

## **NAACP CEO to address Disciples Biennial Session**

HOUSTON, Texas -- NAACP CEO Benjamin T. Jealous, and musicians Richmond Punch and Lecresia Campbell are slated to highlight the 2012 Biennial Session of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The forum for African American Disciples meets July 26-29, 2012, in Houston, TX. Organizers hope upwards of 1,000 attendees will converge at the Houston Hilton North, under the theme "...Yet I Will Rejoice!" (Habakkuk 3:17-19)

Benjamin Todd Jealous is the 17th President and Chief Executive Officer of the NAACP, and the youngest person to hold the position in the organization's nearly 100-year history.

He formerly served as president of the Rosenberg Foundation, director of the U.S. Human Rights Program at Amnesty International, and was Executive Director of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), a federation of more than 200 black community newspapers.

The Rhodes Scholar earned a master's degree in comparative social research from Oxford University, and a bachelor's degree in political science at Columbia University, New York, NY.

Also addressing conferees is guest preacher, the Rev Dr. Jasmin (Rev. Jazz) Sculark, senior pastor, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, York, PA. The native of Trinidad and Tobago holds master's and doctor of ministry degrees from Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH, and United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, respectively.

Soloist Lecresia Campbell, Newport News, VA, is a former school teacher turned recording artist. After her recording of "Perfect Praise (How Excellent)" received critical acclaim, she became a background vocalist for Vanessa Bell Armstrong. She later shared the stage as a solo artist with Larnelle Harris, Donnie McClurkin, Mary Mary, Gerald Levert, and Stephanie Mills.

A stage play actress, Campbell starred as Effie in "Dreamgirls," and performed in two David Talbert productions: "Mr. Right Now" and "His Woman, His Wife." She has also been a regular performer on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN).

Campbell holds a bachelor's degree in applied voice from Tougaloo (MS) College. She and violinist Richmond Punch will highlight the All-Convocation worship service, July 29.

Dallas-based Richmond Punch has performed around the country playing a variety of genres, from classical music to jazz, hip hop, and gospel. The Yale University and Julliard School-trained musician has performed at numerous music and arts festivals around the country and worked with gospel artists Donnie McClurkin and Yolanda Adams, composer Marvin Hamlisch, and Ledisi.

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As program planning continues by the Rev. Dr. Timothy James and Convocation trustees, a local arrangement committee works at recruiting area volunteers, arranging activities for children and youth, ground transportation for visitors, and myriad other details. That group is chaired by the Rev. Marilyn S. Fiddmont, vice president, Christian Church Foundation.

This time around, the Biennial Session will have a heavy web presence with a 2012 National Convocation website ([www.2012nationalconvocation.com](http://www.2012nationalconvocation.com)), Face Book page (<http://tinyurl.com/65jach2>) and Twitter account (@2012convocation). Coordinating the multimedia effort is Communications co-chair Patrick Booker.

Pre-convention activities include a heritage tour through the Buffalo Soldiers and African American Museum, Texas Southern University, and historic civil rights sites and neighborhoods settled by descendants of slaves released following the original "Juneteenth" announcement.

In addition, workshops and resource groups will be offered, July 26, through the Pre-Convocation Institute for African American Faith and Life. The activity is being coordinated by the Rev. Dr. Billye P. Bridges, Dean, and Director of Christian Education, Disciples Home Missions.

For more local area information, contact the Rev. Marilyn S. Fiddmont, [mfiddmon@ccf.disciples.org](mailto:mfiddmon@ccf.disciples.org).

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