

Dear AABC Council Members and Constituents,

I am so excited to be part of leading in our denomination and more specifically resourcing and bringing new life to the AABC. I am so indebted to Earl and our 11-year friendship. He has been a constant friend and colleague throughout the years. I will miss our impromptu phone calls when he is thinking through new projects or ideas that he would want to bring to the AABC and how we would go back and forth on the pros and cons of those projects. Earl is a great friend and brother.

A little about me, I was born and raised in South Los Angeles. Below are some important points about my life:

- I am a graduate of Cal State Dominguez Hills where I received a B.A. in Mass Communications.
- After undergrad, I continued my education and received my Master's of Education in Administration and Leadership degree from the University of Phoenix.
- My educational career began 20 years ago in LAUSD at Compton Ave Elementary School where I taught 2nd -5th grade. I then taught for 7 years at a charter organization (View Park Prep) where I also was the founding Principal of Thurgood Marshall Leadership Academy Middle School.
- After 20 years in public education, I decided to leap into and went into full-time ministry where I decided to go back to school.
- I started a Master's of Theology at Western Seminary but finished at Fuller Seminary where I completed a Masters in Theology in Spring 2017.
- I am currently a doctoral candidate at Fuller Seminary in the school of Theology in my 3rd year of a five-year program.

I am a product of the traditional black Baptist tradition. I received a call into ministry in 2001 at my wife's home church in Compton. I am a proud product of Holy Chapel Baptist Church where I was licensed and ordained under the leadership of Pastor George L. Thomas.

In 2008 my family and I pursued a call to start a church in our city that would be multiethnic and multigenerational. At the time our city was the second most diverse city in the nation. My family and I planted and organized The Rock Church, which celebrated 12 years in September 2020.

I have authored a book called "Prodigal Father" which narrates my 30-year journey of forgiveness and reconciliation after finding my biological father on skid row after 30 years.

I have been married to my wife Dr. Didi Watts for 26 years and have three children Jasmin Anderson, Avery Watts, and Imani Watts who have all graduated from college are pursuing their God-given purposes in life.

For the past 30 days, I have been able to spend one-on-one time with Earl onboarding onto the denomination's history structure as well as the AABC. I have been able to meet with different constituents within the AABC on our zoom meet and greets and those have been wonderful. I have collected all of your input and will share with you the overarching themes that have come forth. I have been able to meet some of the General Synod execs as well as key people that are on the different Commissions. I am beyond grateful for this slow onboarding process as it has

allowed me to wrap my arms around what I was stepping into. In my view, the future looks bright.

The AABC has a mission statement that I want to help us all live into. When the mission statement was shared a few months back I knew then we were on the right path to transformative work within the AABC and the RCA as a whole. In one of our meet and greets a question was asked of me. I'm paraphrasing but someone said, "Do you have a vision for us?"

When I look at all the assessments that I have ever taken such as Strengths Finders, Myers Briggs, Kolbe Index, or even some church planting assessment the one thing that comes out is that I am a visionary. I read a really short powerful book some years ago called "Making Vision Stick" by Andy Stanley. That little easy read has helped how I go about communicating a vision to groups.

I hope to share with you in the next coming weeks after spending more time talking with the AABC constituents to share the vision for our council. In the meantime know that I am praying for all of you and our denomination.

Two things are clear to me from spending time with everyone these past few weeks. First is that there is a deep love for Black people in our denomination and secondly there is a deep love for the RCA. With those two overarching themes, I will have a nice springboard to launch from when working with the Council and its constituents.

Lastly, one of the most effective ways I have led in my tenure with my church or other large non-profit organizations is by leveraging resources and relationships. There are a ton of resources out there that I hope to bring to the table to benefit our churches and a host of relationships that I have been able to build that I think will benefit you and your ministries in different capacities. Please know that I am here for you to be a thought partner, advocate, and resource to help you accomplish all that God has put on your heart for your church and our denomination as a whole.

Humbling Serving,

Pastor Pete Watts
Coordinator for AABC