“God is changing humanity,” said Augusta S. Clark, retired head of Gillespie-Selden Institute, Cordele, Georgia. That remark was made in 1954, and it was reported in The Atlanta Daily World, August 21, 1954. According to the writer, Edward Peeks, (now living in Charleston, West Virginia and active in the National Gillespie-Selden Alumni Association) who wrote the article, Clark “…for more than half a century has been helping God to change people and things as a minister, teacher and educator.” Gillespie-Selden was one of the Presbyterian mission schools, and it was in transition to its new ministry in 1954. Writer, Edward Peek, was paying tribute to Augusta S. Clark through the article, “Clark of Cordele Is A Partner of God in Human, Social Change.”

In the interview, Clark “predicted that Negroes will be running for and holding state offices in Georgia within another forty years.” “If you live to be as old as I am, Clark told the writer, “you will see a Negro lieutenant governor of Georgia, perhaps even a Negro Governor.”

DATELINE: October 8, 2008

Edward Peeks sent a copy of the 1954 news article and as well as his written commentary from his West Virginia address to the president of the Atlanta Chapter, National Gillespie-Selden Alumni Association:

“Reverend’s foresight speaks for itself. I haven’t seen a black governor of Georgia yet. But as you and others know, L. Douglas Wilder broke the barrier in Virginia. Now there’s a governor of color in New York, also in Massachusetts in this Obama age.

Reverend and Mrs. Clark, others like them, held high the light of hope and faith. It burns today in this nation and reflects the character of one Barack Obama, who has written by that light -- The Audacity of Hope”

--Edward Peeks

DATELINE: November 4, 2008 (Editor’s notes)

Barack Obama became President-Elect of the United States of America.

Atlanta, Georgia has seen three 3 African Americans as mayors of the city. Shirley Clarke Franklin is the current mayor. There are/ have been African American mayors in many cities across the nation.
DATELINE: November 14, 2008, PRESBYNET
“When ‘Barack Obama has been elected President of the United States’ rang out, I wept, cheered, and prayed. Our world has changed. Our children’s view of ‘American’ will never be the same—here or around the world.”
--Bruce Reyes-Chow, Moderator of 218th General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

DATELINE: 1570:
“Choose [your leaders] with a pure conscience, without regard to anything but the honor and glory of God, for safety and defense of the republic.”
--John Calvin

MESSAGES OF HOPE
(Barack Obama, President-Elect)

We has a people will get there.
It’s been a long time, and change has come to America.
Tonight is your answer.
We are not just a collection f Red States and Blue States; we are and will be the United States of America.
Our stories are singular, but our destiny is shared.
Let us summon a new spirit of service, patriotism…”
Change has come to America

Yes, Augusta S. Clark, God is changing humanity!

November 1, 2008, PW Meeting, Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia

Pictures on the Cover Page
Barack Obama /Daphne Bryson Jackson, member of Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia
Barack Obama/Wilhelmina E. Lewellen, Arkansas State Representative and member of Allison Presbyterian Church, Little Rock, Arkansas
**Whose Mirror Will You Trust?**  
--Edward Buri

In the present social culture, after a person’s name, the next main identifier is the work one does and where one does it. The response to the “What-do-you-do” question determines greatly the map the conversation will follow. The conversation may be ended with politeness, “It was nice to meet you.” Or it may be an “Oh! Tell me more about your experience...!” If it continues, it somehow drifts to the car you drive. Hopefully it is not the bone-shaker kind that has the “All things are possible” bumper sticker! Then it matters the kind of neighborhood you live in. The leafier the neighborhood, the longer the conversation is likely to go. The opposite is also true. It also matters the club in which you have membership. The more elite the club, the more “alive” one is perceived to be.

The church of Sardis in Revelation 3 was famous and had a big name by the standards of the day. But when God came to do an inspection, God found that the church was smaller than its name. Its name was big. But its reality was narrow and shallow. It is described as a church known to be alive by the world. But by God’s standards, it was near dead.

It reminds me of world-renown athletes who run in big stadiums, capacity crowds cheering them hoarse from the floor of their lungs. Winners are crowned with medals only to be discovered later that their win was aided by banned drugs. *They had won but they had lost.* The case of the church of Sardis is one of an illusion. They are a case of false confidence. Their image was based on a wanting standard.

Sometime back I read a really brief article that was claiming that the Japanese had finally discovered the *true mirror*. The article read something to the effect that for a long time people have carried wrong images because of the shortcomings of the present day mirror [that is the one you used in the morning!]. But now with the more advanced *true mirror*, people will finally have the true image of themselves. It was reported that the new mirror will impress some and depress others. Some who think themselves as good looking should prepare themselves for a rediscovery of their looks. The true mirror will now show them exactly how they look. Their beauty status might be out for debate. Some others who by the standards of the older mirror thought themselves not so good-looking should prepare themselves for a new life. The mirror may reveal that they looked very good after all! This article made many uncomfortable and others very expectant. But it appeared in the newspaper on April 1!

When we look at the church in Sardis, we see two contrasting perceptions of the same community. We see two mirrors at work: *the mirror of the world*, and *the mirror of the Lord*. Each mirror has its own message. The question becomes then, whose mirror will you trust?

The mirror of the world is a faulty mirror. Faulty because it is a *manipulative mirror*. The world has potential to cast an image of who you are in relation to the gains it needs from you. So we find a person telling a colleague, “You are great... You are amazing... *What would we ever do without you?*” Truth is that they say this not because the person is really that great and indispensable, but because they need a favor from them. The “praised” colleague smiles and rests on false-praise. In the same spirit, we hear a boss talk badly about a junior not because the junior is a bad worker, but because the junior is standing in the way of a deal he is making under the table. The junior falsely feels terrible and worth nothing.

The mirror of God is never an illusion. *It is the true mirror*. It casts your real image. God does not need to manipulate because God needs no gain from us. Instead God offers us an opportunity for a divine make-over. So when the world tells you how you are doing, make sure to ask God too, “*How I’m I really doing?*”

> “Awake, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death...” Rev. 3:2

Pastor E. Buri is the youth pastor at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. A graduate of Princeton Seminary several years ago, he returned home to continue serving in the same capacity. This commentary is his Weekly Faith Booster #10 which was sent by email November 27, 2008.
MILDRED M. BROWN ESSAY CONTEST

Sponsored by

NATIONAL BLACK PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Students in Grades 9-12

Write an original essay of 500 words to 800 words about an outstanding woman leader in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who has influenced /has the capacity to influence the lives of young people as she serves as an inspirational model of witness and service. Choose from among the following leaders:

Thelma C.D. Adair; Mildred M. Brown;
Katie Geneva Cannon; Eva Clayton;
Maria Fearing; Lucy Craft Laney

FIRST PLACE WINNER -- $300
SECOND PLACE WINNER -- $150
WINNER ANNOUNCED AT NBPC IN 2009

Criteria

Factual data; originality; inspirational focus; grammatical construction;
quality research; personal focus; writing style

DEADLINE: April 1, 2009

Mail to: Dorothy F. Washington, Chair, 2009 Essay Contest
1823 Longview Court
Teaneck, New Jersey 07666
201-837-8015 (Cell Phone—201-286-4715)
dottiecub@aol.com
CELEBRATIONS

- **Bryon Wade**, vice-moderator of the 218th General Assembly preached at one of the service for the New Immigrant Ministries Consultation, held in Louisville, in September. Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow gave a keynote address during the opening session. This consultation is part of the denomination’s effort to increase the racial ethnic membership in the church to 20 percent by 2010, and it all part of a two-year evangelism emphasis – “Grow Christ’s Church Deep and Wide.”

- **Jerry Cannon** preached for three nights for a revival meeting at Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, GA, and September 20-22, 2008.

- **Eva Clayton** (former US Representative, NC) will lead a workshop at the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women in Louisville, KY in July.

- **Woodland Presbyterian Church**, Charlotte, NC, celebrated its 140 Anniversary, September 29, 2008. Larry Hill is the pastor.

- **New Life Presbyterian Church**, College Park, Georgia, advertises in the *Metro Ebony Pages*, a minority business directory/magazine. All ads in the directory are in color, and New Life has two full ads in the 08-09 edition.

- **Mary Grace** and **Jefferson Rogers** (Daytona Beach, Florida) continue to keep the Howard Thurman Legacy alive in several ways: maintaining the Howard Thurman birthplace in Daytona Beach, and through The Howard Thurman Lecture Series at Stetson University (Deland, FL). Speakers for 2008 included Ronald Waters (“Barack Obama’s Quest for the Presidency and the Problematic of Race”); Heather A. Williams (“Self-Taught: African-American Education in Slavery and Freedom); Jabari Asim (“The N-Word: Who Can Say It, Who Shouldn’t, and Why”).

- **J. Herbert Nelson** (Presbytery of Memphis) is one of the plenary presenters for the Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators (APCE) when the group meets, January 28-31, San Antonio, Texas. Workshop leaders include Gail Porter Nelson, Valarie Small, and J. Herbert Nelson. Diane Wright continues as president of the APCE.

- **Connie Lee**, **Lloyd Green**, and **Winston Lawson**, Atlanta ministers, were among the twenty plus ministers from metropolitan Atlanta who traveled to the Middle East through the courtesy of Tom Cousins. Enterprises. They went in late summer.

- **Joaquina Filipe Nhahala** (Mozambique) became the first woman in Africa to be elected a Bishop in the United Methodist Church.

- **Michael Cottman**, whom you hear on the Tom Joyner Morning Radio Show, through Black America Web, is the son of Roberta Cottman, member of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Detroit, Michigan.
• Warren H. Cooper (Oxford Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia) participated in Jazz Vespers at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Georgia, November 30, 2008. Several other local artists participated as well. Cecelya A. Taylor is the pastor. See article in this issue of the newsletter.

• Covenant Presbyterian Church (Kannapolis, NC) celebrated its 50th Anniversary, October 5, 2008, with Jerry L. Cannon, preaching at his home church. For this special occasion, Chair of the Anniversary Committee was Corine Cannon, mother of the preacher. The Anniversary Book contained all pictures about the church in color. Albert W. Moses is the pastor.

• Bonnie Hines, first female bishop, AME Zion Church has received her first assignment in West Africa.

• Katie Geneva Cannon was the keynote speaker for the International Conference on Racism and Globalization, held June 27-29, 2008, in Chicago. The text of her message, “An Ethical Mapping of the Transatlantic Slave Trade,” may be found on one of the sponsors web page, Agricultural Missions (www.agriculturalmission.org). Find two quotes from the conference under “Quotable Quotes” in this newsletter.

• Oliver Mahabir (May 2008 graduate of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary) has accepted an internship with the Office of Women’s Advocacy, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She is a candidate under care of the Presbytery of Cincinnati.

• Melva Wilson Costen will be participating in a presbytery-wide event in the Presbytery of Western New York (Buffalo, NY) on “Diversity of Music in Presbyterian Worship.” Music by the late Isaiah Jones will be featured from his Songbook, published by Westminster John Knox Press (2005).

• Warren McNeil (NBPC treasurer) has been called as Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Newark.

• Five Eagle Scouts of Troup 290 of Radcliffe Presbyterian Church (Atlanta) have achieved this high ranking within the last few years. The latest service was held following the worship service, November 9, 2008.

• Chinita Goodjoin is the proud mother of a new baby girl.

• Lois M. Stroman (Washington Street Presbyterian Church, Dublin, GA) is one of the elders serving on the Search Committee for a new president for Columbia Theological Seminary.

• Officials of The African American Church sponsored an Inaugural Ball, January 18, 2009, at the The Grand Hyatt Washington, Washington, DC.
QUOTABLE QUOTES

• “... why do God-fearing women and men far too often look on silently while people are still being oppressed, compressed, depressed and suppressed by economic exploitation and systemic underdevelopment?”
  --Katie Geneva Cannon
  International Conference on Racism and Globalization
  Chicago, June 2008

• “We need to countervail the xenophobia that contaminates public discourse in the United States and other Western nations with an embracing, exclusion-rejecting perspective of the stranger, the alien, the other...one which I have named xenophilia, a concept that comprises hospitality, love, and care for the stranger.”
  --Luis Rivera Pagan
  International Conference on Racism and Globalization
  Xenophobia or Xenophilia”
  Chicago, June 2008
QUOTABLE QUOTES ABOUT CHILDREN

Marian Wright Edelman. Founder/President
Children’s Defense Fund
Benjamin E. Mays Lecture Georgia State University
Atlanta, Georgia
October 13, 2008

“We have a youth problem because we have a profound adult problem.”
“If the child is safe, everyone is safe. They are the canary in the mine.”
“If we lose our children, we lose everything.”
“Too many of our child-serving agencies are about anything but serving children.”
“Children need adults who never give up on them.”
“Tell children that they are more than their tests.
“Prisons and institutions are becoming the new American apartheid.”
“Where is the ‘herd’ for our communities today?” (Referring to story about members of herd helping to form community)
“Strategic flies can make the dog uncomfortable.” (Referring to Sojourner Truth’s statement about fleas.)
“Become members of the flea corps for justice.”


Bettie J. Durrah attended this lecture at the Rialto Theatre, Georgia State University., Atlanta, Georgia.

CRADLE TO PRISON PIPELINE

The Children’s Defense Fund recently launched the Cradle to Prison Pipeline Campaign, a national call to action stop the funneling of tens of thousands of youth, predominantly minorities, down the paths that often lead to arrest, conviction, incarceration and in some cases, death. Race and poverty are the major factors underpinning the Pipeline. We created the Pipeline and we have the power, knowledge and will to dismantle it. The need is urgent.

For more information on the Cradle to Prison Pipeline Campaign, please visit www.childrensdefense.org or contact Natacha Blain, Lead Strategic Advisor at nblain@childrensdefense.org or (202) 622-3544.
The Amistad, Freedom and You

“This is your great-great granddaughter,” said a voice from the graveyard of the Amistad slaves, announcing that “We are free indeed.”

These words were spoken in the graveyard in New Haven, Connecticut, September 23, 2008, as many persons gathered to witness and to share an historic event. A large delegation from Sierra Leone, West Africa and others journeyed to that city to participate in ceremonies celebrating the legacy of The Amistad (Spanish for Friendship), a slave ship, commandeered in 1839 by slaves who were subsequently placed on trial in New Haven for their part in the rebellion and eventually freed. Two ceremonies were held—one at The Amistad Statue at City Hall and the other at the gravesite of the six Amistad slaves who died in New Haven.

The historic significance of this event was made even more significant because, as the group gathered in front of the tombstone honoring the memory of the six slaves, the Minister of Presidential Affairs from Sierra Leone apologized for the role that Africans played in the slave trade. The apology was accepted on behalf of all African Americans. Among the persons present included John Karefa-Smart (and other members of his family) who, though now living in Washington, DC, led the delegation from Sierra Leone when it became the 100th member of the United Nations. This extraordinary family has given stellar leadership to the ecumenical and global arena, according to Bernice Cosey Pulley (New York ecumenist) who was also present for the ceremony. The newly elected president of Sierra Leone, Ernest Bai Koroma was originally scheduled to be president for the ceremony.

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“…each of them are natives of Africa and were born free, and every since have been and still of right are and ought to be free and not slaves…”

----S. Staples, R. Baldwon, and T. Sedgewick, Proctors for the Amistad Africans, January 7, 1840

Detail of Supreme Court Opinion, US V. The Amistad
U.S. National Archives and Records Administration
Feasting on the Word (Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary), Year B, Volume 2 (Lent through Eastertide) is now available. (See October newsletter for more information.

Turning Corners—Reflections of African Americans in the United Methodist Church From 1961-1993, George M. Daniels

“Churches that hold fast to tradition without paying attention to new demands placed upon them by a fractured society, they say, do so at their own peril.”

—Preface


• “Be grateful for your children. They are God’s most precious gifts and our messengers to the future.”


DATES TO REMEMBER

• The African American Church Inaugural Ball, The Grant Hyatt Washington, Washington, DC, January 18, 2009
• Martin L. King, Holiday, January 19, 2009
• Inauguration of President Barack Obama, January 20, 2009
• Samuel Dewitt. Procter Pastors and Lay Leadership Conference, February 16-19, 2009, St. Petersburg Beach, Florida (Honorees: John Husrt Adams; Yvonne Delk; Barbara Harris; Michael Pfleger; Cecelia Williams-Bryant), www.sdpconference.info
• Big Tent Conference, Atlanta, GA, June 11-14, 2009 (10 entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including the Racial Ethnic Convocation)
• National Black Presbyterian Caucus Conference, July 29-August, 2009, Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Passion Play 2010, Oberammergau, Germany
• International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, World Council of Churches, Kingston, Jamaica.
SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Please share the good news about what is happening in your congregation, region, or with individuals (clergy and lay). Articles of 200 words or less are solicited. Send your newsworthy items to the address found below. Clearly identify in the subject line that the information is for NBPC newspaper. 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 404-691-6709
P.O. Box 92252
Atlanta, Georgia 30314
SPRING ISSUE---April 2009 –DEADLINE---March 1, 2009

COME TO STILLMAN...

NATIONAL BLACK PRESBYTERIAN CAUCUS CONFERENCE

July 29-August 2, 2009
Stillman College
Tuscaloosa, Alabama (Fly into Birmingham)
Theme: “Saved for Service: Equipping the Saints for Ministry”
(Ephesians 4: 11-13)

Stayed tuned for the following;
Lucy Craft Laney Luncheon
Circles of Elders Luncheon
Clergywomen’s Luncheon
Maria Fearing Fund Breakfast
Church Growth Strategy Campaign

Registration Information will be found in the next issue of this newsletter.
As soon as the details are firm, you will receive registration information in the mail.
SAVE THE DATE!
SAVE YOUR MONEY!
Sheila Louder (2008), Virginia Hawkins-Stephens (2007) and Bettie J. Durrah (2005), received the Community Service Award from the Greater Atlanta Chapter, National Alumnae Association of Spelman College. These three alumnae are members of Atlanta-area Presbyterian Churches -- Louder (New Life, College Park) and Hawkins-Stephens and Durrah (Radeliffe).

Vanessa Sharp (dressed in outfit from Indonesia).
See her article about the “Living Letters” Trip to Indonesia in the Fall Issue of this newsletter.
As I reflect on my 56-year life span, I can only surmise that life is like a box of chocolates. One moment you are enjoying the creamy, rich sweetness it holds, and the very next moment, you’re experiencing its dark, bitter sweetness. Both encounters place you in a context of reflection -- one leaving you with thoughts of how wonderful life can be -- the other, bringing you to a point of critical self-reflection, which leaves you giving thanks to God for the learning and growing opportunity in the bitterness. Although the experience may have been somewhat painful, yet you are still able to glean the goodness of God's mercy and grace out of it.

To give you further insights of my analogy, I will begin with my mother. Kathleen Dease Larry was the kind of mother that not only believed in strong principles for her children, but also for herself. She was brought up in a family that instilled Christian and moral values. She taught my brother, Curtis Larry and myself that it was essential to reach beyond ourselves and touch the lives of others. The "Golden Rule" of treating others the way you want to be treated and to treat your neighbor as yourself was modeled daily in our household. These values were taught by her parents, and she instilled them in us; thus, leaving me with a compassionate heart and a love for God's people.

Undoubtedly, when a person has such love and compassion for people, such a person is willing to take an adamant stand for justice and righteousness, for openness and diversity. It is my desire to model Jesus, who touched and spoke to those outside of his circle, in their own space, which resulted in changed hearts and lives.

In 1973, I married my college sweetheart, Hayward L. Magby, who, too, has the ability to reach and connect to those who are marginalized and on the peripheral of life. After 10 years of marital bliss, God blessed us with our adopted son, Hayward L. Magby, II. The blessing of our adoption is in itself a unique occurrence. We saw our son on television when he was only six weeks old. Twenty-three families called to inquire about his adoption. After three months of classes, interviews, and conferences, we were chosen to be his parents.

Everything in our life was like a box of creamy, rich chocolates -- comforting, soothing, and mellow. My husband was career Air Force man, and he received the most fabulous assignment to Anchorage, Alaska. This encounter nurtured and grew our family in a closer and personal relationship with God. When we transferred to Virginia, I entered seminary.

After three years at Union Theological Seminary, I was blessed to receive a fabulous invitation to serve at a church while pursuing my CPE Residency at Emory University. The only way to describe the encounters with CPE and New Life Presbyterian Church, College Park, Georgia, is to simply state "they were sweeter than sweet".

It was at this juncture in my life that my box of creamy, rich chocolates became entangled with the intrusion of dark, bitterness. For you see, beginning October 1996 and concluding March 1997, after 15 surgeries, I lost my eyesight to glaucoma. How could this happen to me? I was a faithful, diligent person of God. Hadn't I given my life to God? Where was the justice in this relationship I had with the Lord? These questions and many others were
mine for critical, self-reflection. In the meantime, many of my New Life parishioners consistently heralded me by stating "How inspiring you are", "What strength you have", "How encouraging you are". Never could I understand their accolades until two years later. When I realized that God had not called me to leave me. If God called me into this ministry, surely God had a work for me. This "eye thing" was not about me, but about God. I then remembered my acceptance to God's call. For it was at that moment when I cried out to God, "Yes God, use me any way you choose".

I then understood what everyone was saying to me. Their commendations were not about me, but the God in me. I then realized that in my moments of pain and despair, my apparent strength and determination pointed them to God, not me. Thus, leaving me with the conclusion, "this eye thing is not about me, but about God". If my tenacity pointed others to Christ, then I again said "Yes God, use me any way You choose".

**In the dark, bitterness of my life, I found a bitter sweetness.** No, it is not my choice to be visually impaired; nor do I celebrate it. However, I have been able to find the blessing in the midst of the curse. Thus, allowing me to experience God's love, grace and mercy. Above all, I am able to feel God's presence **in the rich, creamy sweetness of life, as well as in those moments of its dark, rich, bitter sweetness.**

The Reverend Dr. Gwen D. Magby, has served as pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Key West, Florida for six years.

**MISSION AND MINISTRY OF TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, KEY WEST, FLORIDA**

During Gwen Magby's six years at Trinity, we have achieved many ministry accomplishments. For three consecutive years, we have hosted native Koreans Presbyterians touring the United States. We have hosted students from Columbus Theological Seminary of Atlanta, Georgia. The church has also attended conferences in North Carolina, New York, Philadelphia, Houston, and throughout Florida. We also had the privilege of going to The Motherland, Ghana, West Africa. After Hurricane Wilma, Trinity provided Red Cross shelter in our Evans/Weed Fellowship Hall to hurricane victims throughout the Keys. Shelter was also provided to victims who became homeless after their boarding house was burned here in Key West. We are also providing space for a local Hispanic congregation. HIV/AIDS testing is provided every Monday between 12 noon and 5 p.m. In addition, we look forward to receiving our monthly *Trinity Newsletter*. In addition, we are excited about three additional new ministries: The “Bread of Life Ministry” wherein we feed the homeless and hungry; the “After School Tutoring” program where we help students increase their FCAT scores; lastly, The “Neighborhood Accountability Board” program where “At Risk” students will receive restorative justice in lieu of going through the criminal justice system.

Trinity is ecstatic to have hosted the Presbytery quarterly meeting, May 2008. We are the first African American Church in Presbytery of Tropical Florida to host the Presbytery meeting. It was an overwhelming success. We continue, months later, to receive raving reviews throughout the Presbytery.

We are also proud of the renovations to the church and manse that we have completed under Pastor Magby’s leadership. We are currently in the process of paving the driveway and back of the church in preparation for parking spaces and handicap ramp accessibility.

Pastor Magby has consistently raised hundreds of thousands of funds, written grants, and acquired numerous donations to meet the needs of Trinity. She has been completely devoted to Key West since her arrival. She’s currently serving as Vice President of the Interfaith Ministerial Alliance of which she organized, after serving as President for four years; board member of both the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Assistant Living Coalition Board; designated Chaplain for the Youth Detention Center; committee member for “Re-election of Mona Clark: Utility Board Campaign; provided prayer for Commissioner’s meetings; and the facilitator for the Faith Based Community Network.

We praise God for Pastor Magby. She has enriched the lives of Trinity’s members as well as the community’s. She has been a blessing to us all. Most of all, she is a blessing to God!
SAN FRANCISCO — When “Barack Obama has been elected President of the United States of America” rang out, I wept, cheered, and prayed. Our world has changed. Our children’s view of “American” will never be the same — here or around the world.

While Obama is not just a person of racial designation, we must not underestimate the symbolic nature and corresponding power of having a person of color as president.

The memories of my grandparents’ struggle through injustice in this country came flooding back. My Filipino grandmother in Alabama struggled with where to sit on the bus because no one knew if she was white or black.

Miscegenation laws were repealed just decades ago that would have prohibited my White wife from marrying this Filipino man. At least a few layers of historical injustice were peeled back through this election to reveal a reality of pure joy. I felt, if just for a moment, a promise was fulfilled.

However, let us not be naive and think this election has made us a post-race culture and world. We have a long way to go before we have solved racism.

The biggest concern I have is the idea that this generation is somehow so past race that we no longer need institutional safeguards against systematic and institutional injustice.

I strongly believe we would be foolish to claim success in defeating racism simply because we have elected an African American president and/or all the generational assessments about race that have punctuated the political discourse.

At the same time, I don’t think this idea is totally off. I see glimpses of truth that hold the potential for changing the way we deal with issues of race.

Those glimpses include our flattening world and the increasing interactions between different ethnic groups; open source technology, with the idea that the community will correct and police itself along the way; and changes in population percentages.

I hope we will embrace the opportunity and challenge to talk about and deal with issues of race in new ways, with new vernacular and new institutional approaches.

Live in hope.

Please join the many conversations taking place at Bruce’s Moderator blog [www.mod.reyes-chow.com]
INVITE MoM TO YOUR MEETING

--Chandra Kearns

The Health Mission on the Move (MoM) is a program of National Health Ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). National Health Ministries is part of Social Witness Ministries of the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry area of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). MoM is a mobile health education unit that travels the country to medically underserved areas advocating for quality health care access and information to all. MoM provides blood pressure and blood sugar screenings, health risk assessments, community health clinic referrals and quality health information. The cost to have MoM visit a community and all the services MoM provides is completely free.

National Health Ministries was awarded a 2004 Birthday Offering Grant from Presbyterian Women, to start the MoM program. If you would like more information on requesting a visit to your community, or if you would like to volunteer to serve on an upcoming MoM trip, please contact Chandra Kearns, MoM Coordinator at Chandra.kearns@pcusa.org

Editor’s note: MoM recently visited the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, and the following Sunday, the van made a visit to Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia. The above pictures were taken at Radcliffe.
MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

The Reverend Dr. Isaiah Jones, Jr.

March 10, 1940 – September 21, 2008

Reflections from a Colleague: Melva Wilson Costen, Ph.D.

The recent death of the Reverend Dr. Isaiah Jones shocked the nation, the ecumenical community, and particularly the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) where he had served energetically in numerous capacities. Among areas of service are: youth minister, director of campus ministry, church musician - composer, song leader and accompanist - as well as pastor, author and publisher. Isaiah was actively involved with the NBPC and was a member of the Steering Committee of the African Heritage Presbyterian Association of Musicians, the African American arm of PAM. He has left an on-going legacy of life in his family: two daughters: Ikela Jones and Isis Jones Pickens, one grandson, Seth Isaiah Pickens; a brother, David Jones, Esq, and a sister the Reverend. Loretta Kelly.

A native of St. Louis, MO, Isaiah Jones demonstrated prodigious musical gifts as a pianist at a very early age. With encouragement, he pursued a well-rounded academic journey, while continually developing his musical gifts and broadening arenas in which to fulfill his call to ministry. He earned degrees from California State University (B.A.), Talbot Theological Seminary (M. Div.) and San Francisco Theological Seminary (D. Min).

At a special service of retirement, Isaiah Jones identified himself as a “Servant of the Eternal Living God.” Those of us who walked closely with him during his journey would add “HUMBLE” before the title “Servant” because of his inescapable humility and exhibited assurance that God was indeed “his all and all.” A mention of the name, Isaiah Jones, evokes song titles such as “Fill My Cup, Let it Overflow,” “Go With God,” and the familiar “God Has Smiled On Me.” This song was also featured in the movie, Clara’s Heart with Whoopi Goldberg. He is also remembered for his theatrical appearances, including his role in Langston Hughes, Black Nativity; and a role in Vinette Carrolls, Don’t Bother Me. I Can’t Cope, and Micki Grant’s, Your Arms Too Short to Box with God, where Jones served as guest keyboardist. His composition, “Abundant Life,” is the title song on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) video: Congregations Who Care-The Ministry of Health and Wholeness. He was music director of the first UCLA production of Tambourines to Glory.

Isaiah's congregational setting of the "Eucharistic Prayer" from the Book of Common Worship, was commissioned by the Presbyterian Service Hymnal Committee. This setting, used frequently by Church of the Master in Atlanta, Georgia, and in national conferences, reflects Isaiah's intentional use of the various styles of African American "Spirituals" in liturgical settings. In addition to published songs in hymnals, the voice of Isaiah Jones can still be heard in:

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

Jane Parker Huber
October 24, 1926 - November 15, 2008

Melva Wilson Costen, Ph.D.

The passing of Jane Parker Huber from earthly life to eternal rest evoked thoughts of her life, ministry and gifts to the church. We served together on a number of committees, each of which provided evidence of a life filled with excitement, hope, creativity, evidence of change and fulfillment. Jane was born in Tainan, China where her parents served as Missionaries. In 1928, the Parker family returned to the United States, so that Jane arrived - for the first time before she was two years of age. Jane was much too young to understand the pros and cons of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) debates about the ordination of women. She learned later that the ordination of women as elders in the Presbyterian Church was approved in 1930, and that her maternal grandfather was elected Moderator of the General Assembly, and that the McAfee family would help shape her interest and leadership roles as an advocate for justice, especially justice for women.

In the midst of her academic career, Jane married her childhood sweetheart, William Huber, whose call to ministry further shaped her environment, and deepened her concern for the status and role of women in the church. Jane was vice president of UPW, the National Council on Women and the Church, General Assembly Mission Council, the Advisory Council on Discipleship and Worship, and the Joint Committee on Women, leading to the reunion in 1983.

In 1969, a report to the UPCUSA GA recommending the use of inclusive language inspired Jane’s creativity for composting new texts for familiar tunes. From 1976 forward, Jane authored such texts, providing inclusive language for God and humankind. In addition to the inclusion of 11 of her song texts in the 1990 Presbyterian Hymnal, two books of her hymns are published by Westminster John Knox Press. We do indeed urge all persons to do as Jane Parker Huber suggests:

“Live into hope of captives freed, of sight regained, the end of greed,
The oppressed shall be the first to see the year of God’s own jubilee!”

--“Live into Hope”
Gathering Song, 1976 UPW Gathering, Purdue University

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Elizabeth Bottoms

Elizabeth Bottoms (Westhills Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia) died in November. She was the spouse of Lawrence Bottoms, who served as the first African American moderator of the General Assembly of the former Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) in 1974. In addition to serving as a national staff for his denomination, he also served as pastor ofOakhurst Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Georgia and interim pastor, Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta. The funeral service for Elizabeth Bottoms was held at Radcliffe. The Lawrence and Elizabeth Bottoms legacy lives on through the churches which Bottoms helped to get started, the influence which he had in sensitizing the denomination in the area of race relations, and through the Lawrence Bottoms Award given annually by the Southeast Region of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus.
Watten B. Cooper (Philadelphia, PA) and The Carlton J. Bryson Trio (Atlanta, GA), along with other local talent teamed up to present Jazz Vespers, Sunday, evening, November 30, 2008, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Decatur, GA. Calling the evening a “Sweet Offering,” Cecelya Taylor, supply pastor, Trinity, introduced the evening saying “Listen closely; God will be in everything you hear tonight.” Sounds of John Coltrane, Thelonius Monk, Horace Silver, Miles Davis, and some original tunes were heard in addition to “Blessed Assurance” and “When the Saints?” were among the repertoire of the “Sweet Offerings.”

Cooper, in his inimitable way, added his commentary on spiritual life, including his poem, “Doing Church with Jazz.” According to Cooper, “To praise with pizzazz is ‘doing church with jazz.’”

Warren Cooper and Cecelya Taylor became acquainted with each other through the African American Presbyterian Church Growth Committee, and thus, the seeds for a Jazz Vespers Service were sown.

Cooper, an elder in the church, grew up in Berean Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, where his father, J. Jerome Cooper was pastor. A graduate of Oberlin Conservatory of Music, he has been the featured vocalist and/or music director of a number of ensembles, including The Presbybop Quartet, Critical Mass Choir, Anointed Praise and others. He is the founding host and producer of the Gospel Music Radio Program, OVATIONS, which is in its 14th year. This show airs Sunday mornings on Temple Public Radio Network in Philadelphia and some of the surrounding areas.

Carlton Bryson, trumpeter, is a member of Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, and he is a member of the Adults in Action Choir, where he often augments the music with his trumpet.
MY WORK WITH FEMA

--Joan Austin, Sacramento, Secretary, NBPC

After retirement from the California State Police in the mid 80’s I worked for the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services when the Loma Preita Earthquake which shook the Bay Area on the West Coast. I, then, began to realize how many natural disasters affected families every year. I became bored with early retirement so I chose to become a part time disaster assistance employee for FEMA. Yes, that is the Federal Emergency Management Agency which you have read unfavorable things about. Homeland Security incorporated FEMA in 2001. News sources have not been a friend to the government, but this article has been written to share what we do with a portion of your annual income tax contributions. We provide a service to victims of flood, fires, storms, hurricanes, earthquake, terrorist attacks, tornadoes and civil unrest.

Most recently, I responded to Hurricane Ike which affected six states and displaced more than 250,000 Texans in September, 2008. Texas only had 70,000 hotel rooms available, and many families were displaced and homeless. The twenty shelters were filled to capacity. Others slept in their cars, tents and campers without power for light, hot water or cooking. From Austin, Texas, we provided new manufactured mobile homes to homeowners for their use while rebuilding or repairing their homes.

Our job was assisting with

- Rental payments for temporary housing and hotels for those whose homes were unlivable.
- Grants for home repairs and replacement of essential household items not covered by insurance.
- Grants to replace personal property and help meet medical, dental, funeral, transportation and other serious disaster related needs not covered by insurance.
- Unemployment payments up to 26 weeks for workers who temporarily lost their jobs because of the disaster.
- Low interest loans to cover residential losses not fully covered by insurance, up to $200,000 for primary residence; 40,000 for personal property, including renter losses.
- Loans up to $1.5 million for small businesses.
- Crisis counseling for those traumatized by the disaster, income tax assistance for filing casualty losses.
- Advisory assistance for legal, veteran’s benefits and social security matters.

My job with FEMA is to manage a recovery center in the affected area utilizing federal and state staff. Together we provide the individual services mentioned above. The media sources monitor all that we do, and I have a public relations officer by my side trained to protect the privacy of our clients. After 15 years of responding to FEMA I must say I am proud to be a member of Region 9.

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The Maria Fearing Fund for African and African American Partnership in Mission, Inc. celebrated its 8th Anniversary in December 2008. Founder/President, Darius L. Swann, continues to give witness and service to the Fund “in the faith that God calls us -- even those with little of the world’s goods – to build a partnership in service between African American Christians and brothers and sisters in Africa that will witness to God’s glory and serve God’s people.” Maria Fearing Fund, 595 Piedmont Avenue, N.E., Suite 320-169, Atlanta, Georgia 30308.
On November 16, 2008 a core group of the steering committee for the African American Presbyterian Clergywomen's Caucus met in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Arlene Gordon and the Presbytery of Tropical Florida hosted the group. The purpose of this meeting was to address the three outcomes of the African American Church Growth Strategy that address Clergy Women.

**Clergy Women:**

i. *Develop an accountability strategy for the calling of AA women as Senior Pastors*

ii. *Promote the call of women to viable and validated ministries.*

iii. *Design and create resources to emphasize and enhance awareness of the gifts of African American Clergy Women in the PCUSA.*

As this group met and reflected, we looked at the needs of the clergywomen and others in our quest for transformation in the church. The question was asked "If not us, then who? If not now when?" It would behoove all clergywomen to hear the call to action. In a special transformative moment, this group coined "Sisters in Action for Transformation" ("S.A.T.").

Some thirty plus years ago the first Black Presbyterian Woman was ordained in this denomination, and unfortunately we are still pioneers in the ministry striving to break ground for more Black women to be called as head of staff in churches and other vital ministries for the church. To God be the Glory when we look back we can and do see some movement in the churches response to Black clergywomen being called into senior pastorates and other vital ministries.
The group will concentrate on three projects: resource directory, a face book page and website.

1. **Clergy Women’s Resource Directory**

Resource Directory of African American Clergy Women is being developed and should be circulated throughout the church by mid January 2009. This directory will also be available on line at the newly established Clergy Women’s website. The directory will give a brief history of the clergywoman’s background as well as her specialty along with a recent photograph that will be posted.

2. Everyone is invited to join the **Clergywomen’s Face Book** that will catapult the clergywomen into 21st Century, thereby meeting and accomplishing goals as a group without taking vital time away from their ministries.

3. **Website Development (See address below.)**

As we move in the body of Christ to enhance church growth with our connectedness and sharing of resource information, we ask that you consider the talents of these dynamic sisters who have answered God's call for any special occasion to preach, teach or provide workshop or conference speaking.

If you are interested in having more information, please visit our website: www.paacwc.com. All ordained African American Clergy Women are invited to participate in the directory. If you would like to be included, please contact kbrown@mapcflc.org.

We look forward to serving you in the future in partnership with the Black Presbyterian Clergywomen's Caucus.
OUR NBPC 2009 MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

“WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER”

Otis Smith, Membership Chair

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is designed so that the voice of the individual member can be heard at every level of our great church. We ought to be proud that the “founding fathers” patterned their representative democracy (U.S.A.) after our Presbyterian System.

Such a system made possible the most exciting political campaign in U.S. history. Tell me when you were more energized by a national campaign than the one that concluded with the election of President Barack Obama on November 4, 2008?

Our system allowed the General Assembly in 1998 to vote and “mandate to increase racial ethnic membership in the Presbyterian Church, (USA) by 20 percent by the year 2010.” The Presbyterian Church created six (6) congregational enhancement offices to serve its six diverse, culturally different, racial ethnic constituency groups. These offices were designed to resource synods, presbyteries and local congregations in (1) new church development, (2) evangelism, (3) church growth and (4) leadership training. Ten years later the church still has not reached its goal.

In 2007 NBPC at its 39th Annual Conference in Philadelphia, voted to take the lead in developing a strategy for black church growth and to “encourage presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly offices to implement in order to ensure that the 1998 Racial Ethnic Evangelism Church Growth Strategy achieve the objective of increasing African American membership in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.”

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER is the NBPC Membership Committee’s response to the cooperation and partnerships among the above entities. If we are to achieve our goal in 2009, it will take a strong NBPC MEMBERSHIP. JOIN TODAY! Our goal is an additional 1,000 memberships.

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Memorial Tribute to Brenda K. Doub Oliver

(June 12, 1948 – October 10, 2008)

Elder, New Life Presbyterian Church, College Park, Georgia
Spouse, Lonnie Oliver, pastor, New Life Presbyterian Church

“Helping others was her passion. It was in her DNA,” according to Lonnie Oliver. It was quite evident that her witness and service influenced many persons from various walks of life as they gathered for the wake and the memorial service at New Life Presbyterian Church. Members of the Board of Directors of NBPC will remember that Brenda accompanied Lonnie to Tuscaloosa for the August meeting, and she participated in the sessions on “Church Growth.” Our prayers are with Lonnie Oliver and the children (Kiesha and Kamal) in these special days ahead.
THE AFRICAN CONNECTION

THE TALE OF THREE TRANSFERS

QUESTION – How are you, your church, your organization and friends supporting, helping or connected in Africa? The NBPC African Connection would like to know.

SEND YOUR INFORMATION:

The African Connection
C/O Otis A. & Earline F. Smith
130 Oak Bend Drive
Stockbridge, Georgia 30281
FAX 770-474-5626 CALL 706-288-6484/
E-mail oasdante@bellsouth.net
(Information will be compiled and reported at the July 2009 NBPC conference at Stillman College)

If you or your church/organization has a project in Africa, then you know how difficult and expensive it can be to support that project. It is best to send your large sums of money through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Louisville. They will charge only a small administrative fee.

The African Connection is feeding and supporting the Landiri orphans in Malawi, Africa. Often they need emergency help.

TALE #ONE
Prior to 2007 we would send our U.S. $ check to Frank or Nancy Dimmock, and they would deposit in their local Malawian/American account at the daily exchange rate. Well, the Dimmocks are no longer in Malawi.

TALE #TWO
In 2007 we had $500.00 to send, and we tried U.S. bank to Malawi bank transfer. The banks charged $45.00 each ($90.00) plus the Malawian bank charged an exchange fee.

TALE #THREE
Recently, when our student, Chipa, needed an examination fee and we began to search for the quickest, cheapest and safe way to transfer money to Malawi. I walked into a Western Union Station, filled out a form, gave the clerk cash, and the Director received Kwacha in two days all for $10.50.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR HOW YOU HAVE HANDLED MONEY AND CULTURE PROBLEMS.
On October 2, 2008 Vera and I set off on a long-planned, often-postponed journey to India. We would be visiting the site of our missionary labors (1953-64) after eighteen years of absence. Our last visit had been during the Christmas break of 1990-91 when we took a party of nineteen, mostly Interdenominational Theological Center students, on a study tour to that country. Our plan this time was to spend a few days in New Delhi, the point of our arrival, visit for a couple of days in Chandigarh, capital of the state of Punjab that was built as a completely new city about a half century ago, and then go for a few days to Shimla, a Himalayan hill station that we had never seen. The last two weeks were to be spent in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, the site of our labors for eleven years as well as the base for my dissertation research in 1970-71. Our entire itinerary had been carefully worked out by the daughter of a member of our Allahabad host family. She lives in New Delhi with her family, but we had never met her until this visit. The son of the same friend lives in Seattle and though we had never met him, he had also been helpful to us as we made our initial plans. Such is the strength of Christian families in India.
General Impressions of Contemporary India

Arriving about midnight on October 3rd at the New Delhi Airport, named now for Indira Gandhi, India seemed much the same as we had remembered it. The porters haggled over who would carry our luggage, and the taxis competed for our fare to the YMCA where we were to stay. The next day, however, we began to see the several ways in which India had changed since we were last there.

One of my first acts in New Delhi was to go shopping for a pair of shoes (India has always manufactured excellent shoes. Check the pair you are wearing. Don’t be surprised if it has an Indian label). I went a few blocks from the YMCA on Jai Singh Road to a shopping area on Connaught Circus where I found a shoe store. I was taken aback; the store was packed with people; there was absolutely no empty floor space. I asked the clerk who was waiting—impatiently—on me what was happening that the store was so crowded. He responded that this was normal; the store handled the best shoes in the city. Gradually it dawned on me that the crowds in the store and outside on the sidewalk portended an urban India that was much more crowded than we had known forty years a

On Sunday one of our friends, the Reverend Raj Murch came to take us to church in NOIDA, a new suburb of New Delhi (Raj and his wife, Nirmala, had been members of our theatre group in Allahabad, the Galili Natya Sangh, 1960-64). He said he normally did not drive in Delhi because the traffic was so bad. He figured, however, that on Sunday morning at eight o’clock the traffic would be light. And so it was. However, after the church service and lunch at the minister’s house (husband of Raj’s and Nirmala’s daughter), Raj drove us back into the city. The streets were an astounding tangle of cars, motorcycles, scooters, motor rickshas, pedal rickshas, bicycles and trucks of various sizes. Each driver seemed to make his or her (lots of women drivers of all the above) own way, deciding on the spot who had the right of way. Often vehicles missed colliding with each other by inches. On more than one occasion I simply closed my eyes to avoid seeing what seemed a sure collision. Later in Allahabad, the volume of traffic was not as great, but the tangle of traffic was much the same.

Once in Allahabad we noticed another measure of the increased congestion. In that city our hosts were the Rudra family with whom we had been friends since our first arrival in India. Their home is located in the area known as “Civil Lines” which in the era of colonial rule was the location of the residences of British officials. In contrast to the older sections of the city, the area had large bungalows set on spacious lots, and commercial establishments were relegated to a relatively small section of the area. The Indians who acquired these homes after the British left maintained a life style at the upper end of Indian society. Professor Rudra, who died in a tragic accident shortly before our arrival in India was chair of the Philosophy Department at Allahabad University. The changes there took us by surprise, for even in 1990-91 the area still had its original character. Now the whole area has been built up with shops, hotels, restaurants, apartment buildings, petrol stations, banks and other commercial establishments. All of this has occurred at the expense of the original cleanliness and uncluttered tidiness of an earlier period.

FOR A COMPLETE REPORT, READ THE WINTER EDITION OF THE MARIA FEARING NEWSLETTER
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE TRIP BACK TO INDIA

--Vera Swann

The most enjoyable part of our trip to India was seeing many of our students and co-workers. Many were retired; others were young enough to still be active. We were of course updated on many more who were deceased. We shared time and prayer with some who were still in grief over the loss of loved ones who had been very dear to us too.

The Rudra sisters, our friends whom we stayed with, made it possible for us to reach as many as possible in Allahabad, and as a result, there was a whirlwind of activities which we enjoyed greatly. For the two weeks with them, we were entertained at nine dinners and seven tea-parties.

October is the month of Hindu Festivals; Deshera (celebrates stories of the Ramayan) followed by the Festival of Light. Many interesting programs were held during this time. We were most interested to visit and see changes that had taken place in Educational institutions operated by leaders from the Church of Northern India:

- Ewing Christian College- Our first assignment in India(1952), Dr M. Massey now principal
- Jumna Christian High School - Started as Junma Christian Basic School, Mrs. L.E.Gowan, Headmistress
- Ewing Christian Public Senior Secondary School, Mrs Shireen Chand, Principal
- Mary Lucas School and College- Dr. L.R.Amthony, Principal
- IPEM - The International Psychological Education Measuring Office and School, Dr. Lorns Liddle

Other significant events included the following:

- Lee preached at Allahabad Cathedral, Oct. 19th) and Jamuna Church (Oct 26th)
- At The Agricultural Institute (now named the Higginbottom Agricultural Institute in Nani, we met Bishop Dean Dayal, now retired.
- At the Society of Underprivileged People (SOUP), we met the Reverend & Mrs Joy Zaidi and staff as well as the children and families for whom they care.
- A Public Event for organizing Homeless People.
- Catholic Charity Home for Girls of Prostitutes
Lonnie Oliver is standing with members of New Life Presbyterian Church, in front of the church, on Old National Highway, College Park, Georgia, November 4, 2008.

NATIONAL BLACK PRESBYTERIAN CAUCUS
P.O. Box 17041
Charlotte, North Carolina 28237-7041