

INNOVATE

The UNCF National Faith and Education Initiative: Fanning the Flame that Started it All



Harkening back to the African American church and the community's historical roots in the creation of historically Black colleges and universities, UNCF revamped and reignited its focus during FY 2022 for its months-long local faith fundraising campaign—UNCF Sunday—bringing awareness to what really started it all for the organization: the church.

Throughout the year, UNCF works with churches and faith groups across the country to implement UNCF Sundays, a day of financial support to HBCUs from congregations, culminating on a specific Sunday in February. In 2022, UNCF Sunday was Feb. 27. This is part of the overall UNCF National Faith and Education Initiative.



“What many don’t realize is that nearly all of today’s historically Black colleges and universities—our wonderful HBCUs—whether they’re part of UNCF or are now state-funded HBCUs, were started as missions of the church,” said Dr. Michael L. Lomax, president and CEO, UNCF. “They began as teaching schools to help freed Black men and women and escaped slaves to learn how to read and write and give them the basic skills to get ahead in life. That is why, even today, our HBCUs are precious, vital resources that continue to deliver on their mission, supporting those that need education and help them succeed and even the playing field.”



Wilberforce University



Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

Senior Pastor, Alfred Street Baptist Church, Alexandria, VA



Rev. Joel Osteen

Senior Pastor, Lakewood Church, Houston, TX



Bishop Joseph W. Walker III

Presiding Bishop, Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship International



Rev. Dr. Alyn E. Waller

Senior Pastor, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA



Bishop Michael Curry

Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church



Bishop J. Drew Sheard

Presiding Bishop, Church of God in Christ



Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale

Senior Pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, GA



As part of building out the re-envisioned faith fundraising campaign, UNCF sought support from prominent ministers, clergy and other religious leaders to help inspire churches from many denominations and beliefs to coalesce around a common cause—ensuring UNCF has the resources to support HBCUs and the students that attend them. This group of new faith leaders is the UNCF National Faith and Education Initiative Advisory Council. The council provides leadership to support UNCF Sunday and other activities to involve churches in UNCF activities. The current council members are:

- **Yolanda Adams**, award-winning Gospel artist and education advocate
- **Rev. Dr. Carlton P. Byrd**, president, Southwest Regional Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
- **Bishop Roy E. Campbell, Jr.**, auxiliary bishop, Archdiocese of Washington, Catholic Church
- **Bishop Michael Curry**, presiding Bishop and primate, The Episcopal Church
- **Rev. John C. Dorhauer**, general minister and president, United Church of Christ
- **Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale**, senior pastor, Ray of Hope Church, Decatur, GA
- **Bishop L. Jonathan Holston**, resident bishop, United Methodist Church, South Carolina Conference
- **Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II**, stated clerk of the general assembly, Presbyterian Church (USA)
- **Rev. Joel Osteen**, senior pastor, Lakewood Church, Houston, TX
- **Rev. David Peoples**, president, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.
- **Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr.**, senior bishop, African Methodist Episcopal Church
- **Bishop J. Drew Sheard**, presiding bishop, Church of God in Christ
- **Bishop Darryl B. Starnes, Sr.**, senior bishop, Piedmont District, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- **Bishop Joseph W. Walker, III**, presiding bishop, Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship International

- **Dr. Alyn E. Waller**, senior pastor, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA
- **Rev. Dr. LaKeesha Walrond**, president, New York Theological Seminary
- **Dr. Howard-John Wesley**, senior pastor, Alfred Street Baptist Church, Alexandria, VA
- **Dr. Jerry Young**, president, National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

“There may not have been a greater success story than the story of our HBCUs in this country providing education for those who might not have had an opportunity for it, providing education for those receiving it for the first generation, making it possible to find a way out of no way. Stand up to emancipate the mind and to participate in making this a better world for all. That is the work of our historically Black colleges and universities,” said Bishop Michael Curry, presiding bishop and primate, The Episcopal Church.

By engaging the faithful, the UNCF National Faith and Education Initiative helps ensure HBCUs remain viable and that talented, deserving students have the funds to get to and through college. Visit [UNCF.org/FaithCampaign](https://www.uncf.org/FaithCampaign) for more information.