
ORATORICAL CONTEST



Speech Submission Deadline

June 21, 2024

Preliminary

July 8 and July 9, 2024

Final Competition

July 10, 2024

President

Dr. J. H. Flakes, III

Congress Dean

Bro. Keith W. Mitchell

Oratorical Contest Coordinator

Bro. Gregory L. Bailey
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(770) 923-3936

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Oratorical Competition is designed to provide a public platform for youth to exhibit speaking, organizational and elocutionary skills. The GMBC Congress Competition is divided into two categories. Category I Competition is designed for youth grades 1 through 9 and will follow local guidelines and rules. Category I topics will be a designated Article of Faith. Category II Competition is designed for young people grades 10 through 12. The Category II Competition will follow the guidelines and rules of the National Baptist Congress Oratorical Contest, and participants will speak on the official National Contest themes.

The Oratorical Contest will be held the week of the GMBC Congress of Christian Education on July 8-11, 2024, in Columbus, Georgia.

Category I Guidelines and Rules

1. Each participant will recite the designated Article of Faith.
Not reciting the Article of Faith will result in a 20-point deduction.
2. The specific Article of Faith will serve as the introduction to the speech.
3. The oration will be written by the speaker, with assistance from a speech coach.
4. Only one contestant per church/association per division will be accepted. All ties must be decided at the church/association level.
5. Preliminary competitions will be Monday, July 8, and Tuesday, July 9, 2024.
6. Speech format:
 - a. The speech must be typewritten with one-inch margins, double-spaced, 12-point, Times-Roman (or equivalent) font.
 - b. The contestant's name should be typed as a header, flush right. The contestant's name, church, city and speech word count should be typed at the end of the speech, bottom left. If the contestant is representing an association, then the contestant's name and the association should be typed at the end of the speech.
7. Speech submission:
 - a. Email as an attachment to gbailey1906@gmail.com. Save document using the contestant's name. No hand-delivered copies will be accepted.
 - b. Also mail three copies to the following address with return receipt:
Gregory L. Bailey
1944 Herbert Drive
Tucker, Georgia 30084
8. Entry fee:
 - a. \$20 (Twenty Dollars) per contestant
 - b. Mail check or money order to the following address:
GMBC Headquarters
P.O. Box 92340
Atlanta, GA 30314
 - c. GMBC Givelify:
Under other, input Oratorical
 - d. Payment must be received by deadline or contestant will be disqualified.

9. **Deadline:** All speeches and entry fees must be received by **June 21, 2024**. Please allow five days for postal delivery.

Category II Guidelines and Rules

1. The speech topic will be the official themes of the National Baptist Congress Oratorical Contest.
2. Sophomores and Juniors will use a past national theme, while Seniors will use the current national theme.
3. The speech must be original and prepared by the contestant.
4. Only one contestant per church/association per division will be accepted. All ties must be decided at the church/association level.
5. Preliminary competitions will be held Monday, July 8, and Tuesday, July 9, 2024.
6. Speech format:
 - a. The speech must be typewritten with one-inch margins, double-spaced, 12-point Times-Roman (or equivalent) font.
 - b. The contestant's name should be typed as a header, flush right. The contestant's name, church, city and speech word count should be typed at the end of the speech, bottom left. If the contestant is representing an association, then the contestant's name and the association should be typed at the end of the speech.
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 - c. GMBC Givelify:
Under other, input Oratorical
 - d. Payment must be received by deadline or contestant will be disqualified.
9. **Deadline:** All speeches must be received by **June 21, 2024**. Please allow five days for postal delivery.
10. The winner of the Senior Competition will represent the GMBC of Georgia Congress at the ensuing year's National Congress Contest.

SPEECH PRESENTATION/ORATION

The contestant's presentation attire is Males—slacks, suit coats and shirts with ties and Females—business dresses or suits (preferably white). Please note: The contestants may be on an elevated platform facing the audience.

The contestants are to stand, approach the lectern or designated space, state their contestant number, their first and last name, the theme or article and begin their memorized rendition of the written oration within the frame of the lectern/podium or designated space (without moving across the stage). The contestant should not state their church or pastor's name.

The contestant's oratorical presentation must avoid speaking in sermonic tones, using testimonials and excessive gesturing.

The contestants are not allowed to use props, costumes, clothing or prompts.

While contestants are not required to recite their speech verbatim, the style, theme, structure and organization of the presentation should closely adhere to the written documentation presented.

Judges

The judges are selected prior to the GMBC of Georgia Congress. Each judge receives the guidelines, and the judges score sheet during the judges training sessions. Each judge is scheduled to attend a training teleconference prior to the congress session and will attend a final onsite review for participation and protocol. Each judge has attested to providing a fair and impartial scoring of each contestant.

The judges will use the following criteria for each oration: composition, subject matter, content originality, delivery, memorization, vocal control, enunciation, pronunciation, presentation and mastery of material. The oration must be memorized.

The judges will give each contestant an intangible score (is most commonly used to describe things that are recognized but not easily quantified) and in the event of a tie the contestant that has the highest intangible score will be the winning contestant.

The judges' overall decision is final.

Topics and Themes

Grades 1-3	Article IV: The Way of Salvation , 150 words, 3 minutes
Grades 4-6	Article V: Justification , 250 words, 4 minutes
Grades 7-9	Article VI: The Freeness of Salvation , 350 words, 5 minutes
Sophomores and Juniors:	“Making the World a Better Place: GenZers Engaging in the Work of Evangelism and Social Justice at Church and in the Community,” 500 words
Seniors:	“Firmly Committed to God’s Promises for My Life in All Things,” 500 words

Grade levels are based on the 2024-2025 academic year.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Sermonic tones refer to “whooping” or “singing” at the conclusion or during any part of the oration.

Testimonials refer to framing the body or content of the speech around a personal testimony/story. This decision is made at the judges’ discretion.

Excessive gesturing is determined at the judges’ discretion. Contestant beware. Limit all movement, including your hands, as excessive gesturing or movement may result in disqualification.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

IV. The Way of Salvation.

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God; who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

V. Justification.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer’s blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

VI. The Freeness of Salvation.

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own determined depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.