

African American worship rally encourages bold witnesses

November 16, 2020

Participants in the virtual African American worship rally heard a call to be bold witnesses for Christ and to let Jesus' light shine.

The rally, scheduled in conjunction with Texas Baptists' virtual annual meeting, was conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We cannot be together physically, but we can most certainly worship together in spirit," said Edward Wagner, vice president of the African American Fellowship of Texas.

Kenneth O. Jackson, president of the African American Fellowship of Texas and pastor of New Light Baptist Church in Lubbock, delivered the message from Acts 4:13.

Jackson recounted the story of Peter and John, who were brought before the Sanhedrin and ordered to not speak about Jesus. The apostles refused, however, saying that they could not be quiet after all they had witnessed.

Jackson encouraged rally participants to be as bold as Peter and John in proclaiming the gospel.

"Keep being a bold witness. Keep telling people about the goodness of Christ," he said.

Jackson noted Peter and John were common fishermen standing in front of some of the most powerful men in Judaism. But everyone could tell that there was something different about them, he added.

"When you have been in the presence of Jesus, you don't have to tell

anyone else. Because people who haven't been with Jesus, they're most certainly going to see the light of Jesus in you," Jackson said.

Carry out the Great Commission and Great Command

Pastor Michael Evans of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mansfield, president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, extended greetings from Texas Baptists and offered a word of blessing.

"I pray that you are all blessed today and invite others to come and see what God is doing through our convention," Evans said.

Roy Cotton, longtime director of African American ministries for Texas Baptists, and Ray Malone, director of human resources at the BGCT, introduced Oza Jones as the new director of African American ministries.

Jones thanked Texas Baptists' leaders and those who prepared the way for him to serve as director.

"It is an honor and a blessing to be able to serve you ... and we thank God for those who have gone before. I can't wait to meet all of you in person after all of this is over," Jones said. "I solicit your prayers as we lead that African American churches in Texas and beyond would carry out the Great Commission to the lost and carry out the Great Command to love all."

Wagner encouraged rally attendees to participate in Texas Baptists' annual meeting and offered a benediction in keeping with Jackson's sermon.

"May our hearts be inspired by your word to be a bold witness," he said. "May we come together to advance your kingdom and for the advancement of the gospel and to do the work of the Great Commission."

