

Dear AABC Council Members and Constituents,

Greetings to you in our Lord's precious name!

At this moment, I am feeling a good amount of both sadness and happiness. I also feel a large amount of gratitude. Because I formally retire Wednesday, September 30, I share this with you now.

The sadness is there because a profound era in my life is closing. For the last 45 years, I have worked full-time all the time. Regardless of my jobs, God ensured my life was shaped and sustained through work, through the salaries and benefits that work provided for my family and me, and for the wide ranges of relationships, growth opportunities, and difference-making endeavors that occurred from that work. And now, that kind of work will end.

The happiness is there because I believe new profound eras of my life are about to begin. I have hope and trust. More time with my family is already proving to be a beautiful blessing in so many ways. New and old relationships unrelated to my work history are being nurtured. I might be able to make some Kingdom of God differences in my city and a creation care contribution nationally. God's hand is in all that and more.

Happiness is also there because Rev. Peter Watts is our new AABC Coordinator. I think the results of my service as Coordinator included identifying key strategic opportunities and threats facing the AABC.

Those, in my humble opinion, include:

- Ensure many more young adults are equipped and become leaders
- Increase the number of RCA congregations that serve people of African descent
- Find stronger, healthier, and biblical balances between word and deed, especially as it relates to justice in the everyday lives of our people
- Widen the opportunities for people of African descent to influence and shape the life and ministry of the RCA, our denomination

I fully believe Pete is the Coordinator for us. His life and ministry demonstrate he has been fully and fruitfully engaged in different venues in each of these areas. I believe in him, and that he is God's person at this time for AABC Coordinator.

The gratitude is there for many, many reasons. Serving you all has been a source of deep pleasure and learning and prayerful relationship building with you and with our Lord. I love listening to and learning with you. I believe in you. I look forward to a blessed, exciting, and impactful future for you and our AABC. Thank you all for everything.

Yours in Christ,

Earl James,
Coordinator for the AABC