



Women Together:
Lifting and Serving
One Another

"You obey the law of Christ when you
offer each other a helping hand."
GALATIANS 6:2 (CEV)

A Conference for Female Clergy
Sponsored by AMERICAN BAPTIST HOME MISSION SOCIETIES



www.womenliftingandserving.org
www.abhms.org

August 19-20, 2010

New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church
Detroit, Michigan
Dr. Wilma Johnson, Host Pastor

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS
Westin Southfield-Detroit
1500 Town Center
Southfield, Michigan 48075

Thanks to the support of National Ministries, Conference of Baptist Ministers in MA (CBMM), Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB), Adoniram Judson Association, Samuel Stillman Association, and Old Colony Association, the members of our Together in Ministry group (TIM), Shades of Grace, were blessed to be able to attend this life changing conference. With united hearts and grateful spirits, we collectively say thank you.

Shades of Grace is a group of twenty-two clergy and seminarian women of color who serve regionally as pastors, associate pastors, interim pastors, directors of Christian education, chaplains, professors, teachers, executive directors of nonprofits, accountants, lawyers, and consultants who meet monthly to share of the goodness of the Most High God in their ministries and personal lives. The group is a place of refuge, empowerment and learning from each others' shared personal and spiritual experiences and wisdom gleaned from the Word of God.

Shades of Grace has been in existence since August 2009 and is facilitated by Rev. Dr. Judith A. Wesley.

Eleven members were able to attend the conference and two children. Members traveled by train, plane and van to the Detroit area. For those of us who traveled by van (7 members), our sisterhood bond was strengthened as we in one voice shared, laughed and cried together singing the praises of God and getting to know each other better.

The conference was divided into three tracks: For Senior Pastors, Specialized Ministry, and General Ministry. Because of our numbers and varied interests, we were collectively able to attend all of the workshops and found them to be enriching for our personal spiritual maturation and for strengthening of our ministries as we intend to incorporate where beneficial the wisdom shared at the conference. Below are some of the comments shared by members of our group on this wonderful trip.

"God created humankind in His image, in the image of God He created them: male and female He created them." Genesis 1:27 (NRSV)

"The trip to the women's conference in Detroit was quite the ride. The carpool afforded an opportunity to get to know the Boston area ministers better. Going and returning we had great theological and social conversations that we had not had prior. There was much laughter and a sharing of silent and out loud prayers for each other, and sometimes for the world in general.

The conference itself was well ordered and had the tone I had hoped for. There was good teaching that could be applied to ministry immediately. The church itself was a lesson in hospitality and Christian welcome. We did not gather to bash men or to spend too much time lamenting over the "Old Boys Network" and our general exclusion from it as women. We celebrated being the Daughters of Thunder and the Most High God. It was great being in the presence of many wonderful Christian women who are ministers.

The accommodations and cost were good. The hotel was too far away for the church and the absence of shuttles during workshop times was an issue. I understand it called for discipline and an all-in-the-house spirit. However, it was tough for issues of health and other personal reasons for needing to arrive or leave the conference sight."

Rev. Adrienne Berry-Burton

What makes a conference successful is experiencing the presence of God throughout; this conference was successful. It was also affordable through the generosity of many supporting groups. At a time when I am experiencing the ripples and massive waves in my church ministry, this conference has revived, restored and renewed me for the congregation that God has placed in my care. The organizers will forever be in my prayers as I anticipate the upcoming 2nd Annual Women Together conference.

Rev. Deborah D. Lindsay

Conference Leaders and Presenters



Dr. Wilma Johnson Host Pastor

Rev. Marie Onwubuariri MacArthur Community Baptist Church, San Pablo, Calif.; Thursday Evening Worship

Dr. Jan McCormack Assistant Professor of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling, Denver Seminary, Littleton, Colo.; Friday Afternoon Self-Care Seminar

Dr. Charles Adams Pastor, Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich.; Friday Evening Worship

Workshops

For Senior Pastors

Workshop SP 1

"Giving Away My Joy: Navigating the Waters of Pastoral Leadership"
Dr. Wilma Johnson, Pastor, New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich. God wants us to be successful in our leadership roles. This workshop will awaken your heart so you can reach God-sized visions and goals.

Workshop SP 2

"Pastor as Person: Balancing Life and Ministry"
Rev. Peg Nowling, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Lafayette, Ind. Conquering the Oz Syndrome: Using the classic "Wizard of Oz," we'll discuss how to examine and own our choices and move ahead to find the lives we need and want.

Specialized Ministry

Workshop SM 3

"Whole Woman/Whole Ministry"
Rev. Michelle M. Holmes, Vice President/Chief Financial Officer, American Baptist Seminary of the West, Berkeley, Calif. Feeling out of balance—taking care of ministry, but not yourself? This interactive workshop will share ways to maintain balance when ministry demands conspire to keep us off balance.

Workshop SM 4

"Classism, Power, and Influence—Challenges in Ministry in and Beyond the Local Church and Religious Community"
Rev. Marilyn P. Turner, Associate Executive Director, Center for Mission and Ministry, American Baptist Home Mission Societies This workshop will explore the roots of and cures for some of the "girls'-club-isms" that can threaten the ministry potential of women.

General Ministry

Workshop GM 5

"Defining the Ministry: We All Have Gifts...Stay in your Lane"
Dr. Deedee Coleman, Pastor, Russell Street Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich. This workshop will help you define the ministry you have been called to do. It is designed to explore how to *stay in your lane* by using and nurturing the gifts God has given you! It will explore dos and don'ts of ministry along with staying focused on your task while supporting and encouraging others.

Workshop GM 6

"The Power, Purpose, and Importance of Prayer in the Life of the Minister"
Dr. Liliانا DaValle, Executive Minister, American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island

In this workshop, we will explore the dynamics of a vibrant prayer life as a necessary and indispensable tool for a healthy and successful ministry.

Panel Discussion

As female clergy coming together to "lift and serve one another," it is important to identify issues that tend to affect our relationships as women. This panel discussion will explore historic, theological and cultural factors that inhibit fruitful mentoring and supportive ministry partnerships. Panelists will share their perspectives and offer suggestions concerning how we can overcome those factors when they exist and sincerely support one another in Christian love.

Panel Moderator

Rev. Christine A. Smith, Pastor, Covenant Baptist Church, Wickliffe, Ohio

Panelists

- Rev. Judy G. Allbee, Executive Minister, American Baptist Churches of Connecticut
- Rev. Patricia P. Hernandez, Consultant for Leadership Development, American Baptist Churches of Michigan
- Ms. Lunick Papin, Haitian Alliance, Bridgeport, Conn.
- Rev. Naomi Kirstein, Pastor, Wellspring Community Church, Des Moines, Iowa
- Rev. Wilma Johnson, Pastor, New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich.
- Rev. Marilyn P. Turner, Associate Executive Director, Center for Mission and Ministry, American Baptist Home Mission Societies
- Rev. Dr. Mamie Oliver, Pastor, Mountain View Community Fellowship

Friday Evening Spiritual Direction Sessions

Rev. Patricia P. Hernandez, Certified in Spiritual Direction, Shalom Institute of Spiritual Formation, Bethesda, Md.

The spiritual life is concerned with our relationship with God. Spiritual direction involves paying attention to the movement of God in our lives. Sign up on-site for a one-on-one session with Rev. Hernandez.

Registration Deadline: August 2, 2010

"A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favour is better than silver and gold." Proverbs 22:1 (NRSV)

One of our members, The Reverend Veronica Lanier, was honored for her life work and legacy. There is a wonderful spiritual "May the Work I've Done Speak for Me" which exemplifies the challenges and struggles that Rev. Ronnie's life is a testament too. She has served not only her family and friends, but her community, both local and church, her region both TABCOM and throughout the United States, and the world at large through her missionary endeavors. As they placed the white stoll upon her to honor her legacy, they asked if someone would come and speak on her behalf, and more than half of those in attendance was capable of fulfilling the task.



as clergy leaders, servants and women of God".

"As Rev. Adams stated in his sermon "all things are ours" and we must believe ourselves, and not feel overwhelmed by the various obstacles. It is important to look back at the journeys our elders have come from and whose shoulders we stand on. It is also important to realize that God has equipped us with skills and talents to be leaders as women clergy. We value building our skills and have graduated from various theological programs. We value our calls and the diversity of ministries that was represented at the conference. One hymn that summarizes the conference for me is "I am going to run this race till I finish". From the various speakers, the over arching theme I heard is that " we are all thirsting for the presence of God and how we live life

Min. Sandra Dorsainvil

"What this Women Together meant to me "**Matthew 25:35 and I was clothed with a lot of Love from godly women in ministry**".

Pastor Ramona Guadalupe

"Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action." I John 3:18 (NRSV)

The conference was more than just a learning experience for each of us, but we were able to see old friends and make new ones. We were able to have lunch with Rev. Dr. Liliana DaValle and see Rev. Valentine Royal and many others we love and admire.



"Talk about being at the right place at right time. On the very first day of the conference I received troubling news regarding my health and though I fought the feeling I suddenly felt abandoned and alone. As the worship began I could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in a special way, and as the night continued, God didn't delay in letting me know that he was by my side... I sat and listened to stories and testimonies that allowed me to see that God had not left my side in all that I am enduring. It might not be easy, but with God all is POSSIBLE."

Min. Karina Fontanez

"The Women Together Conference was fantastic. It was truly a lifting up and encouraging time for women in ministry. From the time of worship, through the presentation of various workshops, to the fellowship of sharing time with each other, and eating the great food, it was fantastic. Rev. Dr. Wilma Johnson and her church hosted us with great joy and love. God's presence was truly in our midst. His love permeated throughout the Conference. As we served one another, His Spirit of unity was among us. So that with one heart and mouth (we) glorified the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 15:5-6). It is my prayer that this would be an annual event, "Women Together" in Ministry. Because the "Best Is Yet To Come.""

Rev. Cynthia A. Correia

We all look forward to the next Women Together: Lifting & Serving One Another Conference, and all stand ready to assist those who organized the conference in any way possible to insure that it happens again. We came back restored and renewed for our families and ministries having experienced unbridled praise and bottomless worship; we praised with all our breath and worshipped in truth to the very depth of our beings, and the purity of the experience is beyond measure. We thank God, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, Rev. Yvonne Carter and the program committee, Rev. Wilma Johnson and New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church and all those who made this event possible. May God continue to bless all that all may come to know the more of Him.

A fellow sister-laborer in Christ,
Rev. Dr. Judith A. Wesley