

African American Ministers and Caregivers: The Unheralded COVID-19 First Responders

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

8:30 am – 1 pm

Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine
4 Riverside Circle - Room G101

First responders in the COVID-19 pandemic include more than just police and emergency medical personnel. Pastors, family members, neighbors and community leaders provide support and share critical information. Devised Visions, in partnership with Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Carilion Clinic, is offering a free half day conference for the African American community first responders - ministers, counselors, educators, coaches and mentors. This historic gathering will allow these critical disseminators of information in the African American community to reflect on how they will come out of the wilderness of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conference Schedule:

8:30 am - Sign-in, Greetings & Fellowship

9:00 - 10:15 am - Opening Plenary – Rev. Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President, Hood Theological Seminary, Salisbury, NC

10:30 - 11:45 am - Practitioner’s Perspective – Rev. William Lamar, Pastor – Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church PHD, Candidate (Christian Theological Seminary), Washington, DC

12:00 - 1:00 pm - Pastoral Care, Q&A with lunch (provided) – Rev. Dr. Michael Palmer – Pastor of Care, LifePoint Church, Reistertown, MD

To register, visit <https://virginiahealthcareers.org/events/african-american-ministers-event/>
*First 50 registrants will receive a free book “Rest in the Storm: Self-Care Strategies for Clergy and Other Caregivers, 20th Anniversary Edition” by Kirk Byron Jones
(Virtual option available - please note in registration)

For more info, contact Rev. Dr. William L. (Bill) Lee: rev.wlee@gmail.com, (540) 314-3265



Blue Ridge Partnership
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CARILION CLINIC The Carilion Clinic logo, featuring the text "CARILION CLINIC" in blue and a stylized blue and white graphic element.



Rev. Dr. Vergel Lattimore

Dr. Vergel L. Lattimore III is President and Professor of Pastoral Psychology and Counseling, Hood Theological Seminary, Salisbury, North Carolina (NC). He is Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Care and Counseling and former Director of the M.A. in Counseling Ministries, Methodist Theological School in Ohio (1990-2012). He served as Director of Counseling, Addiction and Psychological Services (CAPS), Syracuse Community Health Center, Inc. (1988-90). He also worked as a Core Staff Pastoral Counselor/Area Coordinator, Onondaga Pastoral Counseling Center (1983-88), Syracuse, NY. He was Assistant

Dean, Office of Minority Affairs, Duke University (1977-79). For a complete bio, visit <https://www.hoodseminary.edu/employee/vergel-l-lattimore>.

Vergel will give an overview of the African American pastor as a first responder and then speak specifically about the COVID response. He will also discuss what literature says about being in the wilderness and what it is like coming out.



Rev. William Lamar

William H. Lamar IV is the pastor of Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, DC. He previously served Turner Memorial AME Church in Maryland and three churches in Florida: Monticello, Orlando and Jacksonville. He is a former Managing Director at Leadership Education at Duke Divinity. Lamar is a graduate of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and Duke Divinity School. For a more complete bio, visit

<https://faithandleadership.com/authors/william-h-lamar-iv>.

Lamar will offer the perspective of a practitioner as a first responder. He will talk about the lived experience in the wilderness of COVID and how it feels coming out of the wilderness.



Rev. Dr. Michael Palmer

Dr. Michael Palmer is currently serving as Pastor of Care at LifePoint Church in Reisterstown, MD. Palmer has over 21 years of pastoral experience, including 16 years as a Senior Pastor. His personal pastoral hardships and doctoral research contributed to his passion for the well-being and care of pastors, church staff and congregations. Palmer also served in the United States Army as a Military Police Officer. For a more complete bio, visit

<https://lifepointchurch.us/leadership/>.

Palmer will lead a discussion about self care. Soldiers in the military are rotated from the frontline to reduce stress. First responders cannot keep up the frontline work without regular rotation as well. Palmer will provide guidance on rotations.