

New Baptist Covenant: Action, Reconciliation, Transformation

By Hannah McMahan, NBC National Coordinator



The New Baptist Covenant was born out of a dream. President Jimmy Carter, a well-known peacemaker, traveled all across the world, waging peace and building reconciliation between warring factions. Yet, when he looked at his own Baptist family, he saw so much division. Baptists are divided by race, divided by theology, divided by geography, divided by generation and even divided about being divided. Saddened by all of this division, President Carter convened a gathering of prominent Baptist leaders to dream of a new way for Baptists to work together and to bring love to a world desperately in need. From these conversations the New Baptist Covenant was born. Leaders in this movement pledged to work to heal the wounds in our Baptist family and to join together to be agents of God's love in a world desperately in need.

At the inaugural New Baptist Covenant gathering we caught a glimpse of this dream becoming reality. Here, over 15,000 Baptists from various traditions and backgrounds gathered together to testify to the fact that there is more that unites us, than divides us. We came together to honor God with our unity and to learn about the good works our fellow Baptist had been undertaking. Over the subsequent years, the New Baptist Covenant has continued to nurture this dream and the movement has grown as one person after another shared that the NBC dream echoed in their own heart. We have enjoyed our new friendships and been inspired by powerful words but now it is time to take the next step.



Dr. Tyrone Pitts, Rosalyn Carter, Former President Jimmy Carter, and PNBC President Dr. Carroll Baltimore at a NBC meeting.

The New Baptist Covenant movement is poised to turn inspiration into action. We are calling Baptist churches across the nation to make '*Covenants of Action*.' In these covenants, churches from different Baptist traditions will create collaborative ministries in their communities and advance Jesus' Luke 4:18-19 vision of healing and liberation. In Dallas, TX, for example, Baptists are joining together to combat predatory lending. In Birmingham, AL, Baptists are working to overcome food inequality for children. In Atlanta, GA Baptists are coming together to provide 21st century literary skills to their community. All across the nation, Baptists are taking up this challenge to join forces to share the love of Christ. With your help, over the next 4 years, NBC plans to nurture over 100 Covenants of Action.

From the very beginning, the Progressive National Baptists have been at the heart of this New Baptist Covenant movement helping us shape our vision and guiding us toward action. Throughout this journey, PNBC has been a wonderful support and an inspiring partner in ministry. You have even graciously provided the New Baptist Covenant with office space and we are deeply thankful. Thank you for your wisdom and friendship! Thank you PNBC for being our partner in God's mission in the world! Together we can act to bring about reconciliation among Baptists and Luke 4:18-19 transformation to our communities. The spirit of the Lord is upon us!