

# NATIONAL BLACK PRESBYTERIAN CAUCUS

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)



Spring 2010



Volume 4, No. 1

## FARTHER & DEEPER

*Gregory Bentley*

Pastor, Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church

Tuscaloosa, AL

*Sermon delivered to the  
Covenant Network of Presbyterians*

*Cleveland, Ohio*

*November 6, 2009*

Luke 5:1-11

“But in spite of the disappointments and dejections of life, Jesus is calling us to launch out into the deep. This call is counterintuitive; it goes against the data at hand. It very often makes no sense at all. But that is what it means to walk by faith and not by sight. We cannot see what the end is going to be but we know Who is going to be with us to the end. There are no guarantees about results; there are many unknowns, many things we cannot see. It's dark in the deep. Howard Thurman recounts the story of a deep sea diver in his classic book the *Luminous Darkness*...but if we just be still, and not give in to our fears, if we just hold on and not react to the darkness, the darkness takes on a luminous quality. We begin to see NBP things in the dark that we never saw before. Reality opens up in a whole new way. If we can just get beyond our fear- our fear of losing control, our fear of change, our fear of being challenged, our fear of walking by faith rather than by sight- God will turn the darkness and the deep into a delight. “

*--Excerpt printed from website of Covenant Network of Presbyterians*

*For a copy of the complete sermon, go to [www.covenantnetwork.org](http://www.covenantnetwork.org)*

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## NBPC MEMBERSHIP IS NOW DUE

**Your membership dues of \$50 for 2010 are now due. Please make your check payable to NBPC, and mail to the following address:**

**NBPC**

**C/O NBPC Clerk, Beverly Reeder**

**P.O. Box 17041**

**Charlotte, NC 28237-7041**

## 2009 NATIONAL BLACK PRESBYTERIAN CAUCUS: YOUTH STYLE

Minna Kara Pritchard

11<sup>th</sup> grade, Rabun Gap Nacoochee School, Rabun Gap, Georgia  
Youth Member, New Life Presbyterian Church, College Park, GA



The National Black Presbyterian Caucus was one of the most influential conferences I have been to thus far. Being almost the only one from my church as well as initially having no friends there made it tough for me. I found out though you didn't need best friends with you to have a great time. The start of the caucus was a basic worship service in which we were just being introduced. I think the major turn was the Ritual of Friendship in which we were to hug our neighbors although we did not know them. I only hugged one person but at that time didn't know he was going to be a major part in my journey. After the powerful lesson, the youth were directed to the Wynn Building where all of our events would be held. I was scared when I first stepped in the room because of pre-meeting jitters. We played a couple of ice breakers to lighten the atmosphere and then got into the discussion. I felt the discussion was beyond incredible. The simple thing we did was go around and state name, hobbies, and grade. I can almost remember anyone of them if you point to them out to me. It was mind-boggling how everything worked out. After being in a heated discussion, we ended in a prayer and surprising exercise.

We were told to face our neighbor and simply stare at them. It was challenging for me because I don't necessarily open up to people so having someone stare into my eyes was definitely tricky for me. My friends and I found it interesting how God works because the same boy who I was reluctant to hug in the opening worship happened to be the person I was suppose to comfort and search within. Rev. Barnes, our youth speaker, ordered us next to just hold the person. Justifying we as a people don't know how to love, hold, and comfort a person anymore. It was intense. Between my tears, his tears, and the tears around us it was too much to take in. After about ten minutes, he said that we could let go. Something unusual happen at the end of the session, I felt as if I could trust anyone including the person I teamed with.

The next day was simply filled with workshops, choir rehearsal, a college tour of Stillman, and a luncheon. The workshop we had was centered on the youth council. The process means being able to select a name, mission statement, motto, as well as a slogan. After rounds of group work, we decided on DONE, dawn of a new era, there is not much I can reveal but we are in great shape. The tour of Stillman College was pretty. The buildings were really historic. My favorite building was the Wynn Building. It housed the choir and band room as well as the stage. The dorms were really nice. There were air-conditioned rooms which was a good thing. The dining hall had nice food. The evening was certainly an adventure. There was suppose to be a coffee hour in which we where suppose to mingle with the adults. It hadn't really turned out like that and it was suppose to be more of a reading hour for me. Instead of being able to read, I met a few new friends. We talked and played around until it was time for the block party. The block party was pleasing. They actually played good teen music and everyone was on the dance floor. The block party was the last event of the evening minus the playing in the dorm.

The next day was the amusement park. It was enjoyable. Surprisingly I walked around and enjoyed the rides with the same individual from the opening ceremonies. It was just a relaxing day so that we were able to go back and attend the banquet. I had to leave towards the end of the amusement park to catch my plane so I was unable to attend the banquet. The overall trip was an amazing experience. I learned valuable ideas on how to strengthen my friendships as well as relationships. I reconnected with friends from Texas that I now feel closer to. I feel grateful and blessed to have been chosen to attend.

## MEMORIAL TRIBUTE...

- Frank Jackson, Faith Presbyterian Church, Oakland, California
- Margaret Flory, Asheville, NC
- Wilda Chue Stevenson , Omaha, NB)/Cincinnati, Ohio
- Harry McCleary, Cartersville, GA (Presbytery of Cincinnati)
- Marge Ward, Greensboro, NC
- Samuel George, Rittsburgh, PA

## SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Please share good news of what is happening in your congregation, region, chapter, or with individuals (clergy and lay). Articles of 200 words or less are solicited. Send information to the address below. **Clearly identify in the “subject line” that the information is for the NBPC newsletter. This practice must be adhered to, especially if you think that the editor will not recognize your name or email address.**

Bettie J. Durrah, editor  
[bjdurrah@aol.com](mailto:bjdurrah@aol.com)  
P.O. Box 92252  
Atlanta, GA 30314  
404-691-6709

## RESOURCES

“If one does not have a sense of the history of systemic racism and white privilege and how these developed in this country, it will be virtually impossible to appreciate Martin Luther King’s struggle for civil and human rights nationally and internationally, and why forty years after King’s assassination Afrikan Americans still complain about being victimized by racism, by its many tragic manifestations and consequences”

--Rufus Burrow, Jr., *Martin Luther King Jr. for Armchair Theologians*,  
Westminster John Knox Press, 2009

*Rufus Burrow, Jr., a minister member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), is Indiana Professor of Christian Thought and Professor of Theological Social Ethics at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, IN. he is the author of five books, including James H. Cone and Black Liberation Theology and God and Human Dignity The Personalism, Theology and Ethics of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

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*Made for Goodness And Why This Makes All the Difference*, Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu, HarperCollins, 2009 Desmond Tutu, writing with his daughter, shares his secret of how he manages to remain hopeful and joyful in the midst of struggle.

## CELEBRATIONS...

- **Eustacia Moffett Marshall**, associate pastor, C.N. Jenkins Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC, has at least four sermon illustrations online in the African American Lectionary.
- **Bettie J. Durrah** wrote seven meditations in *These Days*, January 24-30,2010.
- **Paul Roberts** (pastor, Church of the Master, Atlanta, Georgia, is the part-time interim administrative dean, Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, ITC, Atlanta, Georgia. *See picture in this issue of the Board at its October 2009 meeting in Atlanta.*
- **The Village Community Development Corporation**—Youth at the Family Room, Nashville, TN, will receive \$50,000 in a Thank Offering Grant in 2010 from Presbyterian Women. This grant will empower Nashville youth and adults through education, spiritual development, cultural enrichment, social justice advocacy and civic engagement. **Andrew L. Stephens** is the pastor of The Village Presbyterian Church in Nashville, TN.
- **Byron W. Wade**, vice moderator of the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, wrote the worship resources for the 2009 Peacemaking Offering for October 4, 2009. He is pastor of Davis Street Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, NC.
- **William B. Shropshire, D.D.S.**, elder, Radcliffe, Atlanta, GA, is the newly-elected African American Representative on the National Board for Presbyterian Men.
- **Cheryl Pennington**, Oklahoma City, OK, wrote an article on “Hearing Disability,” for the national newspaper of Church Women United. While riding back to the Birmingham Airport together after the meeting at Stillman, Bettie J. Durrah, solicited writers, for *The ChurchWoman News (October 2009)*. Bettie J. Durrah is completing a four-year term this year as National Communications Chair, Church Women United.
- An article, “Good news for the poor,” was published in the November 1 issue of *Presbyterians Today*. The article is about two pastors, **J. Herbert Nelson II** and spouse, **Gail Porter Nelson**, who started Liberation Community Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN. This congregation is reaching out to one of the “toughest neighborhoods in Memphis.”
- **J. Oscar McCloud** has been serving as acting executive, Presbytery of New York City.

- ***The Presbyterian Investor*** (Fall 09) carried an article with pictures of Elmwood United Presbyterian Church in three locations in New Jersey. Written by the pastor, **Robert Burkins**, the article talks about how the three churches came to be connected. Collectively, Elmwood United is one church with one session and over 1000 predominately African American members. Through a loan from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, the Elmwood Central location will undergo renovations.
- **Darius Leader Swann** wrote the “Minute for Mission: Christian Vocation,” found Sunday, September 5, 2010, in the 2010 ***Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study***. A picture of one of the paintings by Reginald T. Hodges, accompanies the article. At the time of the writing D.L. Swann was president of the Maria Fearing Fund for African and African American Partnership in Mission, Inc. Elected president *emeritus* at the summer meeting of the Board, Darius Swann was succeeded by **David L. Wallace, Sr.**
- **Bridgette Hector**, minister member, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, is a mission co-worker in Lesotho. Her picture was seen, along with others, in ***Highlights***, Summer/Fall 2009 issue published by Presbyterian World Mission. She graduated several years ago from Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary.
- **Marinda Harris** (pastor, Rice Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, GA) and **Paul Roberts** (pastor, Church of the Master) were two of the clergy participating in a trip this past summer to the Middle East.
- **Peace Presbyterian Church, Louisville, KY**, will be one of the recipients of 2010 Birthday Offering by Presbyterian Women. **Wayne Steele** is the pastor of the church.
- **Jerrod Lowry (Presbytery of New Hope)** gave the memorial tribute for his maternal grandmother in Ridgeway, South Carolina. He is the son of **Melvin** and **Faye Lowry** (Belle Terrace Presbyterian Church, Augusta, GA).
- **Marsha Snulligan Haney, Ph.D.** (Missiology professor, ITC) received two awards on November 11, 2009, from Fuller Theological Seminary where she received the Ph.D.- Distinguished Alumna Award 2009 Alumna of the Year by the Faculty of the School of Intercultural Studies in recognition of her outstanding contribution as a missiological educator and researcher who is dedicated to the development of African-American leaders.”
- **Marsha Snulligan Haney** was one of four ITC faculty members featured with articles in ***The Lantern***, Annual Edition 2009. Her article was entitled, “Christian Mission in Tis Global Era.”
- **Eleanor Giddings Ivory** spent more than two years working in Geneva, Switzerland for the World Council of Churches. A great deal of her time was spent in international travel from Indonesia, Czech Republic, Cuba, Kenya, Rwanda, Congo, Russia-Georgia, and several other places. More importantly you will want to hear about what was happening in those places, and how the church was able to bear witness.

- Congratulations to the **Church Growth Strategy Team** which put out an email publication regarding its work in late November. **Karen Brown** took the lead in putting together the publication and sending it to all governing bodies.
- **Marsha Snulligan Haney** carried a group of seminarians to Kenya and Tanzania in January 2010 during the Winter Break from the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, GA. **Lonnie J. Oliver** also accompanied the seminary group.
- The **Committee of Women of Color/Justice for Women, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta** hosted 30 international students of lunch on December 30, 2009. These students were visiting in Atlanta as part of the Christmas International House, through the auspices of Atlanta Ministry to International Students with Fahed Abu-Akel as the executive director. All of the students came from colleges in the United States, and all home countries were in Asia. Many of the Chinese students came from Georgia Southwestern University, Americus, Georgia. **Sheila Louder** is the moderator of the Committee of Women of Color in Atlanta.
- **Jerry Cannon** is featured in an article, “Healthy leaders, Healthy Congregations,” in the Winter 2009-2010 issue of *Ideas!* There is a full page picture in color of Cannon holding a baby. In the article, information is given about the manner in which C.N. Jenkins Memorial Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC, supports seminarians.
- **“Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits”** is the title of a display at the Atlanta History Center, January 30-April 25, 2010. This exhibit will be part of the Atlanta History Center’s Civil War to Civil Rights exhibition series. A national tour is being made possible by a grant from MetLife Foundation and the Council of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The title of the exhibition, “Let Your Motto Be Resistance,” comes from **Henry Highland Garnett**, an African American Presbyterian preacher/abolitionist whose complete quote is as follows in 1843: *“Let your motto be resistance! Resistance! No oppressed people have ever secured their liberty without resistance.”*
- **Jin S. Kim**, pastor, Church of All Nations, Minneapolis, MN, is a candidate for the Moderator of the 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly
- The **Bishop Vinton R., Anderson Ecumenical Leadership Scholarship Fund** was created to provide support for African Methodist Episcopal students attending the Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies, World Council of Churches, Switzerland, The fund was initiated by Bishop Anderson (AME).. He was the first African American to serve as WCC president for North American (1991-98). The initial capital of \$100,000 was established as part of the Ecumenical Trust in New York.

- **Byron Wade**, vice-moderator, 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, participated in a nine day trip to Central and South America. In Soledad, Columbia, he preached at a new church development, *Ciudadela Metropolitana* on January 17, 2010. Using Joshua 1; 1-9, when God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites, Wade told the gathered community, “**But God fulfills God’s promises, no matter what people say.**”
- **John White, Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, Margaret Aymer, and Emilie M. Townes** are among the contributors to **Year C, Volume 3, *Feasting on the Word.***
- As part of the African American History Celebration, **Bettie J. Durrah**, preached on the life of Maria Fearing, February 21, 2010, at Oakhurst Presbyterian Church, Decatur, GA. This multicultural church is continuing a 24-year tradition of preaching on the life and witness of African Americans during each of the Sundays in February. David L. Wallace, president of the Maria Fearing Fund for African and African American Partnership in Mission, Inc, was also present. *See article by the pastors, Nibs Stroupe and Caroline Leach, in this issue of the newsletter.*
- **Bettie J. Durrah** talked to the children during the worship hour at Korean Central Presbyterian Church, Chamblee, GA, about African American History Month on February 28, 2010.
- The **General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)** will be held in 2016 in **Portland, Oregon**, the site of the Assembly when the General Assembly adopted the Confessions of 1967. The 50<sup>th</sup> year celebration of C’67 will take place at that time.
- **Allan Boesak** (South African theologian) was one of the speakers for the Festival of Theology and Reunion held at Louisville Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, April 25-28, 2010. The theme was “The Global Church—Implications for Mission and Ministry.”
- **J. Herbert Nelson** has been elected as the Director of Public Witness, Presbyterian Washington Office, Washington, DC.
- **William G. Gillespie** recently retired as pastor of Cote Brilliante Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, MO.
- **Alika Galloway**, co-pastor of Kwanzaa Community Church and **Paula Cooper**, communications director, Minneapolis, MS are featured in an article (with picture) in the March/April 2010 issue of Horizons. The title of the article is “Building Community in Minneapolis.” Paula is serving as executive coordinator of the General Assembly when it meets in Minneapolis in July. The church will be one of the ones featured in a Mission Tour when the General Assembly meets in July in Minneapolis.
- **Robina Wimbush** lectured on “Ecumenism” in two of the “Introduction to Missiology” classes taught by Marsha Snulligan Haney at the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, in March.

## A GLOBAL GATHERING

A global gathering, billed as the “Global Dialogue on The Accra Confession: Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth” was convened by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) in cooperation with the South Africa Council Johannesburg, South Africa, brought together members of Reformed churches worldwide who believe churches must be active in advocacy for economic justice and environmental protection.

Approximately 60 people from 23 countries participated in the program which began Thursday evening, September 3, 2009, at the Willow Park Conference Centre in Johannesburg and ran through Monday, September 7, 2009. Participants include theologians, advocates, economists and senior Church officials.

***Participants from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) included the following:  
Clifton Kirkpatrick, president, WARC; Robina Wimbush, Sarah Lisherness and  
Katie G. Cannon.***

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## SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICE HIGHLIGHTED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND BREAST CANCER DURING OCTOBER

A Worship Service was held at at Henry Ford Hospital on Sunday, October 18, 2009,. *The service was part of The Emerging Church Worship Series, and sponsored by the Henry Ford Health System and the Presbytery of Detroit.* Diane Smalley, pastor, Gratiot Avenue Presbyterian Church, coordinated this special worship service.

Since October is both Breast Cancer Awareness Month and Domestic Violence Awareness Month, two individuals highlighted these concerns. One of the speakers included Dorothy Seabrooks, elder, St John’s Presbyterian Church, Detroit. Other presenters included Celestine White, Domestic Violence Work Group, Presbytery of Detroit, Deborah Fair, Director of Michigan Black Presbyterian Charitable Organization, and George Portice, who delivered the sermon. The Combined (University Church’s Gospel Choir and Family & Friends Community Choir provided the ministry of music.

During worship, the Michigan Black Presbyterian Charitable Organization l recognized persons from Livingston County who were instrumental in the planning and opening of a shelter for victims of domestic violence. Flowers were given to patients in Henry Ford in honor of one woman and in memory of two other women.

A reception followed the worship so that the community had the opportunity to meet corporate staff with Henry Ford Hospital, as well as some of the patients and their families.

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## WHAT DOES THE CHURCH VAN SAY ABOUT THE CHURCH’S MINISTRY?





Board of Trustees of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, at its April meeting on the campus of the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

July 3-10, 2010	General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Minneapolis, MN
July 15-18, 2010	Southeast Regional Meeting, NBPC, Jacksonville, FL
July 20-24, 2010	Presbyterian Youth Triennium
July 21-24, 2010	Youth Leadership Development Conference, NBPC, North Carolina
October 9, 2010	Gala Honoring Darius and Vera Swann, Maria Fearing Fund, Atlanta, GA
May 17-25, 2011	International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, World Council of Churches, Kingston, Jamaica
July 22-26, 2012	PW Churchwide Gathering, Orlando, Florida
2013	10 <sup>th</sup> Assembly, World Council of Churches, Busan, Korea

## INDUCTION INTO THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME DR. ALLIE B. LATIMER



**Allie B. Latimer**, our beloved sister and elder of Northeastern Presbyterian Church, Washington, D. C., was recognized and inducted into the National Women's Hall Of Fame in Seneca, New York, October 10-12, 2009. Her accomplishments and credentials, which are numerous, include a Juris Doctor degree from Howard University School of Law and a Doctor of Divinity degree from the Divinity School of Howard University, and a Masters of Legal Letters from Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law. In 1977, as a Federal attorney, Allie was the first African American and first woman to serve as General Counsel of a major federal agency.

She is honored as a civil rights activist and humanitarian who has been active in legal, civic and religious activities throughout her lifetime. She has not been content to attain greatness only for herself but was instrumental in organizing Federally Employed Women (FEW) , a grassroots organization whose major objective is to work for equal opportunity for all. Today there are more than two hundred FEW Chapters nationwide.

The trip to Seneca Falls and the program of Induction was an extravaganza of activities. The bus pick-ups started from 5 a.m. in Virginia and lower Maryland, a second stop for participants in D. C., then on to North Maryland until 32 women and two men (Gay Wilmore and Lee Swann) were aboard. Most of the passengers were members of the FEW organization. After a scenic drive through the autumn colored hills of Pennsylvania and New York, we arrived just in time to get ready for a wonderful reception where lots of networking took place and where we met other FEW women.

The legacy of Allie places her in the Hall of Fame's selected company of 238 other distinguished women such as Sojourner Truth, Eleanor Roosevelt, Emma Lazarus, Rosa Parks, and Rosalyn Carter, to mention only a few. Visiting the Women's Hall of Fame Museum was a highlight of the activities during the celebration.. The organization is expecting a grant of 2.5 million dollars to renovate the old historic Seneca Mills site for a new home for the Hall of Fame honorees. We learned that contemporary and historical women are chosen for inclusion on the basis of **“the value of their contributions to the development of the USA,” “the significant national or global impact of their achievements and their enduring value.”** Visit [greatwomen.org](http://greatwomen.org) to learn more.

*--Vera P. Swann, Burke, Virginia*

# SAVE THE DATE

*Maria Fearing Gala*

*Honoring Vera and Darius Swann*

**October 9, 2010**

**Radcliffe Presbyterian Church**

**Atlanta, Georgia**

**Sponsored by**

**Atlanta Members/Friends**

**Maria Fearing Fund for African and African  
American Partnership in Mission, Inc.**

**Iris Wallace, Chair**

## CELEBRATING AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

### HOW DID YOUR CHURCH CELEBRATE AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH?



As part of **African American History Month**, the Worship Committee of Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia, prepared a display in the narthex of writers from the congregation who have articles, books, etc. published. Bettie J. Durrah helped to facilitate the display for a second year.

# BLACK HISTORY EMPHASIS: TWENTY-FOUR YEARS & COUNTING

## *How a Multi-Cultural Church Celebrates*

--Caroline Leach and Nibs Stroupe, clergy couple and pastors  
Oakhurst Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Georgia



Oakhurst Presbyterian Church reached a membership of almost 900 white members in the early 1960's. Ninety percent of the white members fled the neighborhood and the church when black neighbors moved into the community. Through strong ministerial leadership (including senior pastor Dr. Lawrence Bottoms), dedicated elders, and Presbytery support, the church not only survived, but now it is a thriving, multicultural congregation of 350 members.

Of the many actions that enabled the church to survive and grow, none has been more important than our emphasis on Black History Month, which we began in 1987. As we started this series, we discovered the great river of witnesses who have gone before us and whose stories continue to call out to us for us to step into the river and trouble the waters of our time. During Black History Month, we dedicate each Sunday to different figures who have been witnesses for racial justice. We have preached on the well-known (Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Fannie Lou Hamer, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X), and we have preached on those not so well known but important still (Williams Still, Ellen Craft, Francis Grimke, Maria Fearing, Joseph DeLaine, Barbara Johns.)



During this month, we also have centered our Sunday school lessons for all ages on those whose lives we are lifting up, so that all can learn that the modern civil rights movement did not spring up overnight but was the result of many seeds sown and lived. Our rooms are transformed into gas stations, school rooms, court rooms, and mission stations in the Congo – you can travel worldwide through the stories of those who worked for justice. We physically set the stage to see and hear the stories of these witnesses. Children and adults come into our rooms to engage the people we are studying in February. The Black History witnesses are researched, and a resource book is given to each class leader. Classes are assigned a different room each week to encounter the stories of these witnesses to God's truth: we are all children of God!

## MARIA FEARING DAY



The **Maria Fearing Fund for African and African American Partnership in Mission** and the **Greater Atlanta Chapter, National Black Presbyterian Caucus** jointly sponsored **“Maria Fearing Day** on Saturday, February 27, 2010 at Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta. . Approximately fifty, enthusiastic persons gathered to participate in this historic celebration.

The Voices of Praise Community Choir, sponsored by the Greater Atlanta Chapter, NBPC, and led by Lauren Fields, showed off their musical skills with a good repertoire of numbers dispersed throughout the program. From “Hold On” to “Total Grace,” this eight-voice choir captured the sentiment of the day. The Interdenominational Fellowship Church Choir, co-led by Jothan Wandu (Kenya) and a pastor from Uganda sang, “Eternity”, one other Ugandan song, and a song from Kenya to round out the program.

David L. Wallace, Sr., president, Maria Fearing Fund, delivered a sterling message entitled **“Words about Maria Fearing.”** Using the “Good Shepherd” theme from John 10: 11-18, in talking about **Maria Fearing’s** life, **Wallace** said that she was a **“good shepherd of the flock.”** **“Like Jesus, Maria was a good shepherd,”** because she exhibited the following in her witness and service:

- **Global mission for ministry**
- **Passionate concern for the care of children**
- **First self-supporting missionary**



Sheila Louder (member of the Board) and Ashli Fuller (Radcliffe) dramatically presented a skit on **“Maria Fearing,”** Written by Darius L. Swann, the skit ended with “Maria Fearing” giving words of wisdom to the African American Church today: **“God needs you. God needs you to speak to others through you and your experience. You may not be rich, but use what you have and God will bless and you!”** With Louder serving as the narrator, and Fuller (a recent Hampton University drama graduate, and member of Radcliffe, Ashli Fuller won the hearts of all as she skillfully portrayed, including dressing the part, **of Maria Fearing**



Melva Costen gave significant high points -in the life of the late James H. Costen. Using a printed copy, she announced that the Costen family members are in the process of completing Jim Costen’s autobiography, which Jim had entitled *Beneficiary of Grace*. **“If I were to write an autobiography, it would be entitled *Beneficiary of Grace*,”** he wrote.

Bettie J. Durrah directed a Maria Fearing I.Q,” and prizes were awarded to participants. Marsha Snulligan Haney won the top prize, and other participants were able to pick prizes of their choice.

Marsha Snulligan Haney, in closing remarks, said that we must engage in **“Double Listening’** (Listening to the church and to the culture). She spelled that meaning out for our group – **“Listen to Africans and Listen to Africans in the USA.”**

Lonnie Oliver, vice-moderator and Toni Griffin-Fields, moderator of the Greater Atlanta Chapter, NBPC, talked about the work of the Maria Fearing Fund and the Caucus, and then lifted a “Love Offering” of over \$500, to be divided equally between the two entities.

Imbued with new energy and inspired by the work of Maria Fearing and James H. Costen, the community did not seem eager to leave as they gathered around the sacred table.



**National Black Presbyterian Caucus  
P.O. Box 17041  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28237-7041**