

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2017 Legislative Session

Legislative day # 6

RESOLUTION NO. 47 - 2017

Introduced by: Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

A RESOLUTION confirming the reappointment of Rev. Rodney T. Morton to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.

Introduced and read first time on April 3, 2017.

By order Jessica Feldmark  
Jessica Feldmark, Administrator to the County Council

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on April 19, 2017.

By order Jessica Feldmark  
Jessica Feldmark, Administrator to the County Council

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted , Adopted with amendments , Failed , Withdrawn  by the County Council on May 1, 2017.

Certified by Jessica Feldmark  
Jessica Feldmark, Administrator to the County Council

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing language; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing language. Strike-out indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

1           **WHEREAS**, Section 404 of the Howard County Charter and Section 6.300 of the Howard  
2 County Code provide for the County Executive to appoint and for the County Council to confirm  
3 nominees to Howard County Boards and Commissions created by law; and

4           **WHEREAS**, Section 6.344, Section 12.203 and Section 12.204 of the Howard County  
5 Code provide for a Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission; and

6           **WHEREAS**, the County Executive has proposed the reappointment of Rev. Rodney T.  
7 Morton as a member of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission; and

8           **WHEREAS**, the County Council ratifies the County Executive's special trust and  
9 confidence in the abilities of the nominee.

10           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the County Council of Howard County,  
11 Maryland this 1st day of May, 2017 that the following person is reappointed as  
12 a member of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission to serve from the passage of this  
13 Resolution to March 1, 2022 or until a successor is appointed and confirmed:

14                           Rev. Rodney T. Morton

15                           Laurel, MD

Rodney T. Morton

GIFTS I OFFER MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. COMMISSION

- Courage do what others aren't willing to do, to follow Christ even when crowds clamor for more expedient ways
- Dedication and hard work to make the Gospels relevant to everyone in their daily lives
- Stewardship guided by love, invested in relationships, and driven by financial responsibility
- Outreach that brings peace, solidarity, opportunity to our church and community and thus people to Christ
- Leadership that transforms guidelines and organization into opportunities

RECENT PASTORAL HISTORY WITH SELECTED CONTRIBUTIONS:

- Senior Pastor, The Central Baptist Church, Baltimore, MD Aug 12 - Present  
*This 91-year-old church now has an average Sunday attendance of 550 drawn from its 800 members.*

REIGNITING A STALLED CHURCH

*Outcomes:* Grew membership 20 percent in a single year--the most growth in nearly two decades. Eighty percent of our new members are younger. Finances rose 15 percent.

Led the way to make our church vibrant again with more relevant Bible studies and closer engagement as church leaders focused on important themes. Replaced a collection of "siloed" individuals with a community of dedicated stakeholders.

BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION

*Outcomes:* Gave us the best tools we've had in years to put our resources confidently to God's purpose.

Transformed confusing, complicated process that couldn't track resources into a smoothly running, professionally validated, easy-to-use system in only five months. Accountability rose, but morale rose even faster because everyone now has a stake in the method.

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

*Outcomes:* Took the initiative to partner with local hospital to provide health screenings and immediate access to physicians at no cost to us, our congregation, or the hospital.

Recently screened 2,000 people and provided free flu shots. Helped secure the grant that will give us a video conferencing room members can use to get immediate access to physicians they normally couldn't travel to. I now provide hospital staff with in-service training to help them administer the program.

CLEARING AWAY POTENTIAL DISTRACTIONS

*Outcomes:* Guiding comprehensive reviews of tools guiding every church function. Worshippers' concerns about liability now nearly gone.

Listened carefully to congregation's worries about how distractions from unclear procedures that often got in the way of our mission. Fitted my experience to our church's unique needs to

support committees completing a top-to-bottom review. Everything from mission work to policies guiding HR, finance, and property acquisition better integrated and focused.

- Senior Pastor, Historic Tabernacle Baptist Church, Selma, AL 02-- Aug 12  
*Tabernacle Baptist, a 126-year old church, is one of the cradles of the voting rights movement. Four of former ministers have been Presidents of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.*

**TRANSFORMING A CHURCH INTO NEW, VIBRANT LIFE**

*Outcomes:* Over 100 new, much younger members. Sunday attendance tripled. Special fundraising increased from \$14K to \$194K annually. \$600K capital fund drive successful.

Guided older, conservative, comfortable congregation to see our needs for themselves. Then fully supported their very active engagement in reaching nearly all our goals. We gave more to our community than ever before.

**POWERFUL, PEACEFUL, CHRIST-LIKE RESPONSE TO DEFUSE COMMUNITY TENSIONS**

*Outcomes:* Guided our church to respond calmly, yet quickly, to rising concerns about violence, crime, and drop out rates. Reached out to everyone from pastors and the police, to city government, to gang members. Selma won a national League of Cities' Award for our sharp drop in crime. Several gang members accepted Christ.

Enlisted a former Clinton and Reagan staffer to help us defeat violence with solid educational programs. Increased our visibility so the most troubled communities saw us earning their trust. Our programs gave ex-offenders their first chance to attend college or learn a trade.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS THAT WORK**

*Outcomes:* Designed and helped build a non-traditional scholarship program to recognize potential missed by others.

Our church dug deep to find our community's real needs, then got deserving people of all ages help they needed to graduate from college. From thought to finish in just three years.

- Previous service as a Senior Pastor* 88 - 02

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO MY CHURCH AND COMMUNITY:**

- Board Member of the United Baptist Convention of Baltimore 12 - Present
- Board Member, Tri-Country Sickle Cell Association 02 - 12
- Board Member and Founder, Tabernacle Baptist Church Education Fund 03 - 12  
*The Fund provides annual scholarships to college students.*
- Chairman, Late Night Ministry, Southwest Alabama 08 - 12  
*We coordinated evangelical outreach to 18 1/2 counties.*
- Lecturer, Alabama Baptist State Women's Convention 08 - 11  
*Sought out by the State President to lecture every year - a very rare feat. Audience is usually 5,000.*
- President, Southwest Alabama Baptist Youth Convention and Retreat 04 - 10
- Graduate *later* Member, Board of Directors, Leadership Selma-Dallas County 07 - 12
- Ministerial Liaison, Selma City Schools 07 - 10

Rodney Morton

Senior Pastor

- Invited by the Speaker of the House or Lt. Governor of Alabama to deliver the invocation to The Alabama House of Representatives* 07 - 10  
*I was the only one, of my class of 21 civic leaders, selected to serve on the Board.*
- Speaker later Vice President, Bridge Crossing Jubilee MLK and Coretta Scott King Unity Service, Selma* 07  
*My audience included Barack Obama, Representative Maxine Waters, the Reverends Jessie Jackson and Al Sharpton, Governor of Alabama Bob Riley and 3,000 guests. Interviewed by CNN.*

EDUCATION AND RECENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Recently accepted into the Doctor of Ministry Program, United Theological Seminary* Oct 13
- Honorary Doctor of Divinity, Determine Bible Institute, Baltimore* 10
- Masters in Bible and Pastoral Ministry, Selma University* 08  
*Paid my own tuition. Carried a full academic load and worked 40 hours a week. GPA 3.0.*
- Pursued Master of Divinity, New Orleans Theological Seminary - Birmingham Extension* 06 - 07  
*Paid my own way earning this degree while working 40 hours a week and carrying a full academic load.*
- BA, Bible and Pastoral Ministry, Selma University* 96  
*Dean's List. Funded my own education by working and attending classes full time*
- Community Strategy Building Initiative, University of Baltimore* Expect completion Mar 14  
*One of only 25 selected from a field of 68 prestigious applicants.*
- Graduate of the National Baptist Leadership Program, one week* Jun 13
- "Evangelism Through the Local Church," 24 hours, Alabama and Maryland Baptist State Conventions* Jun 10, 11, & 13
- "Church Tax Compliance" Workshop Upper Marlboro, eight hours* Aug 13
- "Planning for the Future," Pastor's Workshop, Baptist Southeast District Convention, 16 hours* Sep 11
- "Discovering Leadership Styles," Alabama Power Leadership Circle, four hours* Aug 11

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION:

- Awarded the local Freedom Foundation's MLK Award* 10  
*This award is given to those who demonstrate courage in serving the underprivileged and fighting injustice.*

IT SKILLS

- Comfortable with Membership Plus (church management software suite) Word, Excel, QuickBooks, and advanced Internet search methods,*