BLACK PRESBYTERIANISM:
Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

175 YEARS OF MINISTRY — 1807-1982
JOHN GLOUCESTER, 1776-1822

John Gloucester was a slave in Tennessee. A white Presbyterian minister, Gideon Blackburn, saw the potential of this man for the ministry and purchased him for his personal servant. Gloucester received his training under Blackburn and was taken under care of the Presbytery of Union in Tennessee. It was here that Gloucester was to return later to be ordained.

Gloucester came to the attention of Dr. Archibald Alexander, pastor of Third Presbyterian Church and chairman of the Evangelical Society of Philadelphia. Alexander prevailed upon Blackburn for Gloucester's services. Gloucester was given his freedom and called to organize the work in Philadelphia which he began May, 1801.

While busily engaged in preaching and building the church, Gloucester's wife and four sons were held in bondage in the South. To raise money with which to set them free he went abroad telling the story of human slavery in America. He raised enough money to purchase their freedom. His family joined him in Philadelphia and his four sons later became ministers.

He continued a vigorous ministry until he succumbed to poor health and died in 1822.

EDLER G. HAWKINS, 1908-1977

He was proud of his race and proud of his Presbyterianism and he revered them both, as though they were the special gifts of ministry. Two events had special meaning for him: in 1964 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly, becoming the first black person to achieve that office. Nine months before his death he was given a citation which reads: "Black Presbyterians United presents its Distinguished Ministry Award to The Rev. Edler G. Hawkins, World Churchman, Pastor, Professor, March 19, 1977." The 40 year span of his ministry had a remarkable influence on the character of the church's racial justice ministry and on the shaping of black Presbyterianism.

CLINTON M. MARSH, 1916-

Clinton McClurkin Marsh waged a successful campaign in 1973 to become the Moderator of the 185th General Assembly. The campaign slogan "Marsh... he's a mission man" readily describes the ministry of this influential church statesman who has been a part of Presbyterian mission from his birth in Annemanie, Alabama, to his presidency of Knoxville College. He has found challenging and varied opportunities to serve his God, his church and his Black heritage, whether it was with the All Africa Conference of Churches or the United Presbyterian Church in various executive positions. Dr. Marsh holds steadfast to his belief in the critical role of the church to the life and health of people and the nation. This tenet has been the guiding force in a ministry that has changed the life of many and given Presbyterian presence around the world.

THELMA DAVIDSON ADAIR, 1922-

The life of Thelma Davidson Adair is rooted in common cause with the powerless and oppressed around the world. Her intellect, organizational ability and personal creativity are laid claim to by persons from all walks of life, all cultures and all races. She has lived her faith as a churchwoman, educator and pastor's wife in experiences with Operation Crossroads Africa, the Peace Corps, UNESCO, Church Women United and as president of Black Presbyterians United. Her moderatorial year, 1976, will be remembered.
The publication of this commemorative journal began with discussion among a small circle of friends and associates. Before long it became an idea whose time had come to meet an increasingly urgent need—the recovery and celebration of our roots in black Presbyterianism. On July 16, 1981, the idea took flesh and form with the organization of the Project 175 Committee. Between the opening and closing prayers of that meeting, the purpose of the project was defined, the commitment to oversee the effort was enthusiastically accepted, two editors and a project director were appointed, and several names were advanced as potential contributors to the journal. It needs to be said, parenthetically, that no one invited to contribute refused. The mention of the Committee membership here is a way of offering thanks and appreciation for the uncommonly generous quality of their stewardship. They are Mildred M. Brown, Clarence L. Cave, James H. Costen, Emily V. Gibbes, W. Eugene Houston, Robert T. Newbold, Kermit E. Overton, Inez M. Parker, Ferdinand O. Pharr, James F. Reese, Robert L. Washington, Agnes H. Wilson and Frank T. Wilson.

Expectedly, the needs of the project required the help of many others. A word of thanks, therefore, is offered to the Board of the Program Agency for its official recognition of the Project 175 Committee to provide oversight of and direction to the project and for its approval of the funding plan enabling the publication of the journal. Similarly, appreciation is expressed for the technical and strategic assistance given by members of the Agency staff. It would be insensitive on our part not to note particularly the advocacy role of J. Oscar McCloud, Donald J. Wilson and the Administrative Cabinet. The caucus, Black Presbyterians United, under the leadership of Claude Kilgore, has given the kind of support that is indispensable to the success of the project. Aside from its participation in the development of the Journal, BPU has taken the initiative in formulating plans for its promotional and programmatic use. By doing so, BPU has virtually conferred upon the document the status of a symbol representing 175 years of black Presbyterianism.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge indebtedness to those who have shared their experiences, their reflections and counsel as participants in the enterprise. Gratefully we name the names of Franklin D. Colclough, Edward M. Miller, the late J. Herbert Nelson and Mrs. Leroy King. A list so brief calls to mind a longer list of those who, unbeknown to us, have also helped to bring our labors to fruition. We also acknowledge our debt to them.

The names of the contributing writers have been kept to the last. These are they who, with pen in hand, have filled the pages of this journal with the testimony of their experiences and research, their reflections and perspectives. Together, they have put us in touch with our past; they have acquainted us with our inheritance.

Mildred Brown          Bettie Dunrah          Kermit Overton
Howard Bryant          Emily Gibbes          Inez Parker
Clarence Cave          Eugene Houston        James Reese
Jon Chapman            Robert Newbold        Gayraud Wilmore

Frank Wilson
BLACK PRESBYTERIANS
AND
BLACK PRESBYTERIANISM

There were black Presbyterians long before the beginning of the First African Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia in May 1807. The complete record of black participation in Presbyterian congregations, agencies and judicatories might contain a surprising disclosure of a much earlier presence of Blacks in the life and mission of this denomination.

Undoubtedly, some black free persons exercised the option of affiliation with religious bodies whose communicant requirements were not defined in obvious racial terms prior to 1807. Possibly, some Presbyterian slave owners aided and abetted the religious nurture of their chattel property as a means of insuring slave docility and as an asset in determining their market value. It may be assumed that throughout the “ante bellum” period, the Presbyterian experience was not entirely alien to the black experience.

The celebration of one hundred seventy-five years of black Presbyterianism brings into view the whole range of experience from early contact to current participation. It involves a review and re-assessment of a process which moved by uncharted stages from tolerance, tutelage and testing to patronage, paternalism and partnership. Through all of this, blacks who were, or became, Presbyterian had a sense of the inherent appropriateness of their identification with the Presbyterian Church and they presumed a “joint-heir” proprietorship in this part of the “Body of Christ.” Whether or not this presumption was vindicated or confirmed over this stretch of one and three quarter centuries will be one of the important findings of the celebration.

The emergence of black Presbyterian congregations was one prong of a battery of reactions to the prevailing social, economic, political and religious climate affecting the status and future prospects of Blacks in the United States of America in the 19th and 20th centuries. The assumed inferiority of Blacks consigned them to perpetual servitude. The alleged moral degeneracy of Blacks was invoked to justify various forms of “corrective” brutality. The imputed amoral innocence and religious emotionalism of Blacks made them subjects for “plans of salvation” designed by their moral and spiritual “superiors.” These plans were to be executed by rigid observance of all the social, economic and cul-
tural distances essential to preserving inequalities between the two segments of a bi-racial society. Most striking of all, these plans were sanctified by the presence of Blacks in the church balconies of their detractors.

The “bolt from the balcony” has proved to be one of the truly historic events in American church history. For black Presbyterians, it contains elements of irony, paradox and amazement. Black worshippers from Presbyterian balconies remained Presbyterian. Previously “unchurched” Blacks became Presbyterian. Over the years, there have been few defections from Presbyterianism, either congregational or individual. The generations of Presbyterian families attest a kind of “holding power” sufficient to prevent major disaffection, alienation, or irremediable estrangement.

The increase in the number of black Presbyterian congregations and the rather sparse affiliation of blacks with predominantly white congregations posed serious questions regarding the relationship of black Presbyterians to the congregations from which some of them had withdrawn and to the vast body of black congregations of other denominations, such as Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and, to a far lesser extent, Episcopal.

As stated previously, there was infrequent incidence of defection from the denomination on the part of emerging black congregations. The records of the new congregations indicate almost immediate overtures to Presbyteries for the establishment of churches in full and regular standing with the judicatories of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. No parallel or equivalent system of Presbyterianism was envisaged. The persistence of this identification has survived periods of turbulence and moments of doubt regarding the reality of “one Church indivisible.”

The relationship of black Presbyterians to black congregations of other denominations has been maintained in remarkable balance with reciprocal reinforcement and mutual enhancement. The pattern of coexistence has absorbed the occasional strains of rivalry, recrimination and invidious comparisons. Not infrequently blacks in other denominations have accused black Presbyterians as status seekers whose church affiliation is a sign of “upward” economic and social mobility and whose middle class aspirations nullify their whole-hearted identification with the black struggle for the full experience of selfhood, autonomy and self-determination. At the same time, there is a somewhat hoary quip, still current in some parts of the religious community, which avers that “when a black person is other than a Baptist or Methodist, someone has tampered with her/his religion.” Meanwhile, the “class mix” in all predominantly black congregations renders such barbs less embarrassing or divisive than once they might have been.

What have been the principal factors in the drawing-power and holding-power of Presbyterianism over these one hundred seventy-five years?

Answers to this question might include a cataloguing of the opportunities, satisfactions, achievements and challenges experienced by black Presbyterians as they were engaged in the work and witness of the Presbyterian Church. The appraisal of these attractive and cohesive forces requires a forthright examination of one’s conception of “church” and a non-romanticized report on the degree to which, and the ways in which, identification with a particular communion fulfilled the needs, expectations and aspirations of the whole body of communicants. Such reporting would recognize the variety of gifts, the variety of services and the variety of responsibilities to be combined in fidelity to the demands of a common faith.

Some favorably impressive features in Presbyterianism are the “Polity, Posture and Proclamation” of the whole church when speaking and acting in compliance with its total mission. In the aforesaid areas the mind, spirit and intent of this witnessing community can be discerned. In these areas, the record of performance is not without blemish. There are islands of dissent, deviation and non-comformity. Yet, the profile of performance has been sufficiently reassuring to inspire the confidence, hopes and physical presence of the black component in membership and leadership.

The Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America sets forth a Directory for the Worship of God, a Form of
Government and a System of Discipline which provide principles and procedures for growth in the faith and responsible use of one's talents and resources in concert with similarly committed persons in the Community of Faith. The structure provides for entry at the point of interest, need and capability. Decision making regarding goals, objectives and spheres of activity in the mission of the church is achieved through individual initiative in sharing ideas, suggesting directions, examining alternatives and joining others in representing the will and judgments of the whole at various levels of deliberation and action.

The options and the constraints, the freedom and the accountability, the initiative and the collaboration, the personal insights and the collective judgment, the diversity of issues and the reach for consensus, the right to differ and the assurance of respect are features which have tended to give peculiar force to the emergence and growth of black Presbyterianisms.

The Presbyterian posture in matters affecting people in our society, while not unique, invites serious examination. The position of the Church on Slavery, Civil Rights, Human Rights, Women in Ministry, Child Abuse, Military Conscription and Conscientious Objectors, Education and the Public School System, has placed high premium on the worth and dignity of persons and their inherent right to the resources, opportunities and structural arrangements essential to the well-being and fullest development of human beings as members of the family of God.

This basic position has informed and given impetus to proclamations, proposals and actions on such issues as Abolition of Slavery, Black Colonization, Fair Employment Practices, Minimum Wage Legislation, Fair Housing, Voter Registration, Ordination of Women, Amnesty and Peacemaking. All of these subjects have been highly controversial. In every one of these areas the debate has been vigorous. The cost of decision and action has been measured by the moral/ethical imperatives of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Black Presbyterianism, within the whole body, has served as catalyst, prod, sensitizer and, not infrequently, "thorn in the flesh."

Black Presbyterianism has released into the life of the Church a fresh substance and a flavor.

It has communicated elements of thought and feeling, mood and manner, perceptiveness and empathy which have mitigated some of the negative effects of ecclesiastical rigidity and mollified the crassness of resistance to strange or non-traditional forms, practices or persons. In these respects, black Presbyterianism moves forward in un-structured alliance with other minority elements in the life of the Church.

This "fund of blessing" permeates the church in varying degrees. It is manifest in the spirit, contents and forms of worship. It is expressed fervently in the "Passing of the Peace." It is displayed historically in the non-race, non-class tests for membership in the "black Church." It is reflected in the readiness to affirm a common humanity, to join the issue, to set free the oppressed and to espouse the claims of justice and righteousness in the affairs of church and state.

Black Presbyterianism has not been embroiled in struggles over fine points of creed, doctrine, biblical interpretation or liturgy. Nonetheless, Black Presbyterians have been involved in wrestling with these matters in judicatories, councils, commissions and task forces of the whole Church. There was lively engagement in the process of review and restatement culminating in the Confession of '67. Excepting those times of stress when statements of faith and the authority of scripture were invoked in support of positions on Slavery, Reunion of the Presbyterian Church, the Status of Women and Homosexuality, black Presbyterianism has shared and re-affirmed the basic tenets of the Church in regard to faith and doctrine.

Black Presbyterians in worship, bible study, personal testimony and celebration of Holy Communion manifest a substantial grounding in Biblical understanding and Reformed theology as guides and supports in faith and practice. Certainty in the struggle for a liberated humanity is sustained in the confidence that God's rule of righteousness, justice and peace is both a present reality and a future hope.

The celebration of one hundred seventy-five years of black Presbyterianism will provide moments of reverent remembrance, occasions for thanksgiving and reflection, seasons of soul-
searching and contemplation, opportunity for assessing the intrinsic worth and the functional significance of the black presence in the United Presbyterian Church. The assessment will be done not as mere review, nor as an exercise in statistics, but as a way of discovering the prospects and the means for becoming increasingly a vital force in the whole structure and total mission of our Church.

When black Presbyterianism scrutinizes itself in the context of a highly organized, relatively affluent, historically racist ecclesiastical body, it is necessary to look ahead with an understanding of the degree to which the black presence and participation are peripheral, tangential or integral. It is important to recognize the facts and forces in the history of the Church that have frustrated its best intentions and negated some of its most prophetic declarations. It is equally mandatory to perceive the “signs of the time” and to detect the “indicators of hope” as revealed in the assurances of a living faith.

Some may question whether or not black Presbyterians and black Presbyterianism are doomed to the status of a colony in a powerful Presbyterian empire, or must be pacified by a highly disproportionate presence in jobs and elective offices, with far less than the full sharing of life at the deepest levels of community. In essence, this was the concern of the Afro-American Presbyterian Council in 1894, the Presbyterian Council of the North and West in the 1940s and 1950s, and Black Presbyterians United in 1967 and beyond.

This celebration of one hundred seventy-five years in such a pilgrimage of faith may be consummated in the prayer that, by the power of God’s Spirit, black Presbyterianism may strengthen the Church in becoming a foretaste of God’s eternal Community of Love, Justice and Peace.
BLACK WOMEN IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The history of black women in the United Presbyterian Church is replete with bits and pieces about their work in the field of education. Most of it is unwritten, to be sure, but it is indelibly written in the hearts and minds of those whose lives have been influenced many times over by such women, many of whom will forever remain nameless.

The end of the Civil War and Reconstruction ushered in new opportunities and responsibilities. Since education was one of the primary needs of the newly freed slaves, many black women were able to fill that niche, first by getting their own education, and then by moving out to help found schools, or by working assiduously in schools set up by the Board of Freedmen and later the Board of National Missions (PCUSA).

Lucy Craft Laney, born a slave, was one such educator. She was encouraged by the Board of Home Missions to establish a school, but was offered no financial assistance. Miss Laney organized the school in the basement of Christ Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia, in 1883. She began with six students, and by the end of the first year, there were seventy-five students. At that time, there was no public high school for Blacks in Augusta; the school had been closed because of a conflict between the principal and the Board of Education over what could be taught. Lucy Laney recognized the need to teach her students a variety of skills. In addition to the regular classes, she organized a nursing class, a kindergarten, and high school sports teams; she invited many cultural artists, including Marian Anderson and Roland Hayes. One of her most famous pupils, the famed novelist, Frank G. Yerby, wrote of her:

"You have been called a mother of a race, But you were more than leader, more than friend, You were a flame, a torch, an era’s end, A new day’s dawn, a lamp before our face."

This “mother of a race”, journeyed to Minneapolis in 1886 to a meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. to ask for support for her struggling school. She received no direct help from that body, but met several persons who became benefactors of the school. One of these was Mrs. F. E. Haines, for whom the school, Haines Normal Institute, was later named.
A closer look at Miss Laney's life reveals many instances of pain, danger, and hardship which she encountered due to the rampant racism that was prevalent at the time. Lucy Laney persevered for fifty years as principal, and, to her credit, her influence was felt many times over by young men and women. Lucy Laney was also concerned about those whom she could not reach when she wrote in 1893 about "the many hundreds to whom scarcely a ray of light has yet come!"

Other black women, too, were "lamps" before the faces of their students. Mary McCleod Bethune received her early training and college education at Presbyterian mission schools. She wrote, "a knock on our door (Maysville, S.C.) changed my life overnight. There stood a young woman, a colored missionary sent by the Northern Presbyterian Church to start a school near by." Mrs. Bethune, who later taught at Haines Institute, said of Miss Laney, "from her! got a new vision . . . ." A new vision it was, for she established the Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida. Mrs. Bethune later became one of the most influential women in America; she served as advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and was the founder of the National Council of Negro Women which is still an influential organization.

The efforts of the "colored missionary" referred to by Mrs. Bethune were duplicated many times over in the one hundred fifty-eight parochial schools that were related to the United Presbyterian Church after the Civil War. The last surviving one of these schools, Boggs Academy, Keysville, Georgia, celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in November 1981, and stands today as a monument to the continuing work of those early missionaries. Such names as Coulter Academy, Fee Institute, Ingleside Seminary, Brainerd Institute, Cotton Plant Academy, Harbeson Institute and many more cannot be forgotten—neither the women who taught there nor the countless men and women who were shaped by these institutions.

The United Presbyterian Church has always been conscious of its educational mission, and its Board of National Missions carried out that mission in many of these schools. Black people were often thought of as "objects of mission," but a quick perusal of the staffs of many of these schools will indicate that Black people were indeed participants in mission. The lives of many black individuals were indeed lived out in service at one of these schools. Their influence has been felt in many parts of the church and the world! Much of the black leadership in the United Presbyterian Church today can be traced directly to the influence of Presbyterian-related schools upon them or their parents. These schools, therefore, are not mere names in a history of a church, but names whose very mention conjures up memories of service, witness, and ministry.

The fact cannot be overlooked that many wives of clergy, by convention, maintained and sustained the efforts of their husbands. Sometimes the wife worked in the background at the school where the husband served as principal and as pastor of the church. Often the pastor/principal and his wife were the only college-trained individuals around, so that they gave a great deal of leadership to the community. Black women have always been there, sometimes in the background, supporting and being supported in Christian community.

When Leona D. Stinson's husband was principal and pastor of the school/church in Cotton Plant, Arkansas, it was she who broached the idea of setting up a home economics program for the girls, and it was she who helped to carry out the program. It was Mrs. Stinson's son who later became principal of Boggs Academy and president of Stillman College (PCUS). Her daughter-in-law, Constance Robinson Stinson, carried the same kind of commitment into her job as she worked alongside her husband.

Mrs. Thomas B. Jones (Vivian), wife of the President of Harbison Institute, worked in the music field, helping to develop an outstanding classical music program. Mrs. Mattie M. Byrd was involved with her husband in community work at the Fee Community Center in Nicholasville, Kentucky. The fact that she influenced many lives was attested over forty years later (November 1981) when she was recognized for her work by those whose lives she had touched.

Dr. Mable Parker McLean stands out for her long history of involvement in the United Presbyterian Church, presently serving as the President of Barber-Scotia College, Concord, North Caro-
lina. She is an articulate spokesperson for quality education of black students. Dr. Sarah Cordery, in her quest for educational excellence, likewise shaped the lives of many women at Barber-Scotia.

Wherever human services have been needed, black women have been there. Alleen S. Wood became a mission worker on the Sea Islands of Charleston County, South Carolina, where she established community and health care programs. She also served as a Sunday School Missionary and parish worker. Most of the parish workers employed under the Board of National Missions were women. Often they carried the function of a christian educator and social worker among the parishes in the South. The names of Marcia Marion, Cecilia Mercer, Rachel Swann, Gladys Cole, Ruby Houston, Mildred Artis, Ella Pearson and Myrtle Byrd are synonymous with parish work. When that phase of the church's work ended, these women became involved in other ways.

Rachel Swann Adams in 1955 became an Executive for Children's Work in the Board of Christian Education and served the church nationally. Mildred Artis is now an Associate for Education and Leadership in the Synod of the South. Ruby Boulware Stenback worked with her husband who was Superintendent of Alice Lee Elliott Academy until it closed. Then she became Superintendent of Tabor School For Girls. She held that position until her seventieth birthday, and was consultant to the School for ten years after that. Many of the other heroines, like Eula Burke Johnson and Lila J. Brown, worked in hospitals like Gillespie Selden at Cordele, Georgia, and in other institutions involved in community service.

Several valiant Presbyterian women accompanied their husbands overseas as missionaries. Susan Reynolds Underhill served with her husband in Cameroun, West Africa. During the 1930's, when the Underhills went to Africa, the national church was not enthusiastic about sending Blacks to the overseas mission field. The couple served well, and Mrs. Underhill died in Cameroun after six years of service.

Vera Swann worked closely with her husband when they served as missionaries to India from 1952-64. She taught Bible, helped to organize a primary school, and helped to establish a home for vagrant children. Along with her husband, Mrs. Swann helped to develop a program of Christian drama in the churches and schools of Northern India. Once back in the States, Mrs. Swann took up the fight for civil rights in Charlotte, North Carolina. Agnes Wilson represented United Presbyterian women as an accredited observer at the Status of Women Conference in Ethiopia in 1960; and while in Africa she was able to see the work of Mary Frances Middleton who served for a period of time as a missionary in Egypt. Mrs. Wilson is presently chairperson of the Vocation Agency Board.

It is also important to note that Mrs. Dorothy Smith was the first Black person to chair a denominational board when, in the early 1960's, she presided over the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations (COEMAR).

Gladys Strachan and Mary Jane Patterson of the Program Agency staff are also listed among those who took overseas assignments in Africa. The Rev. Marsha Smulligan Haney, who recently served as a fraternal worker in the Sudan, is credited with making a tremendous impact on the people in that country.

Many women have been involved in finding ways to give their lives in serving the church through its structure. Lula E. Whaley was ordained an elder by the church on Edisto Island, South Carolina, in 1931. Dollie Young was ordained an elder in the Biddleville Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1934. Upon her death, she bequeathed $50,000 to the church, making it possible for the congregation to build an educational building. Since many of the Presbyterian churches were small, the leadership of women was recognized early on, and women have been in the forefront as early church leaders.

Many of these women served in the women's organization as presbytery and synodical officers. Additionally, these women offered leadership at workers' conferences and synod leadership schools. The former all-black synods/synodicals offered excellent training ground for many women, many of whom went on to offer leadership at the national level. Mrs. Vera Murphy of Southern Virginia taught missionary Education courses in Synod Schools across the country in the middle 50's and early 1960's. Others represented the church in World Council
of Churches events and in Kenya, Cameroun, India, Korea, and in other parts of the world. All came back as live interpreters of mission.

Mary Magdalene Jones, McConnells, South Carolina, is remembered for her efforts to get the women’s associations to take responsibility for being in mission rather than being objects of mission. The annals are full of the names of women who understood what mission was all about and helped to promote the idea of “second-mile” giving through the Women’s National Organization. In many instances, even though their means were small, women wholeheartedly supported the worldwide mission, both programmatically and financially. Women in some areas had interesting ways of supporting the church. In the Charleston area, a woman might decide to contribute all the money raised from selling “two rows” of vegetables or all the eggs laid by a particular hen for the mission of the church. Even though many of these women were part of aid-receiving churches, they were proud to be contributing agents to the worldwide mission thrust. Additionally, these women never developed the habit of just asking for money, they emphasized the idea of participating in the global aspect of mission.

E. Valeria Murphy was the first professionally trained Christian educator to serve on the staff of a black parish. In churches where she served, in Baltimore and Chicago, she organized nursery schools and community programs of many kinds. Mrs. Murphy was recently honored by B.P.U. for her many years of service in the United Presbyterian Church.

The names of Dorothy Foster and Emily V. Gibbes are synonymous with women’s organizations in the church. They were the first black women employed as executives on national staff—Ms. Foster with the Board of National Missions and Ms. Gibbes with the Board of Christian Education in 1950. Dorothy Foster served as an Area Secretary in various parts of the country while Emily Gibbes became the first black—and only—National Executive for United Presbyterian Women under the Christian Education Board. She subsequently served as a Religious Education Consultant in Cameroun and Kenya and following that assignment became the first black women to serve as an Associate General Secretary with the National Council of Churches.
After serving the church in a number of volunteer and staff positions, Thelma Davidson Adair was elected as Moderator of the 188th General Assembly (1976), representing the church as titular head, and spreading her message of heritage and hope throughout the world. She is known throughout the church as an articulate spokesperson for her faith. Dr. Adair was the first black woman and the second woman to become Moderator of the General Assembly. Presently, she is national president of Church Women United.

Other women who have received training in various arenas of the church have now moved out and given leadership as volunteers in the upper judicatories of the church. Some are chairing boards and councils. In addition to Agnes Wilson, mentioned above, Melva Wilson Costen chairs the Advisory Council on Discipleship and Worship. Dr. Costen is also an Associate Professor of Worship and Music at the Interdenominational Theological Center, of which Johnson C. Smith Seminary is a part; she is the only woman teaching a course on worship at one of the seven Presbyterian seminaries. Mary Grace Rogers is presently one of the cochairpersons of the Council on Church and Race. Other women are serving in staff positions at all judicatory levels. Mary Jane Patterson heads the significant Washington Office, UPCUSA, helping to make the church's impact felt on governmental issues. Mildred M. Brown directs the relatively new Office of Ministries with Racial/Ethnic Women. Wherever they are serving, black women are doing a creditable job.

It must be pointed out that all along the way, black women have combined their careers with their volunteer service in the church. Long hours, thus, are spent in both arenas, for the same women active in the church-at-large are also high achievers in their careers.

Since 1956, women have been ordained as clergypersons in the United Presbyterian Church. Katie G. Cannon was ordained by Catawba Presbytery in 1974, the first Black woman to be ordained. The Rev. Ms. Cannon represents the new breed of clergypersons making history in the church as local parish ministers, educators and staff persons at various judicatory levels and in the ecumenical arena. Presently, there are seventeen ordained black women clergy in the United Presbyterian Church; some are second career individuals who have had a long history of involvement in the church; all have a deep sense of their calling and are opening up new arenas as partners in ministry with male clergy and with laypersons.

"The moving finger writes, and having writ . . . ” continues to write . . . . . . The history of Black women in the United Presbyterian Church is far from being complete. History is being made each moment. Capture, therefore, some of it, and share it with future generations.

*The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of The United Presbyterian Church, 1865-1970, by Inez Moore Parker*
We begin with a simple question. Why would black people join a church as racially oppressive as the Presbyterian Church, and remain in it, despite the shameful way they were treated? Simple questions about human behavior usually require complex answers, and this one is no exception. We cannot hope to unravel in a single article all of the strands of the tangled web which has bound Blacks and Whites together in the Presbyterian Church for 175 years. But even this modest attempt can be beneficial if it will help us to explain to our young people, and to friends in the predominantly black denominations, why we continue membership in this church.

During the period under review in Part I of this article, Black Baptists and African Methodists fought for and won their independence from white control. Today they often express bewilderment that other Blacks remained in segregated churches with Whites after the Civil War, when they might have established their own autonomous religious bodies.

If this brief study is successful, perhaps we can begin to understand and appreciate the motivation of some Blacks who received something they regarded as important and contributed even more to the Presbyterian Church. We will want to learn why our ancestors persevered under blatant discrimination and why we, 175 years later, should continue to struggle within this same Church for the things they valued. And secondly, we will want to discover (although more research and reflection would be necessary for a thorough evaluation) what is the genius, the distinctive gifts, the capacity, the spirit of Black Presbyterianism.

There is no question about the racism of the white Christians who founded the Presbyterian Church in colonial America, and permitted their slaves and members of the free Black population to become a part of it. In fact, Presbyterians were more prejudiced than either the Baptists or Methodists—which is one of the reasons those denominations attracted more colored persons.

Perhaps the best evidence of the racism of the Presbyterians was the church's hypocritical attitude toward slavery during the early years of the 19th century. No church was more intellectually profound in its Biblical and theological analysis of the sin of slavery, and did less about driving it from church and society, than the Presbyterians. The problem first came up in the Presbyterian Church in 1774. From that year until the Civil War divided the denomination in 1861, only a few embattled white ministers and laypersons dared to make the church face up to the guilt of slaveholding, and the responsibility of opposing it with every resource at its disposal.

A typical response of the judicatories of the church to antislavery efforts was the action of the Presbytery of Transylvania in 1797. The question was put: "Is slavery a moral evil?" The answer given was "Yes." To a second question: "Are all persons who hold slaves guilty of a moral evil?: the answer given was "No." When a third question attempted to get the Presbytery to decide who, if not all slaveholders, were guilty of a moral evil, the answer was: "Resolved that the question . . . be put off until a future day." The Presbyterian historian, Andrew E. Murray, remarks drily: "This day seems never to have arrived."

The case of Rev. George Bourne, of Lexington Presbytery in Virginia, is the most infamous example of Presbyterian pharisaism on the slavery question. Bourne was a strong antislavery advocate who was removed from the gospel ministry by the Presbytery for "slandering" a fellow minister he had reported seeing driving slaves through a Virginia town. Bourne appealed his
deposition to the General Assembly, and in 1817 the Assembly reversed the Presbytery’s sentence and ordered a new trial. Lexington Presbytery, even more determined to get rid of this troublemaker, deposed him again on April 25, 1818.

It was at the General Assembly of 1818 that the denomination both denounced with great eloquence, and called upon all Christians to rid the nation of slavery and, at the same time, voted to uphold the Presbytery of Lexington’s deposition of Bourne from the ministry, on grounds that angry Virginia slaveholders had obviously manufactured in order to silence abolitionism within the church.

Bourne accused the General Assembly of rank hypocrisy for voting, and then publishing abroad, a resounding antislavery pronouncement that the southern churches, which had now been satisfied by having his deposition upheld, well knew they could ignore with impunity, “while among the eastern and northern churches, they only intended by it to blind their eyes to the true character and wickedness of slavery, and to silence their outcry and disquietude respecting their being participants with their guilt.”

Black Presbyterians must have watched this spectacle of their church’s pious fraud on the slavery question with little humor. Where they had found staunch friends among white Presbyterians—and there were several in the Philadelphia-New York area—black Presbyterians were encouraged to believe that at least some white members of the denomination were Christians. But as for the church as a whole, it soon became clear that the Presbyterian Church condemned slavery in theory and condoned it in practice. Since it is, however, an ill wind that does not blow some good, the more their Presbyterian brothers and sisters tip-toed around the forthright repudiation of slaveholders, the more the consciences of the Whites drove them to an unusual emphasis upon evangelism and religious instruction among the slaves. “Doing good for the poor black people” easily became a substitute for emancipating them in the South, and granting them civil rights in the North.

Few white Christians in 19th century America could “do good” better than white Presbyterians. They were, after all, the backbone of the growing middle and upper classes in most of the areas where Blacks were numerous. Their churches had eagerly supported the Revolution and exercised greater political influence in the post-war period than the wealthier Episcopal Church. The Presbyterian pastors and missionaries were the best educated in the nation and, therefore, could be of greater assistance to black people who were looking for educational opportunities than the more zealous, but less erudite Baptists and Methodist itinerant preachers. Certainly one of the reasons Blacks joined the Presbyterian Church was the widely publicized opportunity to improve reading, writing, arithmetic, manners, morals, and social contacts. As is clear from other articles in this publication, Presbyterians placed an uncommon emphasis on education, and perhaps the denomination’s greatest contribution to both slaves and freed persons was advancement in learning.

The First African Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia where, according to one of its pastors, “the claims of the Gospel . . . (were) addressed more to the conviction of the conscience and understanding of the people, than to the prejudices and passions,” prided itself in sponsoring a day school in Augustan Hall that was strongly supported by white Presbyterians. The Synod of New York and New Jersey established an African School in 1816 which continued with some difficulty until 1825. The earliest Black Presbyterian missionary, John Chavis, organized a school for both Whites and Blacks in North Carolina, despite laws throughout the South after 1831 which prohibited anyone from teaching slaves to read and write. Indeed, almost all black Presbyterian pastors augmented their salaries by teaching, and intellectual if not spiritual betterment, soon became synonymous with conversion to the Presbyterian faith. Relatively few Blacks in the North, and only a small proportion of the estimated 70,000 slaves owned by Presbyterians in the South, answered the call to discipleship in the Presbyterian churches, but those who did may well have come as much for educational and social advancement as for any other reason. It was certainly well known that the sober-minded Presbyterians put more stock in the enlightenment of the mind by instruction than in the emotional experiences of conversion, so much
stressed by the Baptists and Methodists.

We can make at least this tentative conclusion: that one of the reasons Blacks joined the Presbyterian Church and remained in it had to do with what they believed they were getting from it in education, and status in the eyes of other members of their communities. It must have occurred to some that both had limited value in view of the disabilities they still suffered. But what black Presbyterians, at least in the North, were prepared to do was to turn the intellectual weapons which Whites put into their hands, against prejudice and discrimination in the church, and challenge their white brothers and sisters to live up to their high-sounding professions. During the antebellum period no black ministers illustrated this strategy better than the two New York Presbyterian clergymen, Samuel Cornish, and Theodore S. Wright. Together they typify what we may call the spirit of black Presbyterianism, in constantly holding before the eyes of the church and the nation the mandate of Christians and all good citizens of the republic, to "let justice flow down like waters and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Cornish is better known as the editor of the first black newspaper in America, Freedom's Journal, but in 1822 he founded the First Colored Presbyterian Church of New York City, after laboring for two years as a missionary to indigent Blacks in the slums of lower Manhattan. Theodore S. Wright, the first black man to graduate from a theological seminary (Princeton, 1828), took over the congregation after Cornish and made it the second largest black church in New York City—something that was not possible under the divided attention it received from Cornish. The two men were close friends for many years. Side by side they represented the free black community of the North in the antislavery movement during the 1820s and '30s, although Wright refused to abandon his pastorate of the Second Colored (Shiloh) Church for the abolitionist lecture circuit. Together they attacked the segregated seating in Presbyterian churches, and chided their white fellow churchmen for so boldly denouncing slavery in the South, while being unwilling to grant civil rights to blacks in the North.

Cornish complained of the fact that black ministers were never invited to supply the vacant pulpits of Presbyterian churches. In one of his editorials in The Colored American he reported how he had been asked by the elder of a white Presbyterian church to preach in the absence of the pastor, only to be informed by the elder the day before, that because the congregation was in an uproar, "it would not do" for him to preach. In 1836 while attending an address in the seminary chapel as a Princeton alumnus, distinguished by any ordinary standards, Wright was called a nigger by a young white student from the South, and physically assaulted. The seminary president made little of the incident in a letter to a New York newspaper, but Wright was humiliated, although he took pains to prevent the seminary from being blamed for the incident.

All black Presbyterian ministers and commissioners experienced discrimination at meetings of Presbytery, and bitterly complained about it. Cornish wrote in his third newspaper, The Colored American, for March 11, 1837:

"I have seen a minister of Jesus Christ sitting in Presbytery, with his white brethren in the ministry, who, though it had been announced that full provision was made among the church members..."
for every brother . . . yet (was) left by himself in the church for three successive days, without dinner or tea, because no Christian family could be found in the congregation, who would admit him to their table, on account of his color.”

Neither Cornish nor Wright limited their protest activities to efforts to integrate the lily white structures of the Northern Presbyterian Church. Although he remained a Presbyterian to the end, Cornish favored Blacks attending their own churches, lest they “weaken the hands and discourage the hearts of their ministers, by leaving them to preach to empty pews.” And in the 1840s, Wright broke with his moderate white abolitionist friends, disobeyed the law to assist fugitive slaves, and ignored the cries of reverse racism and betrayal of white allies, to urge all Blacks to organize politically and fight for the right to vote, rather than depend upon changing the hearts of white people.

These two crusading ministers, and fellow black Presbyterian clergy, like J.W.C. Pennington, and Elymas P. Rogers, were not willing to drop quietly out of sight in the denomination from which they had received ordination. Instead, they were determined to fulfill their ministries like any other Teaching Elder of the church, and make the denomination live up to the Gospel it proclaimed. In doing so, they emboldened both whites and blacks to take increasingly more radical stances in the growing tumult of the years leading down to the Civil War. Wright, for example, was the mentor and inspirer of another controversial Presbyterian minister of the period, Henry Highland Garnet, whose powerful address in 1843 which called upon the slaves to begin an armed struggle, even frightened Frederick Douglas, and gave an added impetus to the radical spirit among black Christians.

A second conclusion which we may draw from this study is that, although black Presbyterians had a reputation for being sedate and middle class, their pastors were among the most militant of black ministers. It is possible that their close association with whites, their taste of the best of white learning, and their sense of superiority over Blacks and Whites with less training, gave them unusual self-confidence, and a more accurate assessment of the weakness of the white church and society. Precisely because of their involvement in the Presbyterian Church, they had the knowledge and skill to play the adversary role against bigotry to the best effect. Ministers of the independent black Baptist and Methodist churches gave increasing leadership in the abolitionist and civil rights movement during the closing years before the war, but none more courageously and effectively than the black clergy of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches.

Although they were never more than a tiny minority within the total black community, black Presbyterians exercised an influence out of all proportion to their numbers. During the antebellum period this influence was not as effective within the Presbyterian Church itself as within the black community, particularly in the North, where blacks were publishing newspapers and organizing such groups as the American Moral Reform Society, the Phoenix Society of New York, the National Negro Convention movement, and other self-help and benevolent societies for social, economic, and cultural advancement. Liberal Whites were associated directly or indirectly with these efforts until the mid-1840s and many of them were a part of a small interracial fellowship of activists in which black Presbyterians played a major role.
Early black Presbyterians like Cornish, Wright, and Pennington—and later Francis Grimke, Matthew Anderson, Lucy Laney and Daniel Sanders—skillfully used their connections with this wealthy, predominantly white denomination to advance the causes they espoused—education, moral development, and political and social justice for the black community as a whole. Although they were generally unsuccessful in getting the church to recognize its black members as equals, and join black organizations in the struggle for justice in the secular society, they nevertheless chose to stay in the church and fight on, because they had an appreciation of Presbyterianism as such, and were persuaded that even in a corrupt institution a just cause would triumph in God’s own time.

In the second part of this overview we will meet again many of the persons whose names are mentioned in other articles in this Journal. Most of them were products of the Presbyterian schools and colleges established after Emancipation, and their encounter with the racism and paternalism of the church was all the more painful because of what they had been led to expect from the Northern Church. But like those who preceded them in the period 1807-1861, they gave the denomination no easy rest from the cause of racial justice and integration. Before the end of the 19th century, they had organized what was to be a series of black caucuses which were to represent the interests of Blacks in the Presbyterian Church, in the great tradition of Cornish, Wright and Garnet. We will turn to that story in the second installment of this article.
Many of the black men and women who serve the United Presbyterian Church as executives and administrators are little known and seldom seen by members of the congregations. The work they do, however, directly affects the Church's ministry. They share in the responsibility of equipping all Christians for ministry. Thus, pastors, parishioners, and executives participate in a shared ministry—an inclusive ministry that extends from the parish into the community, across the nation, and around the world. Congregational life is strengthened by the membership, presence and service of these executives. They share their time and skills with congregations when requested to do so; and congregations ought to call upon their expertise and make maximum use of this group of skilled and committed men and women.

About fifty percent of the black executives are ordained clergy persons. They bring a record of dedication to Christ and his Church, and a wealth of pastoral experience to their positions.

When the Church entered the decade of the sixties, there were fewer than a dozen black Presbyterians employed as executives. In the ensuing twenty years, there has been a dramatic increase. Now there are twenty-five black Presbyterian executives in the synods and presbyteries and about thirty-five in the agencies of the General Assembly. Of the total group, over sixty percent are laypersons and there are slightly more men than women.

The top black administrative officers in the denomination are: J. Oscar McCloud, General Director of the Program Agency; Casper Glenn, Eugene Turner and Carroll Jenkins, Executives of the Synods of Alaska-Northwest, Piedmont and the Northeast, respectively. In addition, Robert T. Newbold, Jr. serves as one of the Associate Stated Clerks of the General Assembly; Edgar Ward and J. Bradley Williams as Associate General Directors of the Vocation Agency, and James F. Reese as Associate Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council.

About two-thirds of the black executives carry program responsibilities. They are mission enablers, consultants and resource and leadership developers. They have expertise and skills in education, evangelism, urban mission, polity, congregational development, stewardship education, social justice issues, public policy, women's concerns, economic development, youth work, continuing education, personnel relations and minority issues. These credentials provide ample reason for rejoicing. Our rejoicing, however, must not obscure the important questions that need to be asked:

- Where are black executives located in the organizational structure of the Church?
- Do they possess power?
- What significant decisions do they influence?
- What sense of responsibility do they have to the black constituency of the Church?
- Can black executives withstand the job competition that the future will bring?

Black congregations must also face some hard questions:

- How do we provide encouragement and support to present black staff?
- How do we motivate and equip our young people for service and ministry in the Church?
- How do we make the pastoral ministry so challenging and fulfilling that black leaders will remain in the pastorate?

These questions must temper and tame our celebration, and become issues to be dealt with in the years ahead.

Another serious note accompanying the celebration of 175 years of black Presbyterianism in the United States is sounded by the Plan For Reunion. While black Presbyterians are celebrating, many white Presbyterians are trying to determine how the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America will vote in June of 1982.

One of the stated reasons for reunion is that "it offers a mandate to provide for fuller participation and representation of minorities in the life and leadership of the Church." At least two questions are raised by this statement:

- How will reunion provide for fuller participation and representation of minorities in the life and leadership of the Church?
- And when?

Black Presbyterians—staff and non-staff, lay and clergy, women and men—cannot help but ask of the Plan for Reunion: Will its passage signal the erosion of the gains we have made? Or, can we, and our children, and our children's children, confidently look forward to fuller participation?
and representation in the life and leadership of the Church?

An anniversary celebration is not a time for mere fun and frolic nor for ticking off achievements only. It is a time for developing questions and producing destiny-shaping answers. This type of query and response helps to determine whether or not black United Presbyterians and executive staff members can confidently face the future in the Presbyterian Church.
BLACKS IN THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A. 1807—1982

GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCIES

South

Southwest

Pacific

Lincoln Trails

Trinity

So. California

Puerto Rico

Covenant

Lakes

&

Prairies

152

Presbyteries

Alaska-

Northwest

Rocky

Mountain

Sun

Mid-America

Northeast

Piedmont

Presbyterian/

Congregational Clergy

of Color

1899

Afro-American

Presbyterian Council

1894

Presbyterian Council

of North and West

1947

Concerned

Presbyterians

1963

BLACK PRESBYTERIANISM
70,000 Communicants
400 Congregations
275 Pastors
82 Executive Staff
6 Presbyteries

BLACK PRESBYTERIANS UNITED:
A NATIONAL OFFICE—
CHAPTERS
1968
In tracking the one hundred seventy-five years history of Black Presbyterianism, it is noteworthy that so large a proportion of black Presbyterians can be found in North and South Carolina. Many black Presbyterians spread throughout the nation have their roots in these two states. These roots are deeply imbedded in the Presbyterian Church as far back as the period immediately following the Civil War. This legacy of membership and leadership in the Presbyterian Church stems from a network of educational institutions concentrated in the Carolinas and extending through fifteen Southeastern and Southwestern states into Kansas and Pennsylvania.

During the final phases of this tragic domestic conflict, called the Civil War, the church and federal government perceived distress signals from the Union Army regarding the human situation, for which their military training had not prepared them. Out of the surrounding thickets and swamps of their quarters came large groups of emaciated black men, women and children, bearing the scars of 200 years of inhuman bondage. The federal government's response was the creation of the Freedmen's Bureau, with General Oliver O. Howard as Commissioner.

Even before the urgent call reached the church, there were voluntary missionaries in the field. The Presbyterian Church had appointed John Chavis in 1801 as "missionary to his own people." Chavis did not restrict his services to Black people, but rendered service wherever he found need. Both branches of the divided church of 1837-38, split over slavery and other issues, began to structure their response in the same year—1864. At first, two committees were appointed, with headquarters in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. In June of 1865, the two committees were consolidated as the General Assemblies' Committee on Freedmen, with Reverend Elijah E. Swift, Chairman, and Reverend S. F. Scoval, Recording Secretary.

In 1868, the Freedmen's Department of Missions was established. At that time, it was operating 61 schools, mostly elementary, in nine states and the District of Columbia. This kind of work with its peculiar trials made the enlistment of qualified workers exceedingly difficult. In addition, the decision was made not to attempt to
sustain schools in areas where there was no hope of maintaining a church. Thus, it became mandatory for each minister to operate a parochial school as part of his church program, without additional expense to the Freedmen's Department of Missions.

In 1870, a new agency was established, The Presbyterian Committee of Missions for Freedmen. The Reverend Elijah E. Swift continued as Chairman and The Reverend A. C. McClelland was elected Secretary. This committee was incorporated, in 1883, with enlarged powers and the new title, The Board of Missions for Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., and continued to function for more than forty years.

In the reorganization of the Church's boards and agencies in 1923, four boards emerged—National Missions, Foreign Missions, Christian Education, and Pensions. The Board of Missions for Freedmen was placed under the Board of National Missions as The Unit of Work with Colored People. Dr. John M. Gaston was retained as Director, with headquarters in Pittsburgh. He held this position until 1938 and was succeeded upon his retirement by Dr. Albert Byron McCoy of Atlanta, Georgia, who was succeeded when he retired in 1950 by Dr. Jesse Belmont Barber.

At the core of the parochials' curriculum was the Bible as a textbook and the Shorter Catechism, as a type of workbook. Supplementary to these were courses in reading, arithmetic, and writing. Memorization was a common method of instruction until the 1930's. Music, especially singing, was an enjoyable and important part of the curriculum of mission schools.

Boarding schools, often begun as parochial schools, included academies, normal schools (teacher training), seminaries, institutes, junior colleges, and two universities: Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, established in 1854; and Biddle University in Charlotte, N.C., in 1867. The boarding school curriculum was augmented by a rudimentary theological emphasis, classical and normal courses, and frequently by industrial courses. These schools were designed primarily to develop leadership. Therefore, theology and teacher training were stressed.

There are sketchy records of more than forty schools established by the Presbyterian Churches in South Carolina. Among them are: Wallingford Academy, Charleston, 1867; Larimer High School, Edisto Island, 1865; Goodwill Parochial, Mayesville, and Ebenezer Parochial, Dalzell, 1872; St. Mary's Grade School, Blackstock, 1866; Fairfield Institute, Aiken, 1881; Brainerd Institute, Chester, 1868; Bethany Parochial, McConnells, 1878; Mattoon Parochial, Greenville, 1880; Lincoln High School, Due West, 1882; Emerson Institute, Blacksville, late 1880's. There was Coulter Academy, Cheraw, 1881; Harbison Institute and Ferguson Academy, Abbeville; Grant Academy, Spartanburg, 1889; Calhoun Falls, 1890; Rendall Institute, Sumter, 1891; New Hope Parochial, Camden, 1898; continuing with Harden Academy, Allendale, 1898; St. James Parochial, James Island, 1926; Mary A. Steele, John's Island, date of founding unknown; Salem Industrial High School, Anderson, 1887; Irwin Parochial, Irwin, 1912; Frasier Excelsior, Bamberg, 1916.

Records indicate that the following schools were closed, but no date is indicated of their beginnings: Bethlehem First, York; Thomas Steele Memorial, Wedgefield; Curry Institute, St. Charles; Bethlehem Second, Oswego; Holmes Memorial, Ridgeway; Westminster (Alcolu), Sumter; Good Hope, Brogdon; Grandview, Chesterfield; Mt. Carmel, Manning; Kersville, Lone Star; Lebanon, Ridgeway; and Salem Wadmalaw, Martin's Point.

In North Carolina, the records indicate the following: Albion Academy, Franklinton, 1865; Redstone Academy, (first known as Bethany), Lumberton, 1903; Billingsley Academy, Statesville, 1889; Freedom Parochial, Bethany, 1866; Greensboro Graded School in St. James Church, 1868; Charlotte Parochial, Charlotte, 1867; Calvary, Asheville, 1884; Sarah Lincoln Academy, Aberdeen, 1844; Yadkin Academy, Mebane, 1888; Mary Potter, Oxford, 1889; Henderson Institute, Henderson, 1890; and Scotia, Concord, 1867.

But the church's schools are not limited to North and South Carolina. They extended as far as Quindaro, Kansas. There was a boarding academy, Alice Lee Elliott, in Valiant, Oklahoma, and parochial schools in Okmulgee and Tullahassee, Oklahoma.

The United Presbyterian Church in North
America had schools in Wilcox County, Alabama; the Miller’s Ferry School, the Prairie Mission School, the Midway Mission, the Camden Academy, the Arlington Institute, and the Cotton Bend Mission. The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. had the Miller Memorial parochial school in Birmingham and the Margaret Barber Junior College at Anniston, Alabama.

In Tennessee there were the Mount Tabor Graded School in Columbia, 1866; the Mayer’s Parochial School in Knoxville; the Rendall Academy in Keeling, 1918; the Newton Normal Institute in Chattanooga, 1903; and the Swift Memorial Junior College at Rogersville, 1883. There was the United Presbyterian Church of North America College at Knoxville, founded in 1863. In addition, in Kentucky, a border state, there were the Fee Memorial Institute at Nicholasville, which eventually merged with the Ingleside Seminary in Virginia; the Bowling Green Academy, which had been a Cumberland Presbyterian work; and the Logan High School at Danville.

In Virginia there were the Russell Grove School, founded 1865, Amelia Court House; the Christian Light Mission at Manboro, Nottoway County, founded 1909; the Winchester Normal School, founded 1870 in the Shenandoah Valley; the Classon School at the Grace Church, Martinsville, founded 1890; the Great Creek School at Bracey, founded 1894; the Holbrook School at Danville, founded 1866, still continuing. In addition, there was the Wheller Graded School at Drake’s Branch, and the Ingleside Seminary at Burkville, founded in 1866.

Also in Virginia the United Presbyterian Church in North America established Thyme Institute in 1876 at Chase City; Bluestone Academy, 1879, at Bluestone; and the Norfolk Mission College, 1882, at Norfolk.

In Georgia, there was the Haines Normal and Industrial Institute at Augusta, established in 1867; the Pleasant Grove Parochial School in Liberty County, 1866; the Midway Parochial School in Midway, 1874; the Ebenezer Parochial School at Rome, 1863; the McClelland Academy at Newnan, 1889; the Selden Institute at Brunswick, 1903, (which merged with the Gillespie-Sel-
den Institute at Cordele, 1902); and the only one still in existence, Boggs Academy at Keysville, founded in 1906. There was also at one time a parochial school at Milledgeville; Butler Parochial, Savannah; St. Paul’s, Greensboro; and Hodge Academy, Washington. We know from at least one source that there was an institution at Dalton and others whose contributions must go unrecorded.

In Florida there were the Laura Street Parochial School in Jacksonville, founded in 1867; the Mellon Parochial School in Palatka, 1901; the Mather-Paritt Parochial School in Augusta; and the Berean Parochial School in Gainsville, 1887. There was a school at one time in Fort Pierce, the Mather-Paritt. The hyphenated name probably indicates a merger of two institutions.

In Texas there was the Mary Allen Junior College at Crockett; and a parochial school in Palestine. In Arkansas, there were the Mount Hermon Parochial School at Fordyce; Monticello Academy in Monticello; the Mebane Academy at Hot Springs; the Arkadelphia Presbyterian Academy at Arkadelphia; the Richard Allen Institute in Pine Bluff; and the Cotton Plant Academy at Cotton Plant. Arkadelphia was merged with Cotton Plant in the early 1930’s and continued until the 1940’s.

By 1920, public schools for Blacks had increased to a point where the church felt it could not afford to compete. The Church, therefore, began to curtail its program by consolidation, merger, transfer, and discontinuance. Even before the effects of the Great Depression began to play havoc with the Board of National Missions’ finances, it was becoming obvious that its educational program for Blacks had been overextended and basic support was beginning to wane. Drastic curtailment loomed as the program's one salvation. When the full effects of the Depression were felt, there were cuts in benevolences, philanthropy, grants, and tuition income. The South’s economy became paralyzed. Its slowly rising public school system slipped back down the scale. Public schools for Blacks lay neglected at the bottom.

On 28 October, 1931, the Advisory Committee of the Unit of Missions for Freedmen recommended to the Board of National Missions that
all elementary and high schools in places where public school facilities were available, be discontinued as of June 1933. Thirty-five schools were discontinued at that time. Further mergers and closings followed, until in 1981, only four schools remained under the sponsorship of the successor agency to that Board.

Over the decades of their existence, these schools were "feeders" of College enrollments at Lincoln University, Biddle University, Knoxville and Barber-Scotia Colleges as well as "proving grounds" for adult participation in affairs of church and state. Fairfield Academy nurtured the youthful talents of the first four Presidents of Biddle-Johnson C. Smith University in the persons of Daniel J. Sanders, Henry L. McCrorey, Hardy Liston and J.W. Seabrook. Graduates of Mary Potter School in Oxford and Henderson Institute in Henderson, North Carolina might be paired with those from Haines Institute, Gillespie-Selden Institute and Boggs Academy in Georgia as illustrative of the contributions of all these institutions to the denomination and the world community.

For a further study and listing of Presbyterian schools, see The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church, 1865-1970, by Inez Moore Parker, Trinity University Press, Presbyterian Historical Society.

_Photos in this article have been provided by the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA._
Slavery as an institution was dying in the United States of America when John Gloucester founded the First African Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1807.

Many white citizens were wrestling seriously with such questions as: Are Blacks human? Are Blacks subhuman? Do Blacks have the brain power to become leaders? Do Blacks have any rights or capabilities that need be respected? The lack of positive convictions and affirmative answers led ultimately to the application of the principle of “separate and unequal.” This principle applied not only in government, education, and public accommodations; it was also operative in the church.

Thus it would have seemed ludicrous for Gloucester, or any other black Presbyterian, to expect that a time would come when black persons would be appointed to serve as judicatory executives. Few, if any, pragmatic black Presbyterians of the early nineteenth century would flirt with such a bold dream, particularly in view of the fact that the three black Presbyterian men whose names dominated this early period—John Chavis, John Rice, and John Gloucester—had attained only the status of “missionary.”

The idea that a black person could administer work for and with black Presbyterians was an idea whose time ultimately arrived in 1938 when Albert Byron McCoy became the first black executive of a General Assembly Board in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., one hundred and thirty-one long years after the founding of the First African Presbyterian Church.

It is worthy of note that McCoy’s work was limited to the black constituency of the church. It was limited by custom, tradition, and law. It was limited by white Presbyterians whose prior commitment was to the principle of “separate and unequal.”

Despite these limitations, McCoy’s appointment indicated the following:

It was a step in the direction of self-determination for black Presbyterians;

It provided black Presbyterians with the opportunity of obtaining employment and experience on the administrative level of the church;

It signified to both the white and black constituency...
of the church that black Presbyterians could serve efficiently and effectively in all areas of the church if given a chance.

Not only does McCoy have the distinction of being the first black Presbyterian to serve as an executive on a national staff in the Presbyterian Church. He controlled large sums of money; he was the acknowledged leader of black Presbyterians throughout the South and Southwest; a network of employees knew him as their supervisor; and to his influence can be traced pastoral calls to some of the more viable churches.

One of the persons in McCoy's "network of employees" was Charles W. Talley. Talley was appointed Field Representative of Atlantic Synod—the predecessor judicatory of the Synod of South Carolina-Georgia—in 1945. In this position Talley administered an annual "program budget in excess of a quarter of a million dollars, and an annual building budget of approximately half a million dollars." His tenure of service was twenty years.

Jesse Belmont Barber succeeded McCoy in 1950, having been a member of the Board of National Mission from 1938 to 1949 and having served as co-chairperson of the Institute on Racial and Cultural Relations. As the new Secretary of the Department of Work with Colored People, Barber's position had undergone considerable revision.

Each amendment reflected a diminution of power. Two basic reasons accounted for these changes: (1) Some black Presbyterians accused McCoy of abusing and misusing his power; and (2) Some of his white peers realized that McCoy was not only a powerful black man in the Presbyterian Church but he was also one of the most powerful men, white or black, in the Church. As it happened, the Board of National Missions was reorganized in 1959, and, in the process, the black executive was organized out of power.

One black executive who sought to return black administrators in the United Presbyterian Church to positions of power was Bryant George. He was, perhaps, the most pragmatic and political of all those whose names appear in this article. He successfully used his talent to his own professional advantage as well as to the advantage of the nineteen Blacks who he worked to put into various staff positions.

George's skills and talents were recognized and acknowledged by the Board of National Missions in 1961. During his service of eight years he assisted in the creation of the mission and development structure of the Board of National Missions, the Presbyterian Economic Development Corporation, the National Committee of Black Churchmen, the Delta Ministry, and the Child Development Group of Mississippi.

One of the persons whose professional path crossed that of Bryant George is Emily V. Gibbes. After thirteen years in the municipal and federal government arenas and in service as an office assistant to the Christian Education Executive in metropolitan New York, Ms. Gibbes became Field Director of the Board of Christian Education in 1950. Her performance in this position, as well as in others, was outstanding. This record led her into other avenues of service in the church she loves.

She was elected Eastern Area Secretary and then Executive Secretary of the Women's Department in the Board of Christian Education. Following that she served as a consultant in Christian Education to the National Presbyterian Churches of Cameroun and Kenya, under assignment from the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations.

Gibbes later became Associate General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in America. She served in this office until her retirement. She is currently a member of the faculty of New York Theological Seminary.

While McCoy and Barber were serving as Secretary of the Unit of Work for Colored People, Frank Shirley served as field representative, Board of Christian Education and National Missions, Catawba Synod. This, in effect, meant that Shirley was Synod Executive of Catawba—a predominantly black synod in North Carolina and Virginia. Since Catawba came into being because black ministers and laypersons objected to "paternal nurture," it was not surprising that Catawba subsequently emerged as "a self-administering synod" in 1966.

Nine years before Catawba became "a self-
administering synod,” Frank T. Wilson, Sr., became the first Secretary of Education for the Board of Foreign Missions, later known as the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian Church. His peers were unanimous in their agreement that Wilson’s record in this position was one of administrative excellence, undaunted altruism, and effective Christian witness.

After eleven years with COEMAR as Secretary for Education, he served for two years as Director of General Assembly’s Temporary Commission on Theological Education in the Southeast, whose research and recommendations resulted in the establishment of the new Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia, and the formation of a Task Force for Improving Prospects of Blacks for Ministry in the United Presbyterian Church; which, in turn, became the Vocation Agency’s Consulting Committee on Racial/Ethnic Ministries. Many black churchpersons continue to draw inspiration and encouragement from Wilson’s brilliant record of achievements.

McCoy, Talley, Barber, George, Gibbes, Shirley, Wilson, and those who subsequently participated in the ministry of church administration in the United Presbyterian Church, enjoyed an experience that was denied John Gloucester—their ministries began after the death of slavery—his before. Although legal slavery had died 73 years before the line of black executives formed initially, its successor had come into being. Legal segregation was the heir of legal slavery. The negative effects of both of these upon Blacks in the United States of America are incalculable. Nevertheless, there were some significant achievements that came out of this era, such as:

Southern Black Presbyterian congregations assumed control of their churches;
Southern Black Presbyterians occupied positions of influence and responsibility on judicatory councils and committees; and,
Southern Black Presbyterians received opportunities to obtain on-the-job training and administrative experience.

These conditions did not prevail in the presumed nonsegregated judicatories of the North and West. It was, an historic moment when Ulysses B. Blakeley was elected Executive of the Presbytery of Newark, New Jersey, in July 1964. It is generally believed that Blakeley was the first black person to serve as a presbytery executive in the North and West.

The name of G. Lake Imes also appears on the list of black executives in the Presbyterian Church. Imes was an acknowledged scholar, an effective proclaimer of the Word of God, and a former staff member of Tuskegee Institute which was founded by Booker T. Washington. Imes became Field Representative for Negro Work in the North and West under the Interboard Commission on National Missions and Christian Education. His office was related to the Department of City and Industrial Work.

He served with distinction for five years and was succeeded by Robert Pierre Johnson. Johnson’s professional experiences included pastorate in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C., and service as Assistant Secretary in the Department of City and Industrial Work.

Johnson’s rich background eminently qualified him to be the second black churchperson elected to the position of Executive Presbyter in a predominantly white judicatory. He was elected in 1967 and administered the work of New York City Presbytery as it related to 118 churches and 44,000 communicants.

Another prominent black Presbyterian joined the executive ranks four years before Robert Johnson’s appointment as Executive Presbyter of New York City Presbytery. Gayraud S. Wilmore, a former pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in West Chester, Pennsylvania, one-time member of the executive staff of the Student Christian Movement, Department of Social Education and Action for the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, and Assistant Professor of Social Ethics, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, became Executive Director of the United Presbyterian Commission on Religion and Race (now known as the Council on Church and Race) in 1963. Wilmore, a prolific writer in the field of Black Theology, went from this position to teach at Boston University, the School of Theology, and later to his present position at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Crozer Theological Seminary.
It was during the 1950’s that Blacks in the Presbyterian Church were restructured out of power. Surprisingly enough, restructuring in 1972 brought them back to power. This was the year when Robert Pierre Johnson was elected by the General Assembly to the position of Associate Stated Clerk. This was also the year when Leon Fanniel was elected to the highest administrative job in the church, Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council; the year when J. Oscar McCloud, a former staff member of the Board of Christian Education and National Missions (with the Council on Church and Race), of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, and of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was elected General Director of the Program Agency.

Three years later, on January 5, 1975, another black man, Eugene Turner became Synod Executive of the Synod of the Northeast, which includes the New England states, New York and New Jersey. Turner’s work was initially made more difficult by the fact that the Synods of New York, New England and New Jersey resisted the adoption of the plan for the restructuring of synods. In fact, they were the last synods to unite.

Robert T. Newbold, Jr. was elected Associate Stated Clerk of the General Assembly following the death of Robert Pierre Johnson, four months after Turner began his duties as Synod Executive. Newbold’s journey to the Office of the General Assembly began when he was appointed the first Black seminary intern. The journey continued into three pastorates, administrative work in the Department of Ministerial Relations and the Council on Administrative Services.

Another black pastor was elected synod executive by the end of the next three years. Casper Glenn became Executive of the Synod of Alaska / Northwest on September 1, 1978. Twenty-two years of service in the pastorate, two years as Director, Greater Parish Ministries, San Diego, California, and seven years as Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of San Diego, California, prepared him for his new position.

Three years later, two black persons were elected heads of judicatories. One was James Hampton, who was elected head of Catawba Unit on January 1, 1981, after having served in the
pastorate and as a member of the Council on Administrative Services. Hampton was the successor to Elo Henderson, who at one time was a protege of Frank Shirley.

Henderson is still applauded and praised because of his leadership in the human rights struggle for all people. He is also admired because he was one of the chief architects of "A Design to Liberate the Oppressed." The "Design" was developed into an overture which was received and acted upon by the 182nd General Assembly. It later became known as the "Catawba Manifesto." It was a radical proposal whose specific goal was to provide economic liberation for black people in the Catawba Synod.

The second black person elected to serve as judicatory executive during 1981 was Carroll Jenkins, who began his duties as Executive of the Synod of the Piedmont on September 1, 1981. Prior to his election, Jenkins served as a caseworker with the Department of Welfare in Philadelphia; Assistant Pastor of First African Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; pastor of T.M. Thomas Memorial Presbyterian Church, Chester, Pennsylvania; and Associate Executive of Philadelphia Presbytery.

The 175th Anniversary Celebration of Black Presbyterianism in the United States of America prompts us to reflect upon the contributions of those whose names are listed in this article. They were and are, for the most part, judicatory executives and heads of General Assembly agencies.

However, the list of black Presbyterian pioneer staff members exceeds the eighteen persons mentioned above. It includes such names as Rachel Adams, Clarence Cave, Herman Counts, Thomas Hargrave, Herbert Pinkney, Abraham Prince, Mildred Artis, Marcia Marion, Leander and Vera Swann, Allene Brewer Woods, Cecilia McCoy Mercer, Lionel B. West, William E. Houston, Sr., Claudius N. Schropshire, T.B. Jones, J.T. Jones, Elmo C. Haymes and Cornelius Berry. It is appropriate that we salute them also.

But mere salutation is not enough. This historic celebration calls us to do more. It summons us to look back and see whence we have come; who brought us were we are; where our representatives are in the present structures of the Church; and where we must be in order to be acknowledged as full partners in the ministries of the United Presbyterian Church.
The idea of black persons serving in the mission of the church overseas has been a concern of Blacks and Presbyterians since 1774. In that year the Synod of New York and Philadelphia received a letter from Samuel Hopkins and Ezra Stiles, two prominent ministers, asking for help in educating two Negro students for mission work in Africa. The sending of those persons did not materialize, but the Synod appointed a committee to consider the request and seemed eager to endorse the missionary aspect of the project.

There were two underlying factors in selecting Africa among the first places for Presbyterian mission endeavor and the first place where Blacks were considered suitable as missionaries. First, the black slaves from Africa were the earliest contacts that 18th century Americans had with nonchristians from "foreign lands". Secondly, it was supposed that Blacks as missionaries to Africa would aid in returning slaves and freed persons to their "native country". The land from which the slaves had come aroused a kind of missionary zeal within the church.

During the latter part of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, there was a noticeable fusion of religio-economic and politico-humanitarian sentiment in support of movements espousing mission and colonization. Colonization was favored by many Presbyterians. The American Colonization Society was founded by a Presbyterian minister, Robert Finley. The General Assemblies of 1831 and 1832 took actions calling attention to the efforts to colonize the western coast of Africa with freed Blacks and requested Presbyterian churches to take up collections annually on or about the fourth of July.

The Western Foreign Missionary Society appointed J.B. Pinney, a white graduate of Princeton, to go to Liberia, which had been founded on the West Coast of Africa as an American colony to provide a home for slaves who had won their freedom. When Pinney arrived in Monrovia, Liberia, on February 16, 1833 he was the first missionary to enter a foreign field under the care of a Presbyterian Missionary Society.

Pinney spent four months exploring the field, returned to America in July and reported to the executive committee of the Society. He sailed again to Africa on November 6, 1833 with three associates, one of whom was James Temple, a
young Negro who had been taken “under the care of Philadelphia Synod as an assistant missionary.”

Temple was the first of fifty-seven (57) black men and women, lay and clergy, who went to Liberia from 1833 to 1891. Of this number, twenty-one went prior to the Civil War. The missionary work which was intended chiefly among aborigines, not colonists, began in Monrovia and extended into the deepest reaches of the interior.

A third factor accounting for the number of Blacks being sent to Africa is reflected in the Society’s report in 1837. After reiterating that Blacks should be concerned about taking the gospel to people of their own race, the Society concluded that “they were better able than white men to retain their health in the climate of Africa” (especially “colored men of the Southern states”).

Encouraged by results in the beginning of its work and declaring its intention to strengthen and enlarge this enterprise in Africa, the Society said:

“If the friends of our Society at the South will select pious, suitable men, it will be the duty of the Committee to have them brought to the North and see that they are properly educated. The result of this course, in a few years, would be a full supply of pious, educated and qualified missionaries.”

After the Civil War, Blacks were recruited exclusively for Liberia. In 1894 the Board of Foreign Missions made a decision to continue its aid to Liberia with a diminishing amount each year until the termination of its work there in 1899. At the time, the Presbytery of West Africa was encouraged to take complete responsibility for support and control of this missionary venture.

The closing of the Board of Foreign Missions relationship to the Liberia Mission did not dampen the desires of black Presbyterians to serve overseas. The number of black Presbyterian churches and members in the U.S.A. increased but there seemed to be a color line on black missionary appointments to any overseas mission.

In 1896 a student volunteer group at Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, was organized and eight students volunteered for missionary service. When the Board failed to appoint any of them, both Lincoln University and Chester Presbytery protested. In its reply, the Board denied any intention of racial discrimination and indicated that it might be wise to send Negroes to Africa “in view of the number of deaths of white missionaries in Goboau and Carisco Mission . . .”

Lincoln University, established in 1854, was the first school to train Negro missionaries for Africa. It was only the first of a number of institutions begun by Presbyterians to develop leadership for the emerging free black community.

No black appointments were made from 1896 to 1928. In this the Church was reflecting the mood of white America in respect to advancing the cause of freed persons or encouraging black participation in the growth of a free society. The mood is explicit in statements of the General Assembly’s Board of Mission for Freedmen when commenting on the bloody riots in Atlanta in 1906, it said the great mass of Negroes is still in ignorance and characterized by a low state of morals and shiftless methods.

An even more depressing attitude toward the capability of Blacks to assume significant roles in the mission of the church is contained in this quotation from comments by Dr. Robert E. Speer:

“The Negroes from America have not shown the qualities of enterprise, stability and solidity of work . . . the hope that the American Negro would evangelize the continent of his fathers has been abandoned, at least until he shall have been brought by education and long discipline to a tenacity and directness of character he does not yet possess.”

The capitulation of Presbyterians to the prevailing mood of white America was sealed in 1906 when the General Assembly agreed to separate racially the lower judicatories in exchange for union with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Included also in the negative impressions were statements that native churches and their pastors would resent Negroes from America with the status and salary which their own pastors did not have. Why this same resentment would not have been felt against whites has never been understood by black Americans nor black Africans.

The spiritual strain of life on the West Coast
of Africa, the lack of skill for the conduct of missionary affairs, the failure of wives to meet "necessary educational qualifications" were additional contentions that militated against the appointment of Blacks.

In January of 1927 the Board of Foreign Missions invited representatives of the black Presbyterian Churches to a conference in New York in the following month. The black churches responded and after the meeting the Board, responding through its Candidates Department, said it would take applications of candidates from colored churches and seek contributions for the support and equipment of the particular work. Rev. and Mrs. Irwin Underhill sailed on August 22, 1928 to West Africa.

There was an extensive void of almost thirty years duration from the last black appointments in the late 1890's until that of the Underhills in 1928. Much has happened over the past half century. The saga of Blacks in Presbyterian Mission must be updated in the subsequent issue of this Journal.

### BLACKS IN PRESBYTERIAN MISSION OVERSEAS

**BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR**

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<td>Wilson, The Reverend Thomas</td>
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1PCUS GA Minutes 1907, p. 69.
2Presbyterian Foreign Missions, 1901, p. 23.
THE FOUR BLACK SYNODS—ORIGINS AND SIGNIFICANCE

"The song has ended, but the melody lingers on". The words of this old popular song from the 30's came to mind as I began to look at the one hundred-year history of black synods in the Presbyterian Church. In the United Presbyterian Church as it now exists, the mother of black synods was Atlantic, appearing in the General Assembly Statistics for the first time in 1869. It was preceded by the Presbytery of Catawba, which had been part of the Synod of Baltimore, and the Presbytery of South Carolina, which had been part of the Synod of New York and New Jersey.

Blacks, of course, were members of Presbyterian churches before 1807, the date we celebrate as the beginning of black Presbyterianism. Blacks were members of churches of all denominations, albeit assigned to segregated buzzards' roosts, as balconies came to be known. Some Blacks in North Carolina were members of southern White Presbyterian churches well into the 20th Century. At the close of the Civil War (called the War Between the States by those who never accepted secession as an act of civil disobedience), black Presbyterians in the south felt deserted by southerners who withdrew to form the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Parenthetically, myth has it that the split was over slavery. Not so! Pro-slavery sentiments and feeling against abolition ran high, but the straw that broke the camel's back was the pushing through of an oath of loyalty to the Union by General Assembly. A guilt complex led most southern Presbyterians to forego further efforts with Blacks. The Reverend James Andrews, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, is reputed to have stated that but for northern Presbyterians, there would have been no work among Blacks.

When pondering the significance of the four black synods, consider this: four of the top executive leaders in the denomination today—members of the Churchwide Coordinating Cabinet—have come from, or were nurtured in, the one called the mother of black synods, Atlantic. They are J. Oscar McCloud of the Program Agency and Casper I. Glenn, Carroll D. Jenkins and Eugene G. Turner of the Synods of Alaska—Northwest, Piedmont and Northeast, respectively.

Atlantic's boundaries extended from Southern Virginia to South Florida, with presbyteries at one time numbering seven: Atlantic, Catawba, East Florida, Fairfield, Hodge, Knox, McClelland, and South Florida. Interestingly, the synod which evolved into the first black synod was founded by
Whites. Some think that only northerners came down to minister to the spiritual needs of the freedmen. The fact of the matter is that in the various splits—New School, Old School, and withdrawal to found the Presbyterian Church in the United States—there were white ministers in the south so concerned about the people to whom they had been ministering that they identified with the so-called northern church and continued to serve their black brothers and sisters.

One such was the Reverend Steven Mattoon, who became the first President of Biddle University, now Johnson C. Smith, and at the same time served as Stated Clerk of the Synod of Atlantic. At one time, Mattoon also was Stated Supply of six little black congregations in and around Charlotte, North Carolina. Of these, Ben Salem and Murkland churches still exist. Mattoon was the maternal grandfather of the late Norman Thomas. His last pastorate as a Presbyterian minister was the Harlem Presbyterian Church, now the Mount Morris Church on 122nd Street in New York City.

Another one of these dedicated Southern Whites was the Reverend Luke Dorland who founded Scotia Seminary for black women, a tremendous venture of faith in those days. Some ministers came down from the north, including the Reverend Asa West, who went through the wilds of South Carolina and founded, among others, the Good Will Church near Mayesville, which for many years was the largest black Presbyterian congregation in the south. During those missionary days he was listed by his Presbytery in New York as being "without charge".

Twenty years after the appearance of Atlantic Synod in the General Assembly statistics, the Catawba Synod came into being with the Presbyteries of Cape Fear, Catawba, Yadkin, and Southern Virginia. At this point, many white ministers were still involved in the work of Catawba Synod, as Blacks were being trained to move into leadership. In 1889, also, the eastern part of Indian territory was being opened up to non-Indians for homesteading. A number of Blacks made the trek from North and South Carolina. Among these was Rev. William Bethel from Winston-Salem, who travelled across Indian territory as a member of the Presbytery of Cimarron, founding black congregations, right and left.

About the same time, there was a Presbytery of White River in Arkansas, part of the Synod of Missouri, with churches in Arkansas and Missouri. The Presbytery of Canadian came into being twenty years after Catawba and less than a year after Indian Territory became the state of Oklahoma. Its presbyteries were White River, Rendall (named for the first president of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, since Dr. Bethel was a graduate) and Kiamicl, named for a river and an Indian tribe. White River may have covered more territory than any other presbytery of its time. It had congregations from Springfield, Missouri, to Lubbock, Texas, including all of Arkansas and congregations at Crockett, Jacksonville and Rusk, Texas. The Synod of East Tennessee was convened in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with the presbyteries of Birmingham, LeVere, and Rogersville. In 1936 it was renamed Blue Ridge.

The paternalistic, patronizing attitude of the majority can be seen in the following scenario. The black Presbytery of Birmingham was the catalyst for the Synod of East Tennessee, which really covered all of Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama, plus Asheville, North Carolina. There were also congregations at Abington, Big Stone Gap, and Rose Hill, Virginia. When a sufficient number of Whites with Presbyterian U.S.A. leanings surfaced in Alabama, they petitioned General Assembly to establish a presbytery which they insisted should be named Birmingham. So insistent were they, that General Assembly statistics carried for years two presbyteries of Birmingham: the black as Birmingham and the white as Birmingham A. Another indication was the designation of Black congregations in white presbyteries as, e.g., Grace (Col.). It took pressure from the black judicatories and the Afro-American Presbyterian Council to stop the designation of black congregations in white presbyteries with "(Col.)" after the church's name.

Perception is often more overwhelming than fact! One cannot help but wonder why it was necessary to have black synods. First, the majority of the Whites, except for those stalwarts who stuck with their black members in the south, went with the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Eventually, the only churches in the area with membership in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America were black. Thus, it
became a black synod. And so it was in North Carolina and in the southern part of Virginia.

The perception that blacks were inherently inferior pervaded the attitude of many people who went south to assist them. This was even true of people who sent help south through their "barrels" from the missionary societies, without which some of the black National Missions people could not have survived.

Parenthetically, the few blacks in congregations in the north and west felt lonely and alienated, and in 1894 they founded the Afro-American Presbyterian Council, which was developed along the lines of the General Assembly. It existed until 1957. There had been a continuing buffeting of the leadership, partly because the Council's presence was being felt at the General Assembly level, and partly because of our perception that we had "arrived". The charge was leveled that we were segregating ourselves, even though the name had become the Presbyterian Council of the North and West. At that meeting in 1957 in Baltimore, Maryland, we voted to disband. The fellowship was necessary, but that is a story for another time.

There was a feeling, a perception, mistaken, nonetheless prevalent, that Blacks did not have what it takes for leadership in the wider church. The significance of the black judicatories was this: they provided voice and presence at the General Assembly. In 1935, Rev. W. E. Houston, Sr., D.D., a lonely voice from the Presbytery of White River in the Synod of Canadian, proposed a motion that the judicatory not meet in any city where all of the commissioners could not receive equal accommodations in hotels. He sat down to thunderous applause. The motion was carried. A scant eight years later in Detroit, the Executive of the local presbytery prevailed upon the pastor of the black congregation to find accommodations for black commissioners in the homes of his parishioners. Adam Clayton Powell blasted the move before General Assembly opened, in a speech on a Sunday night at the Woodward Avenue Church, and the Assembly hung its head in shame. After we had had equal accommodations in Cincinnati in 1951, albeit with prearranged black roommates, segregation reared its head again in Indianapolis a scant two years later. Dr. Jesse Belmont Barber, a national staff person, was assigned to The Athletic Club for lodging, and was refused a room.

Ask then, what was the significance of the black synods? But for the hue and cry which came from their representatives, who often were the only Black presence at General Assembly, much of the progress that has developed might not have transpired.

The black synods are now extinct; the presbyteries may be next. If reunion occurs, the last vestige of a corporate black presence will be obliterated. It will be subsumed in and consumed by the larger whole, destined to pale into insignificance. Not one predominantly black judicatory will be left. There are already white members of the presbyteries of Cape Fear, Yadkin, and Southern Virginia. There are, today, white pastors of black congregations across the South and elsewhere, a kind of retrogression to the days when no blacks presumably were prepared. There remains a role for Black Presbyterians United: recruitment of black clergy, the setting of an example which will bring more able young Blacks to the forefront, and the development of viable black congregations which can support the level of leadership we require and demand.

The song of the black synods is ended but the melody of their influence lingers on. The song of overt exclusion may have ended but the melody of oblique discrimination lingers on.
EARLY BLACK CONGREGATIONS

The Christian life style of Blacks in the United States changed drastically with the emergence of black congregations. Their establishment meant that Blacks no longer had to worship in the balconies of white congregations, a widespread and humiliating practice of the larger denominations in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The coming of these black churches in the North and South provided the basis for freer religious expression and social cohesion. More than that, they brought to the worshiper a newfound dignity! The ministries of these early Presbyterian congregations, even though presented here in barest outline, nonetheless document this radically changed life style. Only those churches established between 1807 and the close of the Civil War are included.

FIRST AFRICAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH was founded in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in May 1807. Through the efforts of the Philadelphia Evangelical Society the services of John Gloucester were obtained as organizing pastor to develop the work among Blacks. Gloucester worked under difficult circumstances to build a congregation. He had recently been given his freedom from slavery but his family remained in bondage in Tennessee. Through great personal sacrifice he earned money to purchase their freedom. His evangelical zeal, his skills in preaching and singing enabled him to build a congregation rapidly. The congregation was able to buy the land where they had previously set up a tent to hold services. By 1811 the congregation dedicated its newly built edifice at the corner of Seventh and Shippen (now Bainbridge) Streets. First African Church has ministered continuously in Philadelphia since its founding, being the center of an active church and community program and identified across the years with the struggles of black and oppressed peoples. The present pastor is Kermit E. Overton.

FIRST COLORED (SHILOH) PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of New York came into being in 1822 as a result of the labors of its founder, Samuel Cornish, who became the installed pastor in 1824. His ministry lasted but a few years, terminating in 1828 after a period of decline and a series of financial problems which forced the congregation to sell its edifice. Theodore Wright succeeded Cornish as pastor in 1830 and the church prospered under his ministry, becoming one of the largest black congregations in the city. Wright remained pastor until his death in 1847. The dissolution of the congregation followed.

WASHINGTON STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Reading, Pennsylvania, had its origin as a Sunday School Mission in the spring of 1823. Reverend John F. Grier, then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Reading, and his wife purchased a site with two log cabins where Blacks could have a place of worship. On November 24, 1829, one of the log cabins was dedicated as the First African Presbyterian Church of Reading. The name was later changed to Second Presbyterian Church. On April 21, 1890 it was changed to Washington Street Presbyterian Church.

A schism occurred in the church in 1834. A methodist element created dissension but later withdrew and organized an African Methodist Episcopal...
Subsequently, a structure for the Washington Street Church was completed and dedicated on June 1, 1849. The first pastor to serve the church full time was a Reverend Mr. Ward. A number of ministers served the church as pastor but only for short periods. In 1884, Stephen Gloucester, one of the sons of John Gloucester, began a pastorate which lasted three years. During the years when there was no pastor, the elders offered strong leadership by providing a high level of religious worship and care for the members. Through the good times and the difficult times the Washington Street Church has had a continuous and effective ministry in Reading. At the present time the Church is without a pastor.

SECOND AFRICAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was organized in 1824 by Jeremiah Gloucester, one of the sons of John Gloucester. This church was formed by a split from First African of Philadelphia. After John Gloucester’s death the congregation of First African voted to call Reverend Samuel E. Cornish as pastor. There was, however, a sizeable minority opposed to the calling of Cornish because they preferred Jeremiah, a son of their beloved and deceased pastor. In the minds of many, Jeremiah had been groomed for the job of filling his father’s shoes. Since their attempts failed, the minority prevailed upon the presbytery to allow them to organize the Second African Presbyterian Church with Jeremiah being called as pastor. This congregation was eventually dissolved.

BEAUFORT-SALEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in Sheldon, South Carolina, appears to be the first black Presbyterian congregation in the South. The date of its founding is given as 1828. The following information was recently obtained from a Beaufort County newspaper about the Beaufort-Salem Church, “In Deed Book” 152, page 43, reference is made to an abstract title to Bindon Plantation and in said Abstract, it is reflected that on or about January 1, 1828, one James Cuthbert conveyed to one William Martin the same tract, less a small piece granted to Stoney Creek Church for the residence of their minister which at that time was being occupied by Salem Colored Presbyterian Church. Over the years the church has continued to make its witness to Jesus Christ. The church is presently without a pastor.

LADSON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH had its origin in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1828. During the early years it was governed by white elders. In 1828 land was donated by Colonel Abram Blanding for religious training of Blacks. The title to the property was held by the officers of the First Presbyterian Church, since Blacks could not own property at that time. The church was first organized as a Sabbath School and in 1838 a chapel was built. The Reverend George Ladson, a white minister, was put in charge and served the church until his death. Because of his unselfish service to the congregation, the church was named for him. The Reverend Mack G. Johnson served this church with great distinction and honor for 45 years. It was during his ministry that the Ladson Church became the Mecca of hope in the city of Columbia. King D. S. Pogue is the pastor.

WASHINGTON AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Macon, Georgia, came into existence as a congregation in 1838. The slaves of the white members of the First Presbyterian Church were counted as part of the congregation. As the slave population increased, the session began to provide separate instructions for Blacks. Joseph, a slave of a Mr. Williams, was appointed by the session to lead a
new congregation made up of slaves. By resolution, the congregation was formed October 21, 1838. The church grew rapidly and had its own building in 1839. Aiding in the leadership with Joseph Williams were David Laney (father of Lucy Laney) and G. W. Skinson. They asked for membership in the presbytery but First Church was indifferent to the request so the church declared its independence and formed its own session. They applied to Hopewell Presbytery for ordination. This presbytery ordained Williams, Laney and Robert Carter to the gospel ministry and two others as elders.

The church applied for membership in Hopewell Presbytery which was granted on condition that the congregation voted only on those matters that concerned them. Washington Avenue withdrew and became a member of the Atlantic Synod and thereby a member of the Presbyterian Church—U.S.A. in 1869.

David Laney followed Williams as pastor, serving until 1871. A list of other distinguished pastors served this church over the years. The present pastor is Donald B. Oliver.

FIFTEENTH STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH was organized in Washington, D.C. in a school house, in 1841, by a Methodist layman named John F. Cook who was subsequently ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1843. The congregation played a decisive role in the establishment of public schools "for colored people in the District of Columbia." In 1870, the first public high school in Washington was organized in the basement of this church. Among its distinguished pastors were Henry Highland Garnet and Francis J. Grimke. The present pastor is John L. Pharr.

LOMBARD-CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH was organized in 1844 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, by Stephen, one of the sons of John Gloucester. It was the third black Presbyterian congregation organized in the city. The process of its founding followed the pattern of the Second African Church. Stephen worked with his brother, Jeremiah, at Second African Church and on occasion supplied the pulpit. When the pulpit became vacant a significant number of its members wanted to call Stephen as pastor. The will of this group did not prevail and they left Second African and became organized under Stephen's leadership as the Central Church. Like his father, John, Stephen went to Europe in order to raise money. His goal was to build an edifice.

The Reverend John B. Reeve was one of the distinguished pastors who served the church for many years. In our time, the Reverends Dr. William Lloyd Imes and John Coleman also had long and distinguished ministries as pastors. The church has enjoyed a continuing ministry to the present time. The present pastor is J. Bernard Taylor.

WITHERSPOON STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Princeton, New Jersey, was organized in 1845 by James Alexander. The black Presbyterians of
the city worshipped in the church balcony of one of the white congregations. A fire struck the edifice, destroying it and compelling the congregation to find an interim place of worship. Princeton Theological Seminary granted them the use of its chapel. It was during this period that the Blacks re-evaluated their situation. Feeling unwelcome in the white congregation, the black Presbyterians decided to establish their own church.

The church was first referred to as the First Presbyterian Church of Color in Princeton. The name was later changed to Witherspoon Street. The church is presently without a pastor.

ZION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (now ZION-OLIVET) of Charleston, South Carolina, began as a Mission of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston in 1846. The work of this church was placed under white leadership in its early development. Reverend John D. Adger carried on work with Blacks from 1846 to 1851. Following Adger was the Reverend J.L. Geradeau who took over the work centered at Anson Street. Under his leadership Zion flourished. In November 1858, a petition was presented to the Presbytery by the Zion Church to become a fully organized church. Geradeau was called as pastor. In 1878 Zion became part of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The first black pastor was William C. Smith. Zion and Olivet merged August 16, 1959. The present pastor is F. Perry Metz, Sr.

SILOAM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Brooklyn, New York, organized in 1849 by presbytery action, had a previous existence as a religious society under the leadership of John Gloucester’s third son, James. For two years prior to this event James Gloucester had been carrying on religious services to Blacks as a mission under the supervision of the New School branch of the presbytery. The experience of James as a former slave seemed to have “provided fertile soil for the root of Siloam’s becoming an active and aggressive agency in the cause of Freedom.” The church was the first to create a fund by special contribution for the establishment of an Underground Railroad. Under the leadership of the Reverend Amos N. Freeman the church helped to create sentiment leading to the abolition of the Fugitive Slave Law. A strong Sunday School existed early in the life of this congregation. The session directed its efforts in the formative years toward strengthening the moral and spiritual interests of the church. Effective pastorates of distinguished ministers have kept Siloam a strong church. The Rev. Milton A. Galamison is pastor.

MADISON STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Baltimore, Maryland, was started in 1853 by a white Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Robert Galbreath. One of its pastors prior to the Civil War was the Rev. Hiram Revels who subsequently became a U.S. Senator from the state of Mississippi during Reconstruction. The present pastor is the Rev. Reginald Daniels.

CAPITOL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, called the Rev. Charles W.
Gardner to be its pastor in 1858. He had served as stated supply at First African in Philadelphia and resigned to go to Harrisburg where he found a group of black Presbyterians who had been members of the Market Square Church of Harrisburg. These Blacks wanted to withdraw from the white congregation to form their own church. An elder of Market Square, Mordecai McKinney, assisted these church fathers to organize the congregation. They petitioned to become the Second Presbyterian Church of Harrisburg. In 1865 the church received its charter. In 1866 a building was acquired on Elder Street and the name was changed to the Elder Street Church. Later the name of the street was changed to Capitol Street and the church became Capitol Street Church. In 1880 the building was destroyed by fire and the church used temporary quarters at the Y.M.C.A., Pine Street Presbyterian Church and the Keystone Hotel.

After rebuilding and a second destruction by fire, and a second rebuilding, the land was acquired by the State. The church built on its current site and completed its present facility in 1952. Hiram Baker was the second pastor to serve the church. H. Garnet Lee was pastor almost 30 years. The present pastor is Michael Eubanks.

LITTLE RIVER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH was organized by Williard Richardson in Winnsboro, South Carolina, in 1862, during the Civil War period. The present pastor is Robert Langford.

MATTHEWS-MURKLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, also organized during the Civil War was established in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1864 by Sidney S. Murkland. The present pastor is Daniel O. Hennigan.

MT. TABOR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Blackstock, South Carolina, came into existence in 1864. A brush arbor built for Blacks in the community was used by a white Presbyterian, Chris Elder, to conduct religious services and to provide schooling. In 1870 Alex Elder deeded a lot to the deacons and trustees of Tabor Church, at which time the word “Mount” was added to the name of the church. Chris Elder made possible the education of Benjamin F. Russell, a black man, for teaching and the gospel ministry. A church building was constructed for Blacks on the deeded property where Russell returned to serve. The building continued to serve as a school and church.

Russell served as pastor from 1905-1922. The Reverend L.J. McRae was the next outstanding pastor, remaining there until his death. He served as pastor for thirty-six years. The present Stated Supply pastor is Jesse L. Moore.
PERISCOPE STUDY GUIDE
A Guide for the Study of 175 Years of Black Presbyterian Ministry

Guide for Study

A value of possessing and reading Periscope - Black Presbyterianism: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow will be the personal enrichment of the reader and his/her increased knowledge of Black Presbyterians. There is substantial value to be derived from the study of Periscope with other persons who are interested in pursuing history, Black history and the history of Black Presbyterians. The following guide is designed to facilitate, stimulate, motivate further individual or group study.

Periscope may be used in youth organizations, church schools, with communicant-confirmation classes, new members classes, by Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Men, at family night dinners, Lent and Advent study sessions, quoted in sermons and newsletters, placed in libraries and on bulletin boards. It may also be used as resource in the developing of church officers and BPC chapters and in orientation of committees of presbyteries. Weekend retreats and camps and conferences may also find Periscope a desired source for study.

The following questions are designed to facilitate, stimulate, motivate further individual or group study.

Black Presbyterians and Black Presbyterianism

1. "Black worshippers from Presbyterian balconies remained Presbyterians." Why? How do you account for this loyalty to the denomination?

2. How do Black Presbyterians relate to Blacks in Black denominations? Is their relationship to Blacks in predominantly White denominations different?

3. Some features of Presbyterian polity have special appeal to Black Presbyterians. What are they and why?

4. "Black Presbyterianism has released to the life of the Church a fresh substance and flavor" What is this "fund of blessing," this gift to the Church?

5. Presbyterians have a long and proud history of placing a "high premium on the worth and dignity of persons..." What are some of the current issues for Black Presbyterians that are part of that tradition?

Black Women in the Presbyterian Church

1. Identify elements that make for (a) high involvement of Black women in the Presbyterian Church; (b) hinder involvement of Black women.

2. Indicate ways that the Black heroines can be kept alive in the history of the Church.
3. What is the future image, role, opportunities for Black clergywomen in the Presbyterian Church?

The Spirit of Black Presbyterianism

1. Several very influential Black Presbyterians who lived prior to the Civil War are only mentioned by name in this article. What testimony can you offer about their life and witness?

2. Discuss the positive ways that "status" and education can be used for the benefit of the Black community.

3. What are the distinctive gifts of Black Presbyterians to the Black community? to the White community?

4. What are the conditions that keep and will keep Blacks in the Presbyterian Church?

5. What are your dreams for Black Presbyterians, remembering the past and facing the future?

Profiles in Partnership

1. Spend time discussing the questions that are listed in the middle of the article.

2. Consider also the two questions regarding reunion with the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

3. Invite Black executives to visit with your session, congregation or with a particular group in the congregation.

Presbyterian Schools for Blacks

1. The Church’s investment in the education of Blacks from the Civil War period to the present has yielded benefits almost beyond reckoning. Many of them have been of utmost importance. What are they?

2. Do taped interviews with graduates of the parochial schools. There were large Black populations in several Southern states.

3. Why such large growth of Black Presbyterians in North Carolina and South Carolina?

Leadership Profiles

1. What are positive forces available to increase Black leadership? negative forces decreasing Black leadership?

2. Does our congregation have an on-going program for developing potential leadership?

3. What is required of Black Presbyterians if effective leadership is going to emerge from the ranks?
Blacks Overseas

1. What do you feel motivated Black Presbyterians to serve overseas?

2. What are current facts that cause Blacks to want to serve overseas? that militate against Blacks deciding for overseas service?

3. Invite Black Presbyterians who have served overseas.

The Four Synods - Origins and Significance

1. Outline on a map the areas covered by the four Black synods.

2. Collect taped interviews of ministers who served in those synods.

3. What needs were met by Black synods?

4. Are some, all, none of those needs necessary today?

5. How can we offer a positive response to the charge: "Black Presbyterian Caucus (formerly Black Presbyterians United (BPU) is a self-segregating body?"

Early Black Congregations

1. Design a "Church of the Month" study of the listed congregations.

2. What were the existing factors or conditions that contributed to the founding of these particular congregations?

3. What are current images of Black Presbyterians?

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Epilogue

One hundred seventy-five years in the work and witness of the whole “Community of faith” are as yesterday, or as a “watch in the night.” Yet the emergence and activity of black persons and black congregations in the corporate structure and testimony of the Presbyterian Church have a significance which transcends some of the startling vagaries of Presbyterian decisions and actions on matters affecting the very heart and soul of the nation over this stretch of years.

Slavery, emancipation, reconstruction and the agenda of freedom, full citizenship and unabridged human rights were difficult and were handled as clumsily by the Church as by the social and political establishment of the era under review. The community of faith acquiesced all too readily to the prevailing public opinion and the powerful economic and political interests over the years. The residues of this capitulation linger in the texture of church structures and give peculiar and untimely flavor to the attitudes and actions of the “people of God” on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

Black Presbyterianism survives, persists and in some ways flourishes within the context of a system which struggles valiantly to transmute the “Household of Hope” into a community of prophetic accomplishment.

In this sense, the celebration in which we engage is an act of tribute to the faith of our forebears, a resonant call to courageous faithfulness by communicants and leadership in this generation, and a challenge to the vision, commitment and integrity of the whole church for the century ahead.

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