year-over-year increases to fundraising from FY20 to FY23, including unprecedented private philanthropic support, ITC continues to struggle with financial solvency.

“Thinking about new possibilities...this change is an opportunity for ITC. Don’t lose your optimism.” – ITC Faculty Member, Dr. Will Coleman

The declaration of financial exigency allows ITC to take necessary steps to address the root causes of financial challenges to facilitate a promising future for the institution.

The declaration of financial exigency means that the institution will be taking several actions, including but not limited to:

- Reduction in faculty and staff positions
- Reduction or temporary suspension of academic programs
- Restructuring of administrative functions, institutional model, and governance model

These actions will be taken in a deliberate and thoughtful manner, with a focus on minimizing the impact on our students and preserving academic quality in ongoing programs. We will work closely with affected faculty and staff to provide support and assistance during this difficult time.

ITC remains committed to its impactful educational aim to prepare “Prophetic Problem Solvers” who facilitate transformation in the pulpit, parish, and public square. We are confident that, with the support of our community, we will emerge from this period stronger and more resilient.

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The Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) is a Christian ,Africentric ecumenical graduate theological school with a mission to educate students who will commit to practicing justice and peace through a liberating and transforming spirituality.

Founded in 1958 during the Jim Crow era and rise of the Civil Rights movement, ITC has been a Black-led institution since its inception designed to nurture leaders for and from the Black church. Historically working in partnership with five denominational affiliates, ITC is located in the Atlanta University Center, the cradle of the civil rights movement, where more than half of the population is black or of African American descent.

More than 60 years after its birth, ITC continues to cultivate leaders who co-create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive society. The Interdenominational Theological Center does not discriminate among applicants to, or participants in, its degree programs based on gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, or physical disability.

ITC's educational aim is to cultivate "Prophetic Problem Solvers", faith rooted leaders who possess the competencies to design, co-create, and implement solutions to some of the most vexing social issues of our time, including but not limited to challenges facing marginalized communities. ITC has designed its curriculum to cultivate key competencies in its students for facilitating social justice (advocacy) and social impact (innovation/design justice). The curriculum and pedagogical approaches employ participatory action research as a core method in partnership with social sector organizations to integrate applied participatory research and situated learning opportunities woven throughout students' course of study.

For each individual that ITC graduates, the institution's ultimate reach is exponential as ITC alumni impact countless individuals in the congregations and communities they serve. It's also important to note that most ITC graduates are multi-vocational and take on roles beyond ministry alone. Because of this, the impact of our graduates is immediately felt in the community and ultimately felt nationwide.

ITC occupies an opportunity-rich position within the field of theological education and the church. ITC sits at the nexus of black church and broader community unlike any theological institution in North America. The shifting landscape of theological education including, demographic shifts in American religion, changing educational models, and the uniquely broad reach of the ITC in the Black church present a horizon of possibility for the ITC to innovate and make a significant social impact.

,Africentric – Referring to the centering of cultures, histories, perspectives and spiritualities of people of African-descent.

A New Leader, A New Vision: ITC 2.0

President Williams often describes ITC as a “start-up that is not starting from scratch.” The focus is to amplify a new vision that began upon his appointment to the interim role in July 2019, continuing with his pandemic appointment to the permanent role in June 2020. First dubbed ITC 2.0 by President Williams, the new vision seeks to optimize ITC’s infrastructure through a process of innovative, institutional overhaul. The overhaul will address a range of initiatives including but not limited to optimization in governance and institutional design, reimagining the physical plant and redesigning the academic curriculum. As a demonstration project, the ITC campus and impact program portfolio will become a platform for leadership formation, education, and an institutional model for other cause-driven institutions seeking to make meaningful social impact. ITC will focus its impact in areas related to housing, food systems, environmental justice, mental health, and economic development, all while achieving financial sustainability.

ITC has for so long functioned as a quiet yet powerful beacon of hope and impact. Over the next five years, it will be vitally important for ITC to align with partners, supporters and mentors who can provide expert guidance, funding support and more. As ITC continues this 2.0 journey, it will be a much less quiet time. ITC’s leadership will be seen working collaboratively throughout greater Atlanta and beyond to determine the most effective strategy for institutional growth and change, with the primary goal of positively impacting ITC students, the broader Atlanta community, and the communities where ITC’s bi-vocational graduates live, pray, work and lead.

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