



New Era Missionary Baptist District Association

117th Annual Session - July 21 -25, 2025

Music Auxiliary President

Deacon Fred Patton

2nd Annual Address

Reverend Gregory P. Nichols – Moderator

Reverend Robin Morgan – Host Pastor

Rock Of Ages Baptist Church

3806 Prospect Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64128

First giving Reverence to the Great and Awesome God we serve. Our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ and the precious Holy Spirit.

To Moderator Nichols and his administration.

To host Pastor Robin Morgan

To our Presiding officer Sister JaRita Hill

To all our New Era District Officers and Auxiliary Leaders

Laymen President - Deacon Glenn Moore

WMU President - Sister Lora Griffin –

Ushers and Nurses President - Sister Rita Ford

Ministers Wives & Widows President - Sister Mary Roberson

To all State and National Officers

To all the Pastors and Ministers

To my brother Deacons and Laymen brothers

To the officers of the New Era District Choir

Director: Sister Hattie Lewis

MO State Director and Musician: Brother Darryl Lewis

1st Vice President: Sister Erna Faye Boggess

2nd Vice President: Sister Donna Woods

Recording Secretary: Sister Natalie Ford

Enrollment Secretary: Sister JaRita Hill

Financial Secretary: Sister Linda Watkins

Librarian: Sister: Sandra Jones

My Brothers and Sisters of New Era District

To my daughter Lauren Patton. Thank you sweetpea from the bottom of my heart for that wonderful introduction.

To my sister, Sister Natalie Ford and my Sweetheart Sister LaTanya Patton. Those selections were simply beautiful.

A special thank you to Pastor Robertson and Progressive Baptist Church for opening your doors to us for our monthly rehearsals.

Thank you to my Pastor Monscenior Cunningham, assistant Pastor Minister Sam McDaniel and my Haven of Rest Baptist Church family for your continued support.

And last but certainly not least, thank you to my village, my family and friends. I appreciate your love and support more than you could ever know.

My Stewardship report:

Oct 2024: The choir provided music for the 1st Quarterly Board meeting for the Monday night worship service.

Nov 2024: We held our monthly meeting as scheduled. In addition, our membership grew by six district members.

Dec 2024: The choir hosted our annual fellowship dinner and organized a winter clothing and coat drive. All donations were collected and delivered to Hope Faith Ministries a Christian organization dedicated to helping the unhoused.

April 2025: The New Era District choir participated in the Moderators Revival Worship event hosted by the New Era District held at Morning Star.

- Since April 7, 2025, the New Era District Choir has been diligently rehearsing every Monday evening in preparation for the National Baptist Convention.

The choir continues to uphold its commitment through regular monthly rehearsals, and we look forward to future opportunities to serve the Lord in the New Era District.

Shall we pray:

Prayer: Gracious and merciful God our heavenly father I come to thee with a bowed down head and humble heart thanking you for this opportunity. I pray that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight O Lord my strength and my redeemer. It is In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

My Address:

I stand before you tonight with a grateful heart and a deep sense of honor, as I offer my 2nd Annual Address as the president of the New Era District Choir.

Tonight, is more than a gathering. It is a celebration of purpose, progress, and praise. It is a moment to look back in gratitude, to look around in appreciation, and to look forward in expectation.

Let us first give glory to God, for it is by His grace and mercy that we are here.

Let me take a moment to thank a few people who've been essential to this ministry.

To our beloved District Choir Director, Sister Hattie Lewis — your faithfulness, vision, and deep love for this ministry have truly been the heartbeat of our choir. You've poured so much of yourself into us, not just musically, but spiritually. Thank you for walking boldly in your purpose and for directing us with such grace and heart. We love you dearly, and we thank God for you.

To our State Music Director and musician, Brother Darryl Lewis — your wisdom and passion have meant more to us than words can truly express. You haven't just elevated our standard of musical excellence—you've poured your heart into this ministry, and we feel that passion every single time we come together.

The theme you gave us for our National State Convention, "*Be Encouraged*," has been more than just a message—it's become a movement. Every Monday, rehearsals have taken on a new meaning. They no longer feel like just preparation—they feel like worship. And before a single note is played, your words set the tone and align our hearts with purpose.

Brother Darryl, we see your heart, we feel your impact, and we thank God for the gift you are—to this choir, to this ministry, and to this state.

To every District Choir Member – from the soprano section to the tenors, you are the living notes of God's melody. Your sacrifice, your practice, your passion does not go unnoticed. You are the sound of this district, and more importantly, the sound of the Kingdom. Thank you for your dedication and your service.

New Era District family and friends, I'm reminded of a touching story that speaks volumes about the true meaning of value.

A grandmother once asked her grandson what he wanted as a gift for graduating high school and preparing to enter college. His response was simple: "Something of value." She smiled and said, "I can do that."

On graduation day, she presented him with a beautifully wrapped gift, adorned with a ribbon. Eager with anticipation, he tore off the wrapping, only to discover it was a brand-new Bible. The look of disappointment on his face said it all—this wasn't the kind of "value" he had in mind.

Years passed. From time to time, the young man would call his grandmother. She'd always ask, "How are you? Do you need anything?" And almost without fail, he'd answer, "Yes, Grandma—I need some money." Her response never changed: "Have you read your Bible?"

Frustrated, he'd say, "Yes, Grandma, I have. Why do you always ask me that?"

This exchange continued throughout his college years—until the day he finally graduated.

As he was packing up his things to move into the next chapter of life, he came across the Bible, she had given him years earlier. For the first time, he opened it—not out of obligation, but out of curiosity and reflection. As he flipped through the pages, something fell out. Tucked neatly inside were several envelopes, each one labeled for a different stage of his college journey. Inside each envelope there was money, along with a handwritten note of encouragement and a verse of Scripture. The very thing he had been asking for all those years had been in his hands the entire time—he just hadn't taken the time to truly look.

One of the notes pointed him to Matthew 6:33, which reads:

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

It was then that he realized: his grandmother had not just given him a gift of financial support, but a lifelong treasure—wisdom, faith, and a foundation in God’s Word. She understood that true value isn’t just in what we receive, but in what we seek. When we put God first, He provides everything we truly need.

This verse is not just a spiritual principle – it’s a life strategy. Jesus is teaching us the divine order of success: Seek Him first, and everything else will follow.

In a world that tells us to chase status, wealth, and applause, this scripture reminds us to chase the Kingdom. Seek God's will, His way, and His wisdom.

Choir, when we gather to sing, we are not just rehearsing music – we are seeking the Kingdom. When we lift our voices in worship, we are not just performing – we are positioning ourselves under God’s will. Let us not be distracted by stage lights or audience approval. Our true audience is God, and our true mission is ministry.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said: "The time is always right to do what is right." And the right thing is always to seek God first.

New Era seeking God first doesn’t just mean going to church or singing in the choir. It means placing Him at the center of every decision, every schedule, and every plan.

Ask yourself:

- Is God first in my time?
- Is He first in my home?
- Is He first in how I treat others?
- Is He first in how I serve?

Dr. King also said: “Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.” You don’t need to have all the answers or see the entire path ahead

before you begin moving forward. It's about trusting in God, in the process, your purpose, —even when the outcome is uncertain.

Seeking the Kingdom requires faith. It's choosing to put God first when the finances aren't adding up.

It's choosing to serve even when your body is tired.

It's showing up even when life is heavy.

But hear this: when you put God first, He adds to what you thought you lost. Some of you have sacrificed time with family, resources, energy — but the Word says: *"All these things shall be added unto you."* That's restoration. That's overflow. That's divine return on your investment.

Choir, we are more than a group that sings — we are a ministry that sets the atmosphere.

Our job is not just to be musically accurate, but spiritually available.

We are not performers — we are vessels.

We don't just sing songs — we declare truth.

Each rehearsal is a spiritual workout. Each worship moment is a Kingdom encounter. Let us approach this ministry with excellence. Not perfection, but excellence — the best we can give with what we've been given. Let us not be discouraged by low numbers or weary moments.

Dr. King reminds us: "If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way." Sing your part in a great way. Show up in a great way.

Practice humility in a great way. Encourage your neighbor in a great way.

Together, our "small things" become a great sound. To the one who feels unseen — God sees you. To the one who wonders if their voice matters — He hears you.

Your note matters. Your presence matters. Your faithfulness is not forgotten. The journey hasn't always been easy. Maybe you've had to press through sickness, discouragement, or personal trials. But you're still here. Still singing. Still seeking. And let me tell you: that faith is powerful.

Because you are not just part of a choir – you are part of a movement.
A Kingdom sound. A sound that breaks chains, uplifts hearts, and invites the presence of God.

As we enter this next season of ministry, may we do so with clear purpose and wholehearted intention.

Let this be the year we seek Him more earnestly, serve more faithfully, and sing more anointedly. Let us mentor the next generation of worshippers. Let us collaborate more, pray more, and most of all, love more. The world doesn't need more celebrities. It needs more servants. More hearts that say, *"Lord, not my will, but Yours be done."*

Let that be the cry of the New Era District Choir. As I close, I leave you with this: Dr. King once said: "Everybody can be great because everybody can serve." Greatness in this choir doesn't come from solos – it comes from service. Greatness isn't measured in notes hit – it's measured in hearts touched. So, keep singing, keep serving, and keep seeking. Because when we seek first the Kingdom of God, we won't just sing songs — we'll sing with power. We won't just build harmony — we'll build healing. And we won't just attend choir rehearsal – we'll advance the Kingdom.

May God bless each of you, our leaders, our members, and this ministry.

Let's keep seeking. Let's keep building.
And let's keep lifting up the Name that is above every name — Jesus.

Thank you, and may God richly bless the New Era District

Thank you

Humbly Submitted,

Deacon Fred Patton, New Era District Choir President

Sister Hattie Lewis, New Era District Choir Director

Reverend Gregory P. Nichols, Moderator