



September 29, 2020

Dear JBA pastors and church family,

Greetings! I trust you are doing well in these challenging times. Please know I am praying for you and all of our churches to not only endure but to grow in grace and to look forward to the future that God has planned for us. We all have had our plans and schedules disrupted and have faced new challenges that we did not anticipate at the beginning of the year. These are challenging times but with each challenge, new opportunities can arise. This is why I am writing to you.

Last week, we had a very good JBA General Board meeting. One of the exciting reports we heard was from a Haitian pastor in Goldsboro who shared with us his work with the Haitian community. We learned there are 10,000 Haitians in North Carolina and 6,500 are in Wayne, Sampson and Duplin counties! As he was sharing his report, I began to think about previous conversations I have had about changing the name of our association. The world is coming to us, the ripples from the Research Triangle Park continue to expand to us and points beyond. With this in mind, I made the motion that we move forward with investigating the ramifications of changing the name of the Johnston Baptist Association to the Triangle East Baptist Association. Allow me to list a few reasons for this change.

Recently, the Smithfield-Selma Chamber of Commerce changed their name to the Triangle East Chamber of Commerce. This was done to reflect the changing demographics of the community. Our demographics are rapidly changing and we want to do all we can to reach everyone with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Another reason to change is an obvious one: we currently have 12 churches in our association that are not in Johnston county! In our meeting Thursday, we voted to "recognize" the Haitian church in Goldsboro, another example of our continued expansion! Our associational borders are already beyond our county. Triangle East would include eastern Wake county, Wilson, Nash, Harnett, Sampson, and Wayne where we already have a presence.

Another reason to consider this change, is the rapid change our county is going through from rural to suburban. Neighborhoods are being built where tobacco fields once stood. With this change, suburban lifestyle and identity follows.

As we study and pray over this issue, I welcome your input. I want to invite you to contact me with your thoughts, ideas, comments (positive or negative), and questions. I hope to give a preliminary update at our meeting on October 27. You can call me at 919-802-4944 or email me at pastorsteve@hocuttbaptist.com. May God bless you and your ministry.

Sincerely,

Dr. Steve L. Roy,
Pastor, Hocutt Baptist Church
Moderator, JBA

314 W Home St, Clayton NC 27520
919-553-6650 • connect@hocuttbaptist.com