

LOUISIANA  
INTERCHURCH  
CONFERENCE

2023  
ANNUAL  
ASSEMBLY

MARCH 13-14, 2023  
BATON ROUGE  
CATHOLIC LIFE CENTER



Participants that requested  
overnight accommodations  
(Mar. 13, 2023) will be  
staying in the  
**Courtyard Marriott**

2421 South Acadian Thruway

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337-278-6621  
Leigh's cell



## **MONDAY MARCH 13, 2023**

- 12:00 - Check in and Lunch
- 1:00 - Opening Prayer & Introductions
- 2:00 - Table Discussions
- 3:00 - LA VOAD presentation
- 4:00 - Business Session
- 5:00 - Closing Prayer and Adjournment

5:30 - Dinner at Courtyard Marriott  
2421 South Acadian Thruway

## **TUESDAY MARCH 14, 2023**

- 8:00am - Breakfast
- 8:30- Prayer Service & Commissioning
- 9:00 - Juvenile Justice Presentation
- 10:00 - Campus Ministry Panel
- 11:00 - Closing Prayer and Blessing
- 11:30 - Lunch
- 12:00 - Adjournment



## Call to Assemble

One: In His unfailing providence, God our Father calls us to demonstrate the oneness we already share through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit summons us to that perfect oneness which Jesus wills for His people.

**All: In joyful response we do hereby [assemble] the Louisiana Interchurch Conference as a contemporary instrument of our obedience.**

from the Preamble of the Constitution of the LA Interchurch Conference

# Opening Prayer

Creating God, we come before you as your people from North, South, West and East. In your love and grace you call us to reconciliation and to unity. We give thanks for the richness the Spirit has bestowed on our different traditions and for the many ways your word is preached and sung, and your name is praised and proclaimed. Give us courage to embrace each other in unity and love. Amen.

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From Oasis of Peace – World Council of Churches



Reading Scripture Together  
(Each person reads one verse)

**1 Corinthians 12**

- 1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be ignorant.
- 2 You know that when you were gentiles you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak.
- 3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.
- 4 Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit,
- 5 and there are varieties of services but the same Lord,
- 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.
- 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
- 8 To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,
- 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,
- 10 to another the working of powerful deeds, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.
- 11 All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.
- 12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.
- 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
- 14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.

*1 Corinthians 12 continued....*

15 If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body.

16 And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body.

17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.

19 If all were a single member, where would the body be?

20 As it is, there are many members yet one body.

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

22 On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

23 and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect,

24 whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member,

25 that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another.

26 If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work powerful deeds?

30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

31 But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.



# Introductions

## 01 INDIVIDUAL INTRODUCTIONS

Introduce yourself :

Name, Title, Denomination, Judicatory Body, Local Church, Region/Location, Role with LIC etc.

Based on the body part you have been given, how are you (individually) like that body part? How do you live out your role in the Body of Christ in a way that is similar to the role of that body part in the human body? (Eyes: I'm a visionary.)

## 02 GROUP INTRODUCTIONS / DISCUSSIONS

All the similar body parts will go to one table (eyes with eyes, ears with ears, etc.)  
Re-Introduce yourself to the group as needed.

Each group is challenged to create a list (as comprehensive as you can) naming the ways in which the Church is (or should be) like your body part.

What would a church of only this body part be missing? (A church with only eyes and no arms would be missing the ability to serve, etc...)

Eyes

Ears

Arms

Nose

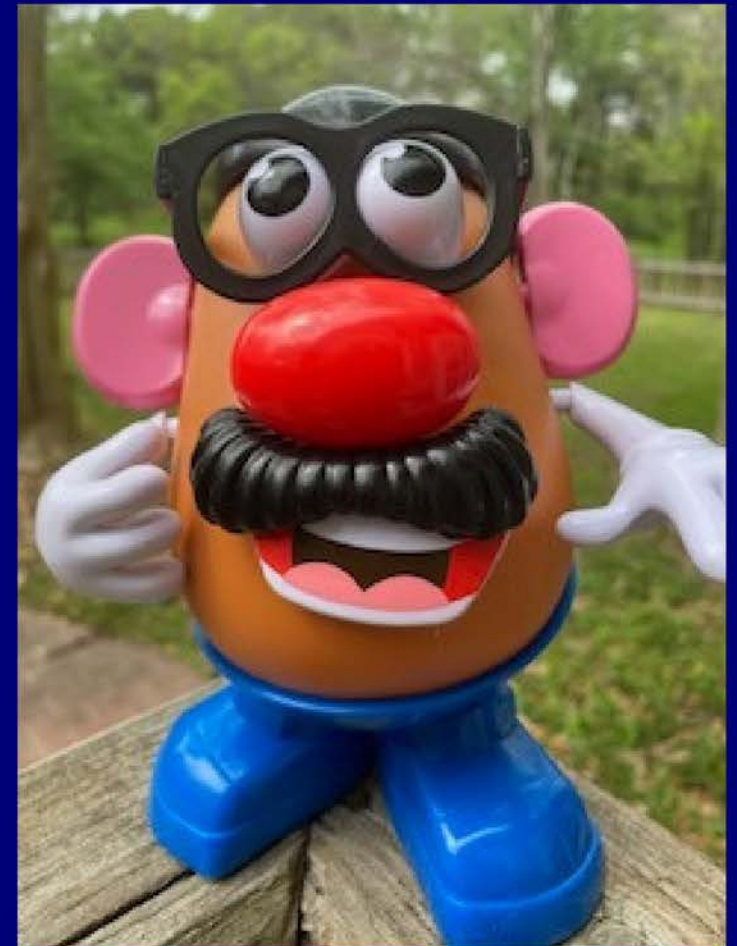
Mouth



*There are many  
parts, but one  
body.*

1 Corinthians 12:20

Eyes  
Ears  
Arms  
Nose  
Mouth



# Table Discussions

Facilitated by the eyes.

Read. Reflect. Discuss. Decide.

UNITY &  
DIVERSITY



READ.  
REFLECT.

"At the heart of the ecumenical movement is a problem that has troubled political philosophers from Plato to the authors of the United States Constitution: the relationship between the one and the many, between the unity of the community and the diversity of its particular parts. The two concepts - unity and diversity - are symbiotic. "Unity" is meaningful only if it includes in one whole things that are unlike, and "diversity" is only diverse in relation to the other distinctive parts of a whole. So the question is one of emphasis or starting point. Do we say, 'out of the many, one' (*e pluribus unum*) or 'within the one, many'? Do we properly speak of unified diversity or diverse unity? The classic ecumenical vision... is clearly the later."

from *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement and How It Has Been Impoverished by Its Friends* by Michael Kinnamon

DISCUSS.  
DECIDE.

- What are the strengths of each approach? What are the challenges?
- Kinnamon claims diverse unity is ecumenism's goal. Do you agree?
- How does our approach to ecumenism differ if we speak of unified diversity vs diverse unity?

# Table Discussions

Facilitated by the ears.

Read. Reflect. Discuss. Decide.

UNITY &  
JUSTICE



READ.  
REFLECT.

What truly distinguishes the ecumenical vision... is the insistence that the unity of the church contributes to its mission in the world, even as engagement with the world contributes to the church's unity. ...

Actually holding such things together, however, has proved extraordinarily difficult. ... 'For some the search for a unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship seems, at best secondary, at worst irrelevant to the struggles for peace, justice, and human dignity; for others, the church's political involvement against the evils of history seems, at best secondary, at worst detrimental to its role as eucharistic community and witness to the gospel.' (quoted from *Gathered for Life: Official Report of the 6th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (1983)*)"

(from *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement and How It Has Been Impoverished by Its Friends* by Michael Kinnamon)

DISCUSS.  
DECIDE.

- What difference does visible church unity make in the struggles for peace and justice?
- How is our life of worship and sacrament related to our life of service Christ's name?
- How could LIC better balance the tension between eucharistic unity and missional unity?

# Table Discussions

Facilitated by the noses.

Read. Reflect. Discuss. Decide.

THE  
ABIGUITIES  
OF UNITY



READ.  
REFLECT.

"When we try to discern the signs of our times, we see many different quests for unity. There is a sense of being one world through new possibilities of communication and sharing information, connecting people through enormous and sometimes unlimited openness, but also making the world a globalized marketplace dominated by a few and powerful actors, some with little or no ethical or value-based standards for a unity of economic justice for all. The global market creates opportunities but not equality. There is also a global trend toward building a safer and closed unity for some – but not for all – by actions that divide and polarize, manifesting national identity as exclusive, defining difference as a reason for superiority, discrimination, racism, or xenophobia."

From *Visions of Christian Unity* by Olav Fykse Tveit

DISCUSS.  
DECIDE.

- In what way is the ecumenical movement enhanced by the "many different quests for unity"? In what way is the ecumenical movement challenged by this?
- What is the difference between ethical and non-ethical unity?
- Are there limits to "unity" in the ecumenical movement? Who sets these limits?

# Table Discussions

Facilitated by the mouths.

Read. Reflect. Discuss. Decide.

COVID-19  
AND  
UNITY



READ.  
REFLECT.

"The world is experiencing new threats posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. International peace and security are seriously affected, and global public health faces unprecedented challenges. These challenges are increasing socioeconomic inequality and discrimination while revealing political vulnerabilities and deepening the erosion of trust in public institutions. The crisis presents a degree of complexity that makes it vital to act and work in a synergetic and coordinated way, and to discover new forms of solidarity."

"The rise of poverty... due to the pandemic is generating the recrudescence of inequalities and injustice, including gender inequality, deepening the gaps between rich and poor, and affluent and less affluent societies. [These] represent major risk factors for the building and maintaining of peaceful relations between the members of communities."

from Peace Is a Treasure for All: An Ecumenical Reflection on Peacebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Violence by A Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches

DISCUSS.  
DECIDE.

- How has COVID-19 made unity or ecumenism more difficult?
- How has COVID-19 made unity or ecumenism more accessible?
- Has COVID-19 made ecumenism more vital/necessary or less? Why?
- Does LIC's approach to unity or ecumenism need to change in light of COVID-19? If so, how?

# Table Discussions

Facilitated by the arms.

Read. Reflect. Discuss. Decide.



" Envision a series of steps or stages that, for the most part, can apply to either ecumenical or interfaith relations:

Competition -> Co-existence -> Co-operation -> Commitment -> Communion"

"Churches, in my experience, continue to see [ecumenical] councils as "them" rather than "us," as "that organization" rather than "our fellowship," as an association they have joined rather than a covenant they have made with others. Former WCC staff member Victor Hayward... put the matter this way...: 'A council committee usually means a gathering of church leaders to decide what the council shall do, instead of what their churches should do together through the council. The churches are not really committed to one another.... This means that councils are too frequently an ecumenical facade behind which the churches in practice remain as unecumenical as ever.'

from Can a Renewal Movement Be Renewed?: Questions for the Future of Ecumenism by Michael Kinnamon



- Kinnamon has 4 recommendations:
  - 1) Building relationships between member churches,
  - 2) Promote knowledge of other members,
  - 3) See the council as an arena for dealing with the truly divisive issues of our day, and
  - 4) Stand with other churches in times of special need.
- How can LIC do these things? or do them better?

# Jessica Vermilyea

Jessica Vermilyea serves as President for Louisiana VOAD Board of Directors.

She has worked in disaster recovery for more than 17 years directly coordinating response efforts in Louisiana and Texas and consulting nationally with impacted communities.

She currently works as a freelance contractor through her consulting agency, Haphak Consulting, LLC.

Her work has included volunteer coordination, construction project management, emotional and spiritual care, and disaster case management.

She has worked to develop and support long term recovery efforts in impacted communities including consultation, capacity building, advocacy, and establishment of best practice models for disaster recovery work.





**LIC 2022-2023  
President of the  
Board of Directors**

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**The Rev. S. C. Dixon**

Founder and Pastor, Greater Mount Olive  
Missionary Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, LA;  
President, LA Home and Foreign Missions Baptist  
Convention;  
General Secretary, National Baptist Convention of  
America International;





# 2023-2024 LIC Officers

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MICHAEL G. DUCA**

**PRESIDENT**

Bishop, Diocese of Baton Rouge,  
LA The Roman Catholic Church

**THE REV.  
RICHARD  
WILLIAMS**

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General Presbyter,  
Presbytery of S. LA  
Presbyterian Church  
(U.S.A.)

**THE REV.  
SHELTON C.  
DIXON**

**IMMEDIATE PAST  
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President, LA Home and  
Foreign Missions Baptist  
Convention  
National Baptist  
Convention of America  
International

**THE VERY REV.  
ANNIE B.  
ETHEREDGE**

**SECRETARY**

Ecumenical Officer,  
Diocese of W. LA  
The Episcopal Church

**THE REV. DR.  
VAN STINSON**

**TREASURER**

Assistant to the Bishop /  
Clergy Excellence, LA  
Conference  
United Methodist Church

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The Rev. Dr.  
Kristina Peterson

*The Presbyterian  
Church (USA)*

*Alexandria*

The Rev.  
Scott Chemino

*Roman Catholic*

*Monroe*

The Rev. Supt.  
Woodrow Davis

*Church of God in  
Christ*

*Lake Charles*

Mr. Winfield Little

*Roman Catholic Laity*

*Baton Rouge*

The Rev.  
Michael Moroney

*Roman Catholic*

*Northshore*

The Rev.  
Michael Otkins

*National Baptist  
Convention of America*

*Houma-Thibodaux*

Vacant

*Lafayette*

The Very Rev.  
Annie B. Etheredge

*The Episcopal Church*

*New Orleans*

The Rev. Emile  
"Buddy" Noel

*Roman Catholic*

# AT LARGE

## Board of Directors

### CLASS OF 2025

#### NEW

The Rev. Dr. Kristina Peterson  
Presbyterian Church, USA

#### RENEWING

Mr. Winfield Little  
Roman Catholic laity

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth York  
African Methodist Episcopal Zion

Mr. Harold Petteway  
Christian Methodist  
Episcopal laity

Mrs. Katrena Ann King, Esq.  
United Methodist laity

The Rev. Dr. Glenell Lee-Pruitt  
African Methodist Episcopal

### CLASS OF 2024

#### NEW

Mrs. Jessica Trahan  
United Methodist Church

#### CONTINUING

Ms. Natasha Smith  
Roman Catholic laity

The Rev. Jean Marie  
Peacock  
Presbyterian Church (USA)




The Rev. Lindy Broderick  
United Methodist Church

Ms. Debra Joseph  
United Church of Christ

The Rev. Margaret Simms  
African Methodist Episcopal



**Resolutions**



**End the  
Death  
Penalty**



**Denounce  
Hate**

# **REAFFIRMING LIC'S OPPOSITION TO THE DEATH PENALTY**

**As religious leaders of the state of Louisiana, we feel compelled to call attention to the moral dimensions of public policy and recommend laws that uphold the God-given dignity and rights of every person, each of whom is made in the image and likeness of God. Because our faith calls us to value human life and dignity, justice, compassion, mercy, and the common good, we are compelled to speak out and reaffirm our opposition to the death penalty and proclaim our support in the coming [current] legislative session for legislation forever ending the practice of state-sanctioned killing in Louisiana.**

**At the center our Christian faith is the belief in the sanctity and inherent dignity of the human person. This dignity is inviolable and cannot be lost even after the commission of a serious crime. The death penalty offers permission for the view that some people do not deserve the respect of human dignity given by God, that their Creator gives up on them, that they have to be removed from the earth on which God gave them life. The death penalty is a rejection of the power of the Gospel to transform people's lives and is a rejection of God's love, gift of life, and grace.**

**Social science and historic analyses expose how our state's death penalty system is deeply flawed and unjust. Widespread racial bias in the prosecution of death penalty cases, sentencing, jury selection, and appeal and post-conviction processes render Louisiana's death penalty system prone to error. There has been one exoneration for every 2.5 executions in Louisiana over the last 50 years.**

# **OPPOSITION TO THE DEATH PENALTY**

The death penalty has not decreased crime in our state and does not protect our citizens. Over the last 25 years the murder rate in states without the death penalty has been consistently lower than in states with the death penalty. The U.S. Justice Department's National Institute of Justice makes clear that there is no evidence that the death penalty deters crime and that the certainty of being caught is the most powerful deterrent. Many of our law enforcement leaders believe that the resources spent on the death penalty would be better spent preventing crime, supporting victims' families, and funding police efforts to apprehend perpetrators. The death penalty is a glaring example of misplaced financial priorities. Maintaining Louisiana's capital punishment system—prosecution, defense, court, and corrections—has cost our state over two hundred million dollars in the past 15 years.

Christians are an Easter people—our faith is rooted in the hope of mercy and resurrection. Jesus' death on the cross transformed all suffering and pain by refusing to pass it on. The Resurrection secured the promise of eternal life. It is this paschal mystery, this Easter faith, that we are called to live each day, drawing upon the limitless love of God to fortify us against the temptation of fear. Let us no longer succumb to the fear and hopelessness that the death penalty represents. We pray that in this Legislative Session our leaders will have the courage and wisdom to end the death penalty in Louisiana and thereby proclaim our state's unequivocal commitment to protecting the dignity and sanctity of every human life.

# STATEMENT AGAINST HATE

*“Christian belief that all human beings are divine image-bearers to one another grounds our efforts to combat Islamophobia and antisemitism. Hospitality is the act of recognizing the image of God in others. As Christians, we are taught to welcome the stranger and to be blessed and not threatened by difference. We are called to provide nourishment, care, and protection to all.”*

*-Denouncing Antisemitism and Islamophobia, General Assembly on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, Presbyterian Church, USA, March 9, 2023*

We the members of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference, composed of members of many Christian denominations across the State of Louisiana, feel that we need to make this statement, as we are deeply concerned about the rise of antisemitic and Islamophobic actions and statements of recent months.

As followers of Jesus, who welcomed all people, and affirmed their inherent dignity, without any reservation, we condemn such rhetoric and actions as completely incompatible with the teaching of our Christian faith.

We further stand with our brothers and sisters, of the Jewish tradition, the Islamic tradition, and all people of any tradition, affirming them, and wishing to let them know of our care for them.

We also pray for all people, especially those who would proclaim hatred and calumny toward others, because of their beliefs, that God will move their hearts to change, and to recognize the innate human dignity of every child of God.

# Other Business?





## Blessing One Another

May the love of  
God embrace us.

May the grace  
of Jesus  
challenge us.

May the power of  
the Holy Spirit  
renew us. Amen

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Following the  
example of the  
risen Christ, we  
offer one another  
a sign of peace:

The peace of  
Christ be with  
you.

And also with  
you



# Jack Harrison

Jack Harrison joined the Juvenile Defense Clinic as an adjunct professor of clinical law in 2009. He has been a long time public defender in the Juvenile Court of East Baton Rouge Parish, and is the current editor of the Louisiana Children's Code Handbook.

Professor Harrison earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Georgia in 1985, before attending the Ohio State University, where he earned a Master of Fine Arts in 1989.

While studying at the undergraduate and graduate levels, Professor Harrison was also recording, and touring the United States and Europe. He eventually settled in Germany in 1995, and remained there until enrolling at the LSU Law Center, as a "non-traditional" student in 2001.

While attending law school, Professor Harrison was working to develop a pro-bono culture among law students. His efforts, and the efforts of many other students following along behind him, eventually led to the creation of the Law Center's PILS program.

After working for a number of years as a staff attorney for Louisiana's Third Circuit Court of Appeals, Professor Harrison returned to Baton Rouge to work in the juvenile section of the Public Defender's Office. Since joining that office, Professor Harrison has been active in all aspects of the practice of juvenile advocacy, and serves on a number of committees established to continue and prompt juvenile justice reform on both a state and a local level.



# Campus Ministry Panel Discussion

MRS. JESSICA  
TRAHAN

UL Wesley

THE REV.  
ZOE  
GARRY

NOLA Wesley

THE REV.  
HEBERT  
BRISBON,  
III

Dillard University



Moderated by: The Rev. Dr. Van Stinson

# Mrs. Jessica Trahan



Jessica Trahan is in her fourth year serving as Director of Campus Ministry at UL Wesley. A native of Lake Arthur, Jessica spent 17 years in college athletics as both a coach and administrator. Answering a call to ministry was an unexpected left turn at 40, but it has proven to be both humbling and transformative at a personal level. The opportunity to serve and support students and young adults at such an important point in life's journey is one not taken lightly. It is a gift to do life with people. Jessica lives in Lafayette and shares home life as a new wife to Courtney and as a dog-mom to Rufus, the rescue Goldendoodle.

[facebook.com/ULWesley](https://facebook.com/ULWesley)

Instagram: [@ulwesley](https://instagram.com/@ulwesley)

# The Rev. Zoë Garry

Rev. Zoë Garry is the Director and Campus Minister for NOLA Wesley and the Labyrinth Café, a campus ministry for Tulane and Loyola Universities In New Orleans.

She is an ordained minister in the PCUSA and a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary with a concentration in Women, Gender, and Theology. College ministry and academia are both passions of Zoë's and she strives to create a dynamic ministry that Christ-centered, open-tabled, and affirming at NOLA Wesley.

<https://wesley.tulane.edu>

Instagram: @laybrinthnola



# The Rev. Hebert A. Brisbon, III

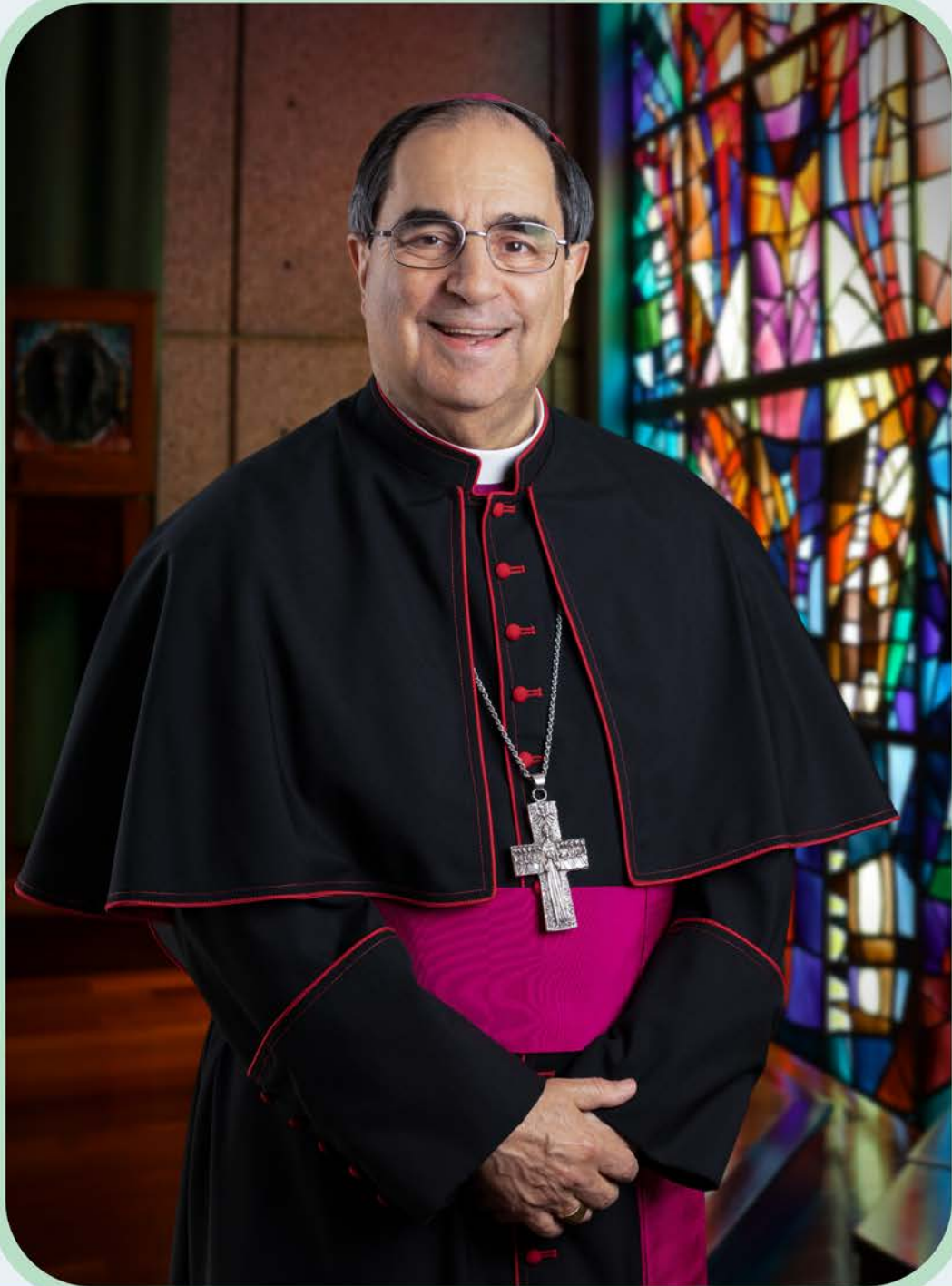


The Reverend Herbert Alexander Brisbon, III, serves as the appointed University Chaplain at Dillard University in New Orleans, Louisiana. He brings his unique skills to develop vision and mission, as well as to discern purpose, enabling him to provide visionary leadership, strategic planning, and spiritual guidance to help the university achieve its mission and goals, while helping individuals within the university community attain their personal and spiritual objectives.

Chaplain Brisbon is passionate about teaching, preaching, and shepherding God's people, challenging them to experience, engage, and encounter God in a Neo-Orthodox manner. His faith journey includes pastoring a new church start in the heart of Baltimore City, Maryland, leading a multi-ethnic cooperative parish in Washington, DC, serving as the United Methodist Campus chaplain at Howard University, a historically Black College and University, and working as the executive director of the Wesley Foundation at Howard University in Washington, DC. He is an Ordained Elder in the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist church.

Chaplain Brisbon's path is guided by two thoughts: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" and "Empowered to serve God's Kingdom by any means necessary, that glorifies God without compromise."

[www.dillard.edu](http://www.dillard.edu)



## **Closing Thoughts & Blessing**

**THE MOST REV.  
MICHAEL G. DUCA**

**2023-2024  
LOUISIANA  
INTERCHURCH  
CONFERENCE  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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The background is a vibrant, abstract stained glass design. It features various colored sections separated by black outlines, including shades of red, blue, green, orange, and purple. A large white circle with a gold border is centered on the page, containing the event information.

**Save the Date**

**2023 LIC Fall Board  
Meeting / Retreat**

**Sept. 25-27, 2023  
Woodworth, LA**

Please complete  
your evaluation  
form.

If you would like to help  
plan the Sept 25-27, 2023  
Fall Board Meeting or the  
2024 Annual Assembly,  
email Leigh:  
[director@lainterchurch.org](mailto:director@lainterchurch.org)



# LIC 2023 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

*Feedback Form*

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied
Location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sessions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hotel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handouts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PLEASE ADD NOTES ON THE BACK IF DESIRED.