



Executive Director:
Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith

Organizing, Energizing and Mobilizing the Faith Community Since 1912

**Denominations and
Congregations represented:**

- African Methodist Episcopal Church
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.
- Assemblies of God Church
- Church of God, Anderson
- Church of God in Christ
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- Church of the Brethren
- Church of the Living God
- The Episcopal Church
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Greek Orthodox Church
- Independent Baptist
- Independent Christian
- Interdenominational Community Churches
- International Council of Community Churches
- Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod
- Mennonite Church
- Moravian Church
- National Baptist Convention of America
- National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.
- National Missionary Baptist Convention
- Pentecostal Apostolic
- Pentecostal Assemblies of the World
- Presbyterian Church U.S.A.
- Progressive National Baptist Convention
- Reformed Church in America
- Roman Catholic Church
- The Salvation Army
- Society of Friends
- Unity Church
- United Church of Christ
- The United Methodist Church

Mission:

“Striving to make visible God’s gift of unity in Jesus Christ and the quality of community God wills for the human family.”

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New Hope & New Life

By Rev. Dr. Angelique
Walker-Smith

Spring is in the air! Daylight Savings Time has even been moved up to become a prelude to the entry of fresh flowers, green grass and yes, soft winds of warmth instead of chill. Along with this comes the holy season of Lent in the Christian community, which is a season of sacrificial preparation for new life found in the great resurrection of Jesus the Christ. With new life come new possibilities. The Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis is one example of this as we review and propose renewed ways for us to promote and live out unity and service in greater Indianapolis for the next three years leading up to our Centennial in 2012. Another example can be found at IPS. A couple of months ago, I was also asked to co-chair the Drop-Out Prevention Task Force with Dr. Eugene White, Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) Superintendent. The Task Force was invited to visit Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky. I was blessed with the privilege to go and witness new life and possibilities in a situation once deplored and declared unconstitutional by the Kentucky legislature. I was able to witness why they are now one of twelve national models of best practices identified as having systemically changed the culture, policies and practices of their system to affect a 4 percent drop out rate! I am pleased to say IPS is seriously considering how such changes might be of benefit.

I am also encouraged by the critical and helpful discussions with the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) Task Force that seeks to reform our Marion County Juvenile Detention Center. Thanks to the Annie Casey Foundation and the vision of local leadership, a delegation from this group visited the juvenile center in Multnomah County (Portland, Oregon) and discovered viable alternatives to not only reducing the retention of our youth but identifying more opportunities to

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1100 West 42nd Street, Suite 345 • Indianapolis, IN 46208
Phone: 317/926-5371 • Fax: 317/926-5373
churches@churchfederationindy.org • www.churchfederationindy.org

work more closely with community partners like churches and other groups already invested in our youth. By the way, 14 percent of their juvenile youth are detained annually!

Recently, the Celebration of Hope, The Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis and Eastern Star Church partnered to host the visit of the Rev. Dr. Renita Weems. Dr. Weems was the first African-American woman to graduate with a PhD in Old Testament Biblical Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary and is currently a scholar, preacher/teacher, writer for many publications, and commentator on various television and radio programs. She spoke of the great leader and deliverer, Moses, in both Jewish and Christian traditions. She cited scripture that pointed to the death of Moses and reminded us that the “new kid in town,” Joshua, would bring new possibilities after Moses’ death. She underscored the scripture that said God would be with the new generation of Joshua just as He was with the older generation of Moses. She encouraged the attendees to support the young Joshuas of today and not hold them back with nostalgic rhetoric of the past, but to find substantive intergenerational engagements of presence, faith and mutual regard that does not place primary value on material items and gain.

Dr. Weems’ message and the overlapping seasons of Lent and spring invite all of us to take our roles of leadership and mentorship seriously. We are the Joshuas of today. This includes our youth and young adults. We are invited to make a conscious effort to work closely with the generations to which we belong as well as the generations ahead and behind us. Working together with our schools and detention centers are examples of opportunities for this. The good news is we do not always have to recreate the wheel. Best practices are occurring in places where many may think there is little hope. Research, technology and good old fashioned storytelling and sharing in our neighborhoods and wider community all can lift the burden of despair and unveil new possibilities of hope. New and effective models are emerging to transform and reform our neighborhoods and communities. We are invited to exercise due diligence in finding and creating them where we live and serve. May the seasons of spring and Lent inspire you anew to do so.