

**Teaching the Art of Congregational Engagement
The Gift of Theological Education
and Black Church Collaborative**



Prepared by Dr. Mary Love – Hood Theological Seminary 4/22

**Questions to Help the Faith Community Address
Congregational Engagement**

- 1. What are the methods of engagement used by congregations, especially during the pandemic?**
- 2. Is there intentionality in helping persons to move from cognitive knowing to behavioral knowing or acting?**
- 3. How are individuals helped in applying biblical understandings (faith) in all aspects of living (finances, relationships, care of the body, decision making, practicing sabbath, living in community, etc.?)**
- 4. Are teachers within the faith community nurtured so that they understand what happens in the brain for learning and meaning making to occur that results in transformation?**
- 5. What are the factors that impact congregants' learning? (Environment, experiences, methodology, economy, biases, assumptions, etc.)**
- 6. Where are individuals learning to hate, love, be violent, practice justice, make ethical decisions, protect the environment, or understand diverse cultures?**
- 7. Is there intentionality in engaging the entire brain in the learning process?**
- 8. Does the faith community pay attention to the neuroscience research findings regarding learning and teaching?**
- 9. Does the faith community examine the teaching methodology of Jesus?**
- 10. Is the faith community intentional in sharing the history, contributions, and culture of all generations of persons of color?**

- 11. Is critical thinking encouraged that provides motivation to examine processes, ask questions, examine personal practices and behaviors, challenge systems/practices and fight for justice?**
- 12. How intentional is the household of faith in helping parents to be effective in passing on the faith to the next generation and helping children to connect with God?**

Questions for Seminaries

- 1. How does the Seminary prepare congregational servants (CS) for practical ministry such as Christian Education?**
- 2. Where does modeling occur within the Seminary to help provide guidance to congregational servants?**
- 3. Does the Seminary place equal focus on enabling CS to preach, administer and teach?**
- 4. What field experiences are possible to enhance learning?**
- 5. Are the experiences and methodologies provided by the Seminary for CS more teacher-based than learner based?**
- 6. How does the Seminary demonstrate engagement in the classroom?**
- 7. What requirements are within the curriculum to provide a balanced holistic approach to theological education?**

Essential Steps to Increase Congregational Engagement
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1. **Be inclusive - all ages/generations, cultures, and issues**
2. **Rename/rebrand the teaching/learning component so that its role is stressed as ministry**
3. **Provide intentional nurture for all teachers emphasizing how the brain learns (neuroscience)**
4. **Explore, train, and use all media options to enhance participation and reach all ages**
5. **Use teaching methodologies to stimulate neural connections**
6. **Find ways to connect with congregants'/ learners' existing knowledge and experiences**
7. **Be intentional in addressing life issues (racism, care of the land, pollution, ethical decision making, justice, economics, LGBTQIA+, violence, food and health disparities, housing, etc.) from a biblical perspective with 21st century applications**
8. **Provide opportunities for learners to understand how faith is applied to all aspects of life**
9. **Go beyond cognitive knowing to behavioral knowing (showing), checking for understanding, meaning making, critical thinking and transformative action.**
10. **Operate beyond the walls of a faith facility**
11. **Remove nurturing for congregational engagement from the back burner to the forefront**
12. **Secure the commitment of leadership on all levels to invest in the ministry of congregational engagement**

Resource Listing: Teaching the Art of Congregational Engagement The Gift of Theological Education and Black Church Collaborative

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Neuroscience – Brain Research

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Tokuhamma-Espinosa, Tracey. *Mind, Brain, and Education Science: A Comprehensive Guide to the New Brain-Based Teaching*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011.

Wolfe, Patricia. *Brain Matters: Translating Research into Classroom Practice*. Second Edition. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2010.

[Why the First 2,000 Days Matter: A Look Inside the Brain | Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences \(ILABS\) \(uw.edu\)](#)

<https://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/first-2000-days-matter/>

[Brain Basics | How do I Learn \(washington.edu\)](#)

[First 2000 Days Toolkit | North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation \(buildthefoundation.org\)](#)
(A faith component is included.)

www.lifelongfaith.com