



Mawuna Gardesey

Synod of The Mid-Atlantic

Moderator

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” – Ephesians 2:10

Beloved of God,

In a few short weeks, we will gather, as part of God’s masterpiece, at the Massanetta Springs Conference Center, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, for our 245th Synod Assembly. We will gather, March 13-14, 2020, to continue the good work for which God has called us. I ask that you pray for the work of this Assembly, that the Holy Spirit will direct our worship and our deliberations, and that God will grant us all safe passage to and from Harrisonburg.

After prayer, and in consultation with the Executive Committee of Synod, we have agreed to focus our work at Massanetta Springs on two planks in our Mathew 25 Agenda.

Building Vital Congregations and Dismantling Structural Racism

The Vital Congregations plank is a natural expansion of our Next Generation work. We will have resource persons to work with us to crystalize our thoughts on this issue, particularly, as it pertains to developing new, energetic and inspired leadership for our congregations of color and new worshiping communities. The goal is to develop an action plan to strengthen ministries in these communities and break new ground with new worshiping communities.

The Structural racism plank will continue our work from the 243rd and 244th Assemblies and help us to develop strategies for sustaining this work. As the most diverse Synod in the denomination, we are uniquely positioned to lead in this work of reconciliation. A broad-based, racially diverse delegation drawn from 11 of our 14 presbyteries was in Montgomery Alabama February 6-8 for a shared immersion experience of visiting the Legacy Museum and the National Monument for Justice and Peace, also called the Lynching Museum. They have come back with a commitment to work in their congregations and presbyteries to address the scourge of systemic racism and the repugnant ideology of white supremacy that undergirds it. The Synod will receive a report from the delegation and plans from each of the presbytery teams on their path forward. As well, we will discuss mechanisms for coordinating, resourcing and sustaining these efforts so that they remain energized and effective.

Our agenda for the 245th Assembly is ambitious. If we depend on our own strength, we will fail but if we rely on the Holy Spirit, we cannot but succeed; it is after all His work. We just have the privilege, as part of God’s masterpiece, to make happen. Pray, therefore, that the Spirit of God will prepare you for your participation in this Assembly. Please plan to attend the whole assembly; we need to hear what the Spirit of God has for us through you.

Shalom,

Mawuna