

Ngwedla Paul Msiza becomes Baptist World Alliance president

People in the [September 2, 2015](#) issue

Ngwedla Paul Msiza of South Africa was installed as president of the Baptist World Alliance July 25 during the Baptist World Congress in Durban, South Africa.

Msiza succeeds John Upton of the United States and is the first African to hold the office since William Tolbert of Liberia served as president of [the BWA](#) from 1965 to 1970. A BWA vice president from 2010 to 2015, Msiza was also president of the All Africa Baptist Fellowship, one of six regional fellowships of the BWA, from 2006 to 2011, and general secretary of the Baptist Convention of South Africa from 2001 to 2010. He pastors Peniel-Salem Baptist Church in Pretoria.

Speaking on the theme of the congress, “Jesus Christ, the Door,” Msiza said that the church ought to swing the door wide open for those who would come to Christ, rather than deciding who are to be admitted and who to keep out.

That door is open to “all human beings, made in the image of God,” Msiza said. “We all belong together.”

Msiza was trained at the Hebron Teacher Training College and worked bivocationally as a pastor and school teacher until he became founding principal of the Baptist Convention College in 1995. He holds diplomas and degrees from the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of South Africa, the Baptist Theological College of Southern Africa, and the Baptist Bible Institute.

Along with Msiza, 12 vice presidents were installed from different continents and nations, including Bangladesh, Bulgaria, and Haiti. The new slate of leaders serves until the next global gathering of Baptists in Rio de Janeiro, in 2020. —Baptist World Alliance