

“WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT PRIORITIES FOR THE PRESIDING BISHOP?”

The Presiding Bishop keeps us focused on the Reign of God, through unceasing attention to mission in the context of baptismal ministry. Christians and their communities are meant to be transformative elements in this world, laboring to create something much more like God’s Reign. The church’s work is to recognize where we have not yet attained God’s dream, speak gospel to that reality, and equip and empower all the baptized to do the work of transforming those places of not-yet. There are two obvious foci for our ministry: moving our sanctuaries into the streets to encounter and transform the bad news of this world; and implementing the Millennium Development Goals, which provide a signal opportunity in this age to realize the dream of God for all creation.

This church must embrace and celebrate all the diverse cultures, languages, and origins of the many parts of the Episcopal Church – Haiti, Taiwan, Province IX, the Churches in Europe, Virgin Islands, as well as the many cultures within the U.S. – First Nations, African-American, Spanish-speaking, Asian, and all Anglo varieties. None is more important than another; all are essential to the transforming work of the Body of Christ.

Ultimately, the Presiding Bishop’s role is one of bridge-building and boundary crossing. If we are to reconcile the world, we must be bold enough to enter unfamiliar territory and partner wherever necessary to build toward the Reign of God. The Body is strengthened as all parts are honored, whatever their color or language, or liturgical, theological, or political stripe. God is to be found in that wilderness of difference, and reconciliation requires the crossing.

