

New Era President Raises the Question What Do You See?

By Toni Demetria Smith

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Omaha, Nebraska – On the evening of Thursday, August 11, 2011, as the week of electrifying music in song from the convention choirs (Mass, Male, and Youth), spiritually inspired devotional messages, and the proclamation of God's Word to uplift those in attendance at the 94th Annual Session of the New Era Baptist State Convention of Nebraska, Inc. came to an end, it was time for the much anticipated first annual address from President Rev. Dr. Cedric L. Perkins. In his message, based on his campaign theme "Empowered by the Spirit of God" - Acts 1:8, Dr. Perkins shared his vision, 2010-2011 accomplishments, goals and objectives.

As the world was dealing with the United States losing their AAA rating, the City of Omaha was blessed to have in their midst three native Alabamans: Dr. Julius R. Scruggs (Toney, Alabama), Dr. Marcus D. Davidson (Tuscumbia, Alabama), and Dr. Cedric L. Perkins (Leighton, Alabama) who provided encouraging words, shared guidance, teaching, preaching, and assisted in developing ways to evangelize in our homes, workplaces, churches, community and communicated the work of the convention locally and nationally.

Briefly recapping the week of events a Musical/Memorial Service began on Sunday, August 7, 2011 with a special tribute to a great solider of the convention who was called to rest in 2010, the late Sis. Corrine White, Convention Historian and member of Mt. Nebo Baptist Church.

On Monday, August 8, 2011, Mission Night was the official opening of the Annual Session. The Convention was called to session by President Perkins who captured the delegates' attention immediately when he simply stated "We come this week with a focus to glorify the Father, horrify the enemy, and edify the saints. We come by faith, trusting in His Word, leaning and depending on the Lord. We come with hope and we come with confidence in knowing all things work together for the good of them who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose. In spite of our trials, economic challenges, senseless murders, high unemployment, foreclosures, political games with people's lives; the devil is a lie, we are here like a tree planted by the water - we shall not be moved. Whereas our God is victorious, we come seeing and believing there is a brighter day ahead. Therefore, we come to lift the name of Jesus up."

His opening words left the audience hungry to be fed each night with the songs of praise, devotional messages, and a Word from God.

Dr. Julius R. Scruggs, President of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. was the guest speaker for the Wade, Williams, Whittington Scholarship Service on Tuesday, August 9, 2011. Dr. Scruggs is the Senior Pastor of First Missionary Baptist Church in Huntsville, Alabama and a very good friend to Dr. Perkins and has provided guidance and encouragement to Dr. Perkins who is the Senior Pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church, is visible in the community by serving on boards, ministering to youth, his peers, and senior citizens.

Dr. Perkins, quoted on Wednesday, August 10, 2011 during the Informational Service, stated that "we as the New Era Baptist State Convention of Nebraska, Inc. and the African-American community must unite our forces to continue to address the many ills of our community." He

provided an illustration that “two teeth look better together and bite better together rather than spread apart.” He encouraged the attendees to explore the idea, “all the churches along with each member of every church to utilize their funds to establish a financial institution or unite all their funds in one local bank to empower their dollars in the North Omaha Community.” In addition, President Perkins challenged us to implement the recommendation of establishing a Board of Education to oversee the development and operations of the New Era Christian Academy. He also provided other instructions on church and economic growth, educational development, and community nourishment. Information was disseminated referencing how to access the convention website www.newerabaptiststateconventionofne.com pertaining to the New Era Outreach Fund and selecting the provided link to make purchases of African-American products, which will bring revenue to assist in ministering to the local churches, community, and abroad.

On Thursday, August 11, 2011, recording artist, Dr. Marcus D. Davidson, Assistant Treasurer of National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., and Senior Pastor of the New Mount Olive Baptist Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida provided the attendees with five memorable motivational words “How Good the Lord Is” prior to singing the song “I Love to Praise the Lord” as a special tribute to Dr. Perkins.

Dr. Davidson introduced President Perkins prior to his first Annual Presidential Address. He confidently informed the attendees he didn’t need any notes because he knew Dr. Perkins. As his true friend and co-laborer in the ministry, Dr. Davidson allowed us the opportunity to visualize Dr. Perkins as a man who is Christ-driven, focused on teaching and preaching the Word of God, one who evangelizes to each and every person he has come in contact with in his daily walk with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dr. Davidson is one who honestly and truly can say he knows Dr. Perkins’ demeanor because he converses with him frequently.

Dr. Perkins thanked everyone for their loyal support and inspired the crowd with his address followed by the sermon titled “What Do You See?” Mark 8: 22-26. During the first year of his administration twenty-one of the thirty goals were completed. New Era is on target to accomplish the additional goals within the five year term.

The entire week’s services were held at Morning Star Baptist Church where Rev. Dr. Leroy E. Adams, Jr. is the Senior Pastor.

New Era will serve as the Local Host Committee for the NBC, USA, Inc. Western Region Youth Conference on July 11-13, 2012.

For additional information regarding the New Era Scholarship or any other New Era activity, please contact the New Era Headquarters Office at (402) 502-2828 or visit www.newerabaptiststateconventionofne.com



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