

The Christian Courier

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April 2019 Lectureship Edition

The “Historical” Churches of Christ 75th Annual National Lectureship Hosted by St. Louis, Missouri • April 20-25, 2019

Welcome to the “Gateway City” known as St. Louis, Missouri, and to the Churches of Christ 75th Annual National Lectureship.

The selected theme for this great convocation of gospel preachers and Christians from across the nation is entitled: “From Tragedy to Triumph: Exploring Man’s Fall and God’s Call to Redemption” taken from the epistle of I Corinthians 15:55-58.

This year the Lectureship program will feature a series of homilies which emanate from the epistles of Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Ephesians, and Philippians; that aptly address and correlate with the general theme.

In addition, the St. Louis area in concert with the National Lectureship will honor Dr. Ralph P. Smith, Sr., Minister of the Centreville Church of Christ in East St. Louis, Illinois, for his sacrificial labor among the people of God throughout the brotherhood.

The Women’s Division Program will recognize Dr. Opear R. Myles of Chicago, IL, Sister Bernice Pitts of Los Angeles, CA, in addition to Sister Fannie Bishop of Detroit, MI. Each of these revered “Sisters of Struggle” are “nonagenarians” having reached their ninetieth birthdays.

Opear R. Myles is the widow of Mark Myles, Sr., Bernice Pitts is the widow of Carroll Pitts, Jr., and Fannie Bishop is the widow of Jesse Bishop; all of whom were well known gospel preachers in the African American Church of Christ.

The Women’s Division will recognize Dr. Opear R. Myles of Chicago, IL, Sister Bernice Pitts of Los Angeles, CA, in addition to Sister Fannie Bishop of Detroit, MI

We thank God for the longevity of life He has bestowed upon these great “Ladies of Distinction.” Needless to say, they are worthy of such honor.

“Tribute to the Preacher’s Wife”

“She is a Godly woman and she has such grace; a warm greeting and smile can be found on her face.

“She always has to look just right; from early morning until late at night.

“She is such a Lady and everyone’s friend; she unselfishly serves with love deep down from within.

“Her husband she shares with a whole congregation; she humbly accepts his intense dedication.

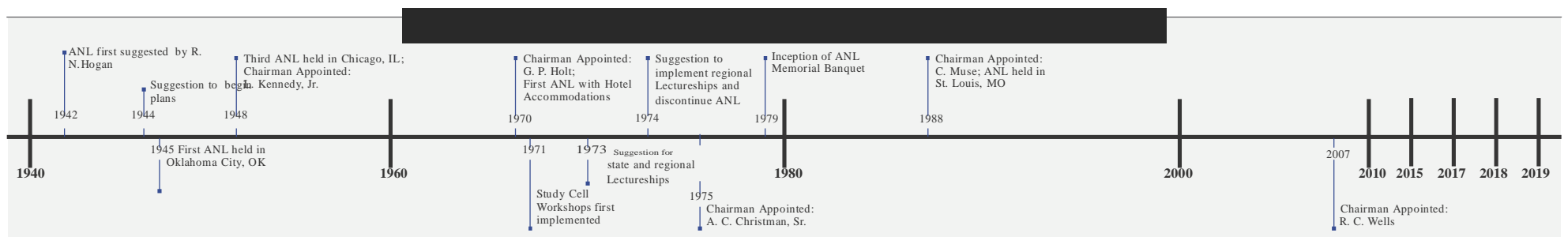
“Her precious time is not really her own; because there is always a need, they go on and on.

“At some point and someday she will reach the end of this race; as she meets her Master face to face.

“God has anointed her with a special life; she is without question the Preacher’s Wife!”



**In Remembrance of the Late
Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells
Advisory Committee Chairman
1933-2019**



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

“A Great Soldier of the Cross Has Been Officially Discharged from Duty” Dr. R. C. Wells, International Evangelist – New York City, New York

Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells, one of the most articulate ambassadors and preeminent proclaimers in the New Testament Church of Christ has passed away. Anyone who heard him preach the message of salvation will concur that he was without doubt a tenacious “Guardian of the Gospel” and a “Genuine Sir Galahad of God.”

Preachers from across the nation along with a myriad of members and church leaders were in attendance at the Harlem Church of Christ on both January 10-11, 2019, to acknowledge this “Champion of the Cross.”

The late Ossie Davis who gave the eulogy for Malcolm X in Harlem on February 27, 1965 (the same year Dr. Wells came to Harlem), said in his encomium:

“Harlem has ever been gracious to those who have loved her, have fought for her, and have defended her honor even to the death...”

The same altruism was revealed in regard to Dr. R. C. Wells. In concert with numerous members of the Church of Christ, a great galaxy of constituents from the Harlem community were present and in attendance for his memorial service.

Towards the close of his eulogy Davis said: “Malcolm was our manhood... our own black shining Prince! – who didn’t hesitate to die, because he loved us so.”

When history is correctly written pertinent to the Church of Christ, let it be acknowledged that Dr. R. C. Wells “didn’t hesitate to die,” because he loved the Lord, he loved the Church, and he loved preaching the gospel.

Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells made it known that his eulogy was to be given by Dr. W. F. Washington, Senior Minister of the New Golden Heights Church of Christ in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

With the help of God Almighty and the Holy Spirit, Dr. W. F. Washington electrified everyone in attendance as he preached from the very depths of his heart and soul.

A few of the accomplishments and accolades bestowed upon Dr. Wells are listed below:

- Churches of Christ National Lectureship Advisory Chairman
- 2016 Defender of the Faith Award
- Mentor and Counselor
- Distinguished Author
- World-Wide Global Evangelist
- SwCC Board of Trustees
- SwCC Alumni Chairman
- Prolific Debater and Moderator
- Educator and Missionary
- Church Historian and Curator

“God saw you getting tired and a cure was not to be, So He put His arms around you and whispered softly ‘Come and be with Me.’”

“With tearful eyes we watched you and saw you fade away, although we loved you dearly we could not make you stay.”

“A golden heart stopped beating laying loving hands at rest, God broke our hearts to prove to us that He only takes the best.”



Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells – International Evangelist



Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells and Family

“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

"The Dream Lives On"

African American Churches of Christ "Historical" National Lectureship Serving the Brotherhood Since 1945

According to the late Dr. J. S. Winston, the "Historical" National Lectureship among African American Churches of Christ was first suggested by the late Dr. R. N. Hogan in 1942, during his ministry with the Stonewall and Waco Street Church of Christ in Houston, Texas. Dr. Winston stated that Hogan called a meeting with the preachers of Texas and recommended to Levi Kennedy and G. E. Steward, the need for having a National Lectureship among African American brethren of the Church of Christ similar to that of the white brethren. It was the belief of Hogan that a Lectureship would help synchronize our preaching and teaching of New Testament doctrine, along with fostering a means of fellowship for those who would attend. Kennedy, Winston, and Steward, agreed with Hogan's idea that a Lectureship would serve a great need in our brotherhood.

In the year 1944 at the Bowser Christian Institute Annual School Meeting in Fort Smith, Arkansas, Steward suggested to Hogan, Winston, and Kennedy, that they should begin to prepare for the Lectureship which had been previously discussed in Houston, Texas, two years earlier. G. P. Bowser was very inspired by this idea and he also agreed there was a vital need for such an event.



G. P. Bowser
1874 – 1950

Bowser encouraged them to make plans for sponsoring a Lectureship for the following year. Subsequently, in 1945, Levi Kennedy, J. S. Winston, R. N. Hogan, and G. E. Steward agreed for the first Annual National Lectureship to be held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, with the East Seventh Street Church of Christ serving as host. G. E. Steward served as Minister of this congregation.

The dates of the first Annual National Lectureship among African American Churches of Christ were March 22-24, 1945, with a total of thirty-six Ministers in attendance. Due to the tremendous success of the Lectureship, it was recommended that it should be held every year. The suggestion was agreed upon unanimously by those who were present and it has been held annually since that time.

Although each of the preachers who attended the first "Historical" Annual National Lectureship have passed from this life since its inception in 1945, the National Lectureship continues to serve as a vital link for brotherhood fellowship among Ministers of the gospel and members of the visible kingdom of Christ across the entire nation.



R. N. Hogan
1902 – 1997



J. S. Winston
1906 – 2001



Levi Kennedy
1899 – 1970

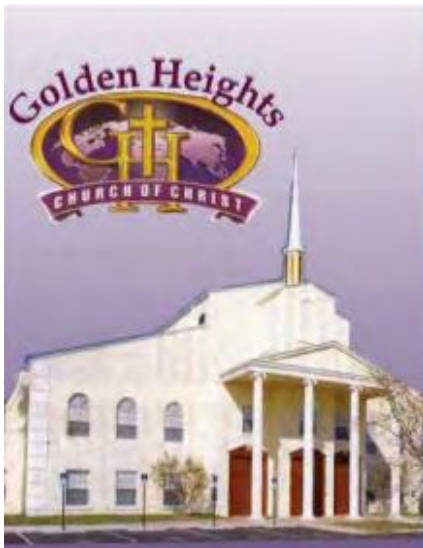


G. E. Steward
1906 – 1979

African American Churches of Christ Annual National Lectureship Orlando, Florida – 2020



"One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism"



Ministers' Institute Conference USA “W. F. Washington Theological Institute” www.ministersinstituteconference.com

W. F. Washington, Ph.D., Founder and President
Harvey M. Jackson, Ph.D., National Coordinator
Gloria Butler, National Women's Conference Coordinator
Lynne Connor, Ph.D., National Program Director

Harvey M. Jackson, Ph.D.
National Coordinator

Regional Staff Coordinators

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Dr. Jefferson R. Caruthers, Jr. – Winston-Salem, NC

Dr. Shelton Gibbs, III – Dallas, TX
Dr. O. J. Shabazz – New York City
Dr. O. J. Heyward – Atlanta, GA

Dr. Luis R. Lugo – Tampa, FL
Samuell Pounds – Winter Haven, FL
Dr. David C. Penn – Chicago, IL



Practical Intent and Guidance

- Participate in Plenary and Fiat Lux Workshops and Seminars
- Gain Insight into 21st Century Church Administration
- Network with Men of God from Across the Nation
- Engage in a Christian Atmosphere Where the Bible is Respected
- Interactive Seminarian Sessions for Ministers Only
- Instructive Sessions for Church Leaders Only

Standard Features of the “W. F. Washington Theological Institute”

- Evening Vespers With Powerful Gospel Preaching
- Enhancing Women's' Division Program
- Wednesday Evening “Honor Banquet” and Ministerial Awards
- Interactive Seminarian Sessions for Ministers Only



“Emphasizing Truth and Exposing Error”

The “W. F. Washington Theological Institute” is hosted by the New Golden Heights Church of Christ in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The Institute convenes annually during the third week of January each year to further the cause of Jesus Christ and to encourage gospel preachers in their respective work.

We firmly believe in the force of Matthew 16:18 to be as poignant and powerful in its application today as it was when spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ our risen Redeemer and Sovereign Savior.

As a result, three imperative and indispensable truths emerge from this divine declaration:

- 1) Revelation
- 2) Identification
- 3) Authorization

In Matters of Doctrine... UNITY
In Matters of Opinion... LIBERTY
In ALL Matters... LOVE

“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

“Preserving Our Historical Past”

The late Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells attempted to name each of the preachers below who attended the first “Historical” National Lectureship. Our research has enabled us to identify eighteen of the thirty-two men shown in this photograph. Can anyone today name the other individuals?



Bottom Row L-R John O. Williams, E. W. Anderson, Luke Miller, Levi Kennedy, Unknown, G. P. Bowser, G. E. Steward, Unknown, J. S. Winston, H. H. Gray, W. D. Booker
 Middle Row L-R Alonzo Patterson, Unknown, Roscoe M. Moore, L. M. Jones, Unknown, Cathey C. Locke, Leroy Durley, Unknown, Unknown, R. F. Nunley
 Top Row L-R Unknown, Unknown, Elcue Wright, Paul S. Settles, Unknown, Unknown, Robert Butler, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Unknown

First Annual National Lectureship – March 22-24, 1945 East Seventh Street Church of Christ Oklahoma City, Oklahoma G. E. Steward, Host Minister

The *Christian Courier* is a bi-annual publication established in the year 2012 by the Churches of Christ Annual National Lectureship. The overall and fundamental objective of the *Courier* is to share relevant information which pertains to the National Lectureship in particular and the African American Church of Christ in general. It is the visionary intent of the *Christian Courier* to publish articles that reflect sound biblical doctrine and those which emphasize the following frameworks:

- Theological foundations impacting New Testament doctrine and biblical interpretation.
- Historical perspectives pertaining to selected individuals and current issues in Christian ministry.
- Empirical and quantitative research that furthers our understanding of sound ministry practice.
- Acknowledgment of past and present ministerial contributions on behalf of the visible kingdom.
- Compassionate efforts performed by various individuals to help heal the hurts of humanity.

Let it be understood that the *Courier* does not promote any specific policies or ideologies that conflict with the Word of God. The Bible is our only standard of measurement in matters relating to religious faith and practice. Therefore, all articles submitted to the *Christian Courier* for publication should be thought-provoking, trustworthy, insightful and engaging. The editorial staff reserves the right to refuse any articles for publication in the *Christian Courier* that does not meet these standards set forth.

“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

Celebrating the Legacy and Ministry of Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells Minister Emeritus / Elder – Harlem Church of Christ



**Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells, Evangelist Extraordinaire
Stalwart “Defender of the Faith”**

However, in 1965 long after the Harlem Renaissance came to an end, another “renaissance” was introduced to the Harlem community by a gospel preacher named Roosevelt C. Wells.

Although he was not a poet in the tradition of Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, or Jean Toomer, Dr. R. C. Wells could recite the poetic prose found in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Ketuvim. Whereas the Harlem Renaissance imbibed a rebirth of social acceptance and collective affluence, Dr. R. C. Wells infused a rebirth of spiritual awareness and theological astuteness.

As a prolific debater, he was “set for the defense of the gospel.” He made it irrefutably clear in his preaching and teaching that he was not “ashamed of the gospel.”

When it came to standing for truth, he was willing to say it, preach it, write it, publicly debate it, suffer for it, and willing if need be... to die for it.

Dr. R. C. Wells could recite the poetic prose found in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Ketuvim.

Dr. R. C. Wells considered himself truly blessed by realizing his life-long dreams. First, being an Evangelist of our Lord Jesus Christ; second, having traveled around the world twice.

He began his career at his home congregation, the Eighth Street Church of Christ in Waco, Texas, at the age of ten. He was affiliated with the Church all of his life and became a member of the Church of Christ at the age of nine.

His mother Nora Mae Fisher Wells, his grandparents and virtually all of his

The Harlem Renaissance era in Harlem New York City, is often defined by historians as the “Golden Age” of African American culture and expression. Alain Locke, the acknowledged Dean and “Father of the Harlem Renaissance” frequently characterized and referred to this exhilarating epoch as “The New Negro Movement.”

The term “renaissance” itself refers to “rejuvenation,” “regeneration,” or “rebirth.” In this context, the Harlem Renaissance was time when people of African descent were “reborn” with a new sense of intellectual independence and individual pride.

Walking down the streets of Harlem on any day you might find great poets such as Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, Countee Cullen, Zora Neale Hurston, or even Langston Hughes. You might find celebrated political activists such as Dr. W. E. B. Dubois, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, Paul Robeson, or Marcus Garvey giving a speech at Liberty Hall his U.N.I.A. headquarters. If you visit Café Society, the Cotton Club, or Savoy Ballroom, you may find Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington, Cab Calloway, Fats Waller, Hazel Scott, Count Basie, Ethel Waters, Joe “King” Oliver, or the majestic Billie “Lady Day” Holiday.

Harlem in New York City was the epitome of “Bronzeville” in Chicago, Illinois, and “Black Bottom” in Detroit, Michigan, where African Americans could portray their unique talents without fear of race prejudice and reprisal. With numbers fueled by the “Great Migration” from the 1920s throughout the 1950s, Harlem became a major hub for African American businesses in the United States. Harlem was indeed the “City of Refuge” for migrants who left the sharecropping fields of the South in search for a better way of life.

maternal relatives were and are still faithful members of “the Church.”

The case is clear and there is no doubt that preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ was the gift God gave to Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells. Whether it was from a national platform, a local perspective or a lectureship gathering, he was anointed and called to preach the message of salvation.

He made it irrefutably in his preaching and teaching that he was not “ashamed of the gospel.”

An interesting thread woven into the lives of all great preachers is that they will encounter great hardships. Yet, they continue to endure and fight the good fight of faith knowing that “...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”

They acknowledge and embrace the burden of the apostle Paul when he stated: “*I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I preach not the gospel*” (1 Cor. 9:16 NIV). Great preachers accede they must preach or die.

The case is clear and there is no doubt that preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ was the gift God gave to Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells.

The record indicates that Dr. Wells labored for only three congregations. These were in Okmulgee, Oklahoma; Pontiac, Michigan; and New York City. As mentioned earlier, Dr. Wells was brought up in “the Church” along with his family and became a member of the Lord’s Church at the young age of nine.

“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

(WELLS... continued)

As a result, Wells was exposed to many great gospel preachers of the twentieth century both locally and nationally. Through his close association with these renowned preachers, he gained wisdom and encouragement; particularly from Dr. R. N. Hogan of Los Angeles, California.

Dr. Wells always treasured the blessings he enjoyed serving as the reader during his pre-teen and teenage years for Dr. Hogan in tent meetings. With Dr. Hogan as his mentor and role model, Wells always promised that he would become a preacher just like him.

With Dr. Hogan as his mentor and role model, Wells always promised that he would become a preacher just like him.

Wells attended A. J. Moore High School and was a member of the National Honor Society of American Schools. In his ninth year of school, he enrolled at the Nashville Christian Institute in Nashville, Tennessee, under the tutelage of Marshall Keeble.

However, he was not able to graduate from NCI due to family illness. Consequently, he returned home to support his mother and members of his immediate family. Upon returning home, Wells then graduated from A. J. Moore High School in Waco, Texas.

The curriculum vitae or résumé of R. C. Wells is quite extensive. Six degrees were conferred upon him including: AA; BRE; BTH; MRE; MTH and THD from Southwestern Christian College, Temple Theological Seminary, and Midwestern Theological Seminary.

Dr. Wells received three Doctor of Divinity degrees in addition to studying law at the Paralegal Institute, Blackstone School of Law, and Atlanta Law School.

Dr. Wells did an apprenticeship with the prestigious Hill and Hill Law Firm in New York City. He served as a college professor at his alma mater Southwestern Christian College and also Northeastern Christian College.

Whereas the Harlem Renaissance imbibed a rebirth of social acceptance and collective affluence, the preaching of Dr. R. C. Wells infused a rebirth of spiritual awareness and theological astuteness.

During his ministry with the Harlem Church of Christ, foreign mission works have been established in Africa, India, and New York State. He preached in forty-three states of the United States of America and in eighteen nations of the world on five different continents.

As a result, Wells was exposed to many great gospel preachers of the twentieth century both locally and nationally.

Dr. Wells authored multiple tracts and books which include: *And Ye Shall Know the Truth; I Shall Not Be Moved; Preacher, I Have a Question; Are You Worshipping God in Vain? Somebody Ought to Say Amen; I'm Different Because; and Corruptive Contrary Winds: Human-isms.*

Dr. Wells received three Doctor of Divinity degrees in addition to studying law at the Paralegal Institute, Blackstone School of Law, and Atlanta Law School.

Borrowing the heart-felt expression of President Franklin D. Roosevelt after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, January 3, 2019, is "a date which will live in infamy." For it was on this day that Dr. R. C. Wells



Co-Founder of Wells-Hairston High School Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa

entered into the eternal rest that he preached about for decades.

His loyal service to the visible kingdom was immeasurable and beyond compare. Whether it was chairing the National Lectureship Advisory Committee or working with Dr. W. F. Washington at the Ministers' Institute Conference, the magnetism of Dr. R. C. Wells could always be felt.

He leaves to forever cherish his memories a loving wife of sixty-five years Dorothy Louise Wells; his immediate family; and a litany of gospel preachers.

It has been said that to die in the service of the Lord is better than to die in the service of Satan. This was more than a sermon point for Wells. His desire to proclaim the gospel to every creature began as a child and it fortified with age.

At the zenith of the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells was one of 40 preachers (Black and

white) to attend a summit meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, during the summer of 1968 to discuss division between races within churches of Christ.

His sincere love for unity among Christians was evident world-wide. Wells baptized multiplied thousands throughout the United States, Africa, Canada, South America, Europe, the Baltic, Caribbean, Mediterranean, and Southeast Asia. He also founded the Christian Bible Institute in the city of New York, to equip Christians of all education levels to become effective servants for their congregations.

To this day, many have the words of King David etched into their hearts and memory due to the recitation of the Psalm by Wells before beginning a sermon. His sheer eloquence and effortless speech drew everyone into him as he delivered the hope of the Lord and promise of salvation.

"One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism"



W. F. Washington



Theological Institute

*The W. F. Washington Theological Institute
Ministers' Institute Conference USA
Extends Words of Consolation and Comfort*

To the Family of the Late Evangelist Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells
Minister Emeritus / Elder of the Harlem Church of Christ – New York City, NY
January 10, 2019

Dr. Harvey M. Jackson, Mound Bayou, MS
National Coordinator

Regional Coordinators
Dr. Steven N. Thompson, Milwaukee, WI

Dr. David C. Penn, Chicago, IL
Minister Leroy Butler, Valdosta, GA
Dr. Orpheus J. Heyward, Atlanta, GA
Minister DonBurnell Holly, Memphis, TN
Minister Samuell Pounds, Winter Haven, FL



Dr. Luis R. Lugo, Tampa, FL
Dr. Shelton T. W. Gibbs III, Dallas, TX
Dr. Olu J. Shabazz, Harlem, NY
Dr. Jeff Caruthers, Winston-Salem, NC

W. F. Washington, Ph.D. – Institute Founder/President

The “Historical” Churches of Christ 75th Annual National Lectureship Salutes “Sisters of the Struggle” Dr. Opear R. Myles and Bernice C. Pitts



Dr. Opear R. Myles, was born Opear Ree Cooley in Grenada, Mississippi, on October 25, 1928. She is the eldest daughter of seven children born to the late Garfield Sr., and Ivory Mae Cooley.

She received her education in the Grenada public school system and was taught the principles of patience, diligence, along with respect for her heritage through the example of her parents.

Dr. Myles later relocated to the city Chicago, Illinois, where she met and then married the late Minister Mark Myles, Sr., in 1953. She obeyed the gospel and was baptized into the body of Christ by Nathan McClinton.

In 1959 the Van Buren Street Church of Christ was established by her husband, which is known today as the Far West Church of Christ. She has faithfully served the Far West congregation as a Sunday school teacher, Ladies Bible class teacher, mentor for the youth and adults, along with being a spiritual counselor.

Her strong core values enabled her to maintain a successful career in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) for over 18 years. This experience allowed her to positively impact the minds of young students she frequently came in contact with on a daily basis.

Dr. Myles later relocated to the city Chicago, Illinois, where she met and married the late Minister Mark Myles, Sr., in 1953.

Opear R. Myles has been blessed to have five of her eleven children, fifteen grandchildren, two sons in-law, and countless godchildren as alumni of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas.

One of the most alluring aspects of Sister Myles and her family is that four of her sons are named after the New Testament gospel writers; three who are currently gospel preachers. They are listed as follows: Mark Myles, Jr., Luke Myles, Sr., Matthew Myles, Sr., and John Myles (deceased).

She obeyed the gospel and was baptized into the body of Christ by Nathan McClinton.

Because of her commitment to Christ and Christian education, an honorary doctorate of Humane Letters was conferred upon her in the year 2012 by Dr. Jack Evans, Sr., former president of Southwestern Christian College. The contributions of this great “Sister of the Struggle” and woman of God cannot be told adequately in such a short space.

However, it is essentially necessary that we recognize her legacy and “give honor to whom honor is due.” Her wisdom has led many lost souls to Jesus Christ and His visible kingdom.

Her favorite Bible verse is “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

Opear R. Myles was appointed as assistant treasurer of the United Ladies Bible Class of Chicago, IL over fifty years ago by Dr. Levi Kennedy, Jr., a position that she still maintains today. She is an active member of the Chicago area National Dinner Day and Penny Pageant Committee and also the Bowser Association of Women.

She has faithfully served the Far West congregation as a as a Sunday school teacher, Ladies Bible class teacher, mentor for the youth and adults, along with being a spiritual counselor.

She is a firm believer that if you keep God as your focus, all things are possible. Her favorite Bible verse is “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” One of her favorite sayings is: “I want to see God’s face in peace.”

Because of her commitment to Christ and Christian education, an honorary doctorate of Humane Letters was conferred upon her in the year 2012 by Dr. Jack Evans, Sr., former president of Southwestern Christian College.

Dr. Opear R. Myles is indeed a great influence to her family, her Church, and to those throughout the community where she lives. Her life is demonstrated in the old Negro spiritual entitled “Someday.”

“Harder yet may be the fight and right may often yield to might.

Wickedness a while may seem to reign and Satan’s cause may seem to gain.

But there is a God who rules above with a hand of power and a heart of love.

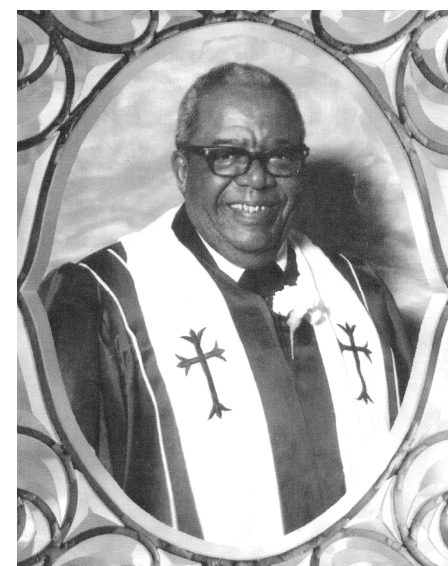
If I am right, I know He will fight my battle and I shall have peace someday.”

Finally, it was Jesus Christ our Lord and matchless Master who said to His followers:

“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

In 1959 the Van Buren Street Church of Christ was established by her husband, which is known today as the Far West Church of Christ.

We thank God for the precious longevity of life He has bestowed upon Dr. Opear R. Myles!



**Evangelist Mark Myles, Sr.
1918-2001**



The “Historical” Churches of Christ 75th Annual National Lectureship Salutes “Sisters of the Struggle” Bernice Pitts and Dr. Opear R. Myles

We give thanks to God for the lives of these “Sisters of the Struggle” who recently celebrated their ninetieth birthdays.

Sister Bernice Pitts is the only child of Lena and Mack T. Carr who both passed away during the year of 1983.

Bernice was born and raised in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, where she attended and graduated from Booker T. Washington High School.

According to Sister Pitts, it was during this time that she met her future husband, Carroll Pitts, Jr., who was in the United States Navy and he became one of her pen pals. She and her parents were later baptized into Christ by the late Dr. Levi Kennedy, Jr., of Chicago, Illinois, at a tent meeting in Phoenix, Arizona.

Following her graduation in 1945 from high school, Bernice moved west to of Los Angeles, California, and enrolled at George Pepperdine College (now University). After relocating to California, she met up with her best friend from Oklahoma, Catherine Bellamy.

During her college years at Pepperdine where both she and Carroll attended, they married in April 1947, at the McKinley Avenue Church of Christ (now Figueroa Church of Christ).



Bernice continued her education and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education. You may notice that she obtained her MRS before receiving her BS degree.

MRS is a term used to describe a young woman who attends college or a university with the sole intention of finding a spouse. Bernice and Carroll first attended the Compton Church of Christ where Brother Amos L. Cassius served as Minister during their early years of marriage.

She and her parents were later baptized into Christ by the late Dr. Levi Kennedy, Jr., of Chicago, Illinois, at a tent meeting in Phoenix, Arizona.

Carroll’s first ministry was with the Bakersfield congregation where he labored for a period of seven years. Dr. R. N. Hogan later asked him to serve as Associate Minister of the Figueroa Church of Christ.

He worked with Dr. Hogan and the Figueroa congregation until he was asked to become Minister of the newly purchased Normandie Avenue Church of Christ building in 1963, where he and Bernice faithfully served until his passing in 1987.

Bernice continued her education and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education. You may notice that Bernice obtained her MRS before receiving her BS degree.

Sister Bernice C. Pitts continues to maintain a busy schedule of church related work and service. She sings for patients in two nursing facilities each week, attends several Conferences and Lectureships throughout the entire

brotherhood, and participates in Ladies Programs where she often leads the singing. She is a loyal supporter of numerous benevolent and Christian organizations, including Women at Work for Southwestern Christian College, LACE, Normandie Christian School Board, and the United Christian Women’s Board. She is a long-time member of the Associate Women for Pepperdine (AWP).

Bernice Carr Pitts received the Bethel M. Smith “Positive Image Award” as a role model of high standards and Christian values.

Her record of stewardship and service to the Church of Christ and Christian education serves as examples for those who have come to know her.



Bernice C. Pitts

Facts Relating to the Late Evangelist Carroll Pitts, Jr.



Carroll Pitts, Jr., was baptized into the body of Christ in 1943 by Henry C. Tyner. He began preaching in 1952, at the Compton Avenue Church Christ in Los Angeles, California. Pitts served congregations in Southern California including the Compton Avenue Church of Christ, Baker Street Church of Christ in Bakersfield, California, and Figueroa Church of Christ in Los Angeles, California. Having been inspired by Dr. R. N. Hogan, Carroll Pitts established the Normandie Avenue Church of Christ in Los Angeles, California, in 1963.

The first worship service at Normandie took place on August 11, 1963, with thirty-three individuals placing their membership and six-hundred in attendance. The first baptisms occurred on August 25, 1963, and both the morning Bible Class and Men's Training Class were implemented.

As a former English teacher, Pitts understood the value of Christian education and in 1974, the Normandie Christian School was established to suffice this need. In concert with NCS, the Normandie Church of Christ offers two scholarships. The “Pamela Pitts Memorial Scholarship” is given to students who desire to attend the Normandie Christian School and the “Carroll Pitts, Jr., Memorial Scholarship” is given to those who aspire for the gospel ministry. Carroll Pitts, Jr., served the Normandie congregation for a period of twenty-four years as their first Minister. He departed this life on September 26, 1987.

Editor’s Note:

According to a recent statement given by Sister Bernice Pitts, she was in attendance at the “First Annual Historical National Lectureship” held in 1945.



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

We Celebrate the Ministry and Memories of Nine Fallen Soldiers

The *Christian Courier* wishes to acknowledge the deaths of nine gospel preachers within this past year (2018-2019).

- Dr. R. C. Wells (New York, NY)
- Cephas A. Northcutt (Dallas, TX)
- Robert Ravenell (Houston, TX)
- I. V. White (Abbeville, SC)
- A. J. Adams (Houston, TX)
- Mayo Towles (Decatur, IL)
- J. E. Thompson (Mt. Clemens, MI)
- Charles L. Smith (Chicago, IL)
- Cecil B. Herndon (Conroe, TX)

The ministry involving each of these men impacted everyone who knew them. Please pray for their families during this time.

Evangelist Cecil B. Herndon

Cecil Bernard Herndon was born August 2, 1945, in Houston, Texas. He was educated in the Houston Independent School District and graduated in 1963 with honors from Phillis Wheatley High School.

As a faithful member of the Fifth Ward Church of Christ, he presented his first sermon on January 1, 1963.

At Wheatley he participated in football and became a legend known as "The Toe." Cecil was baptized by A. D. Derek at the age of 12 at the Fifth Ward Church of Christ. At a very early age, he possessed a zeal for serving God and spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.



Cecil was humble and gifted to sing with the renowned group called "The Untouchables." As a faithful member of the Fifth Ward Church of Christ, he presented his first sermon on the date of January 1, 1963. At the age of 18, he then entered Southwestern Christian College and never looked back.

Upon deciding to engage in the ministry full-time, Cecil retired after 35 years of service as an Adjunct Professor from Houston Community College Systems.

After graduating from SwCC he enrolled at Texas College in Tyler, Texas. Cecil received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas College, a Master's degree in English from Texas A&M University, and later pursued a Doctorate degree while laboring with congregations throughout Texas. Upon deciding to engage in full-time ministry Cecil retired after 35 years of service as an Adjunct Professor from Houston Community College Systems.

At Wheatly he participated in football and became a legend known as "The Toe."

Throughout the years, he received numerous accolades and awards. Cecil was inducted into the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in 1972, honored as "Man of the Year," listed among the Outstanding Young Men of America in 1974 and 1976, and listed among the "Who's Who in Black America" in 1982. He was also appointed in 2016 as a member of the Churches of Christ National Lectureship Advisory Committee.

Minister Cecil B. Herndon went home to be with the Lord Saturday, August 11, 2018.

He was surrounded by his loving family, friends, and colleagues in the ministry.

Funeral services were held at the Garden Oaks Church of Christ in Houston, Texas, on the morning of August 18, 2018. At the request of the family, the eulogy of Cecil B. Herndon was delivered by Dr. W. F. Washington, Minister of the New Golden Heights Church of Christ in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.



"Death, be not proud, though some have called thee Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so; For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me..."

John Donne

*Cecil Bernard Herndon
1945 - 2018*

"An Elegy for the Late Evangelist Cecil B. Herndon"

Someone with much wisdom has articulated that *"Death is not a period that ends the great sentence of life, but a comma that punctuates it to more lofty significance. Death is not a blind alley that leads the human race into a state of nothingness, but an open door which leads man into life eternal."*

John the apostle declares in his mystique of the Apocalypse:

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write,, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them"

(Revelation 14:13).

"When we think of the late Cecil B. Herndon, let us remember that his work on this earth was of eternal value, and because of that he will have eternal reward.

"We say that Cecil has 'departed,' but God says that Cecil has 'arrived.' He has reached the final destination of this terrestrial warfare.

"We say that Cecil has 'expired,' but God says that Cecil has 'appeared.' For to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

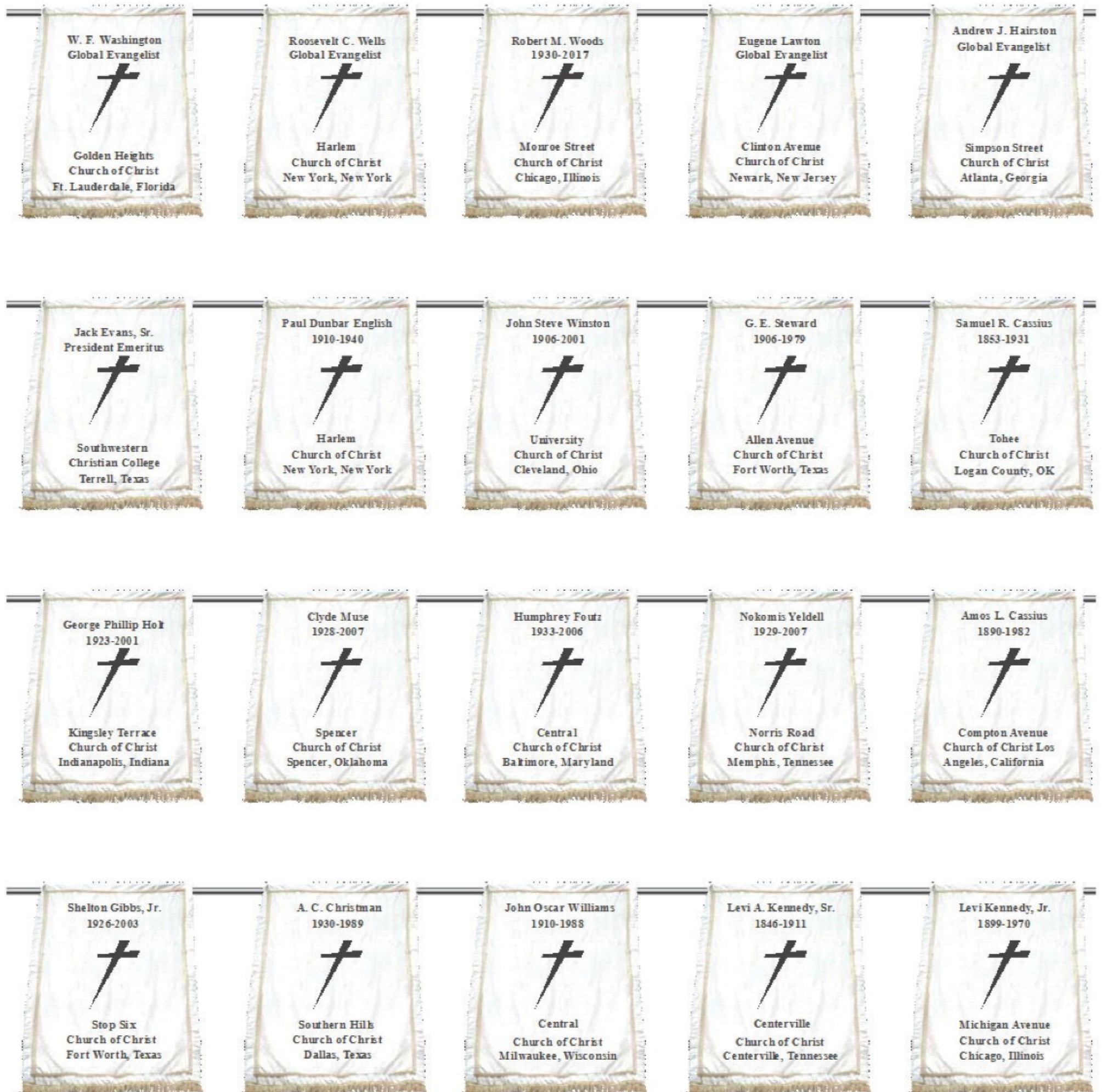
"His race may have ended earlier than we anticipated, but we still have our race to run, and Cecil would not have it any other way than we give our very best for the visible Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

"Just as General Douglas MacArthur once stated that 'Old soldiers never die, they just fade away,' God sees things from such a different perspective than we do. God never sees His children die.. He simply sees them coming home."

"One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism"

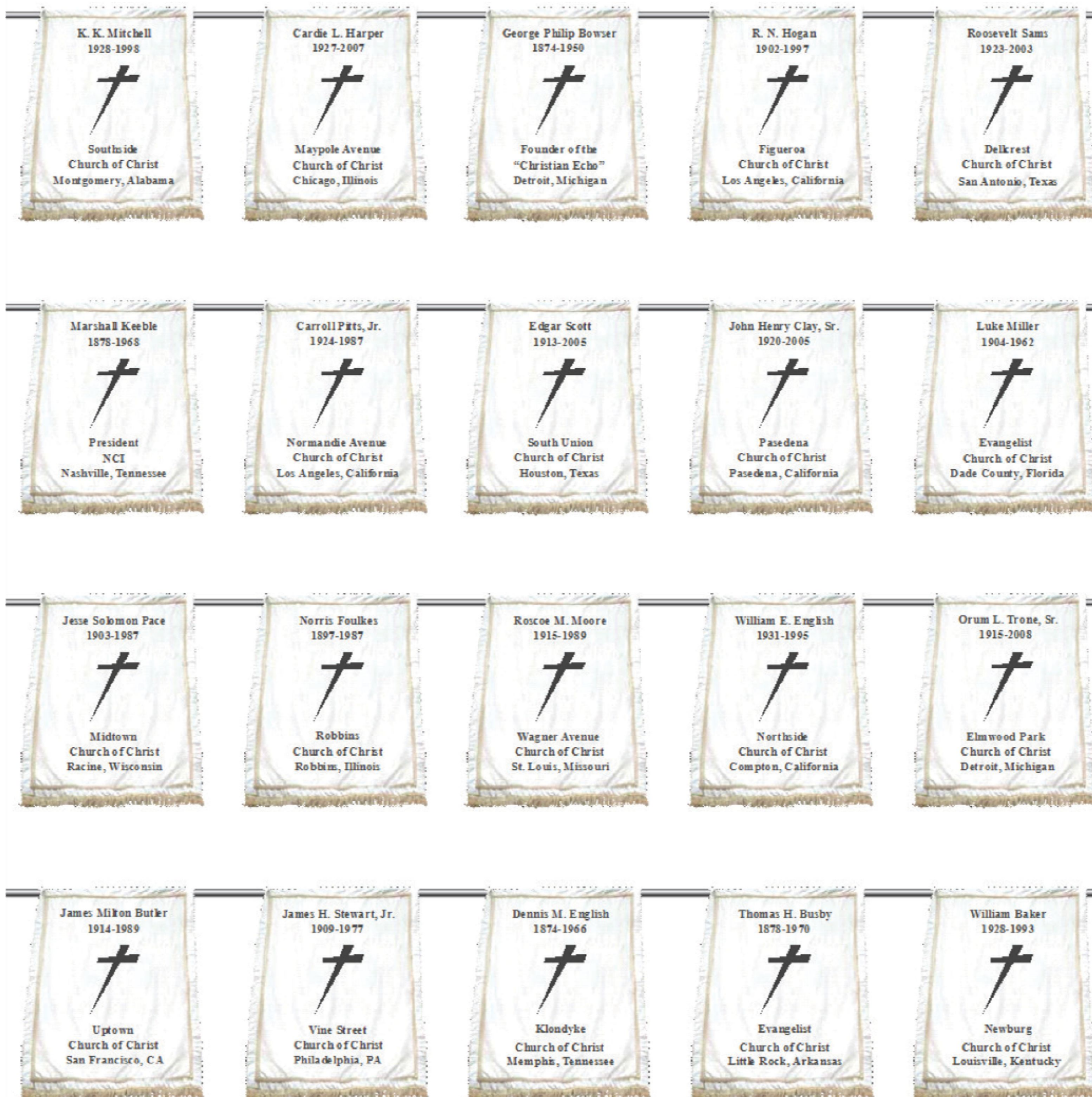


“And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



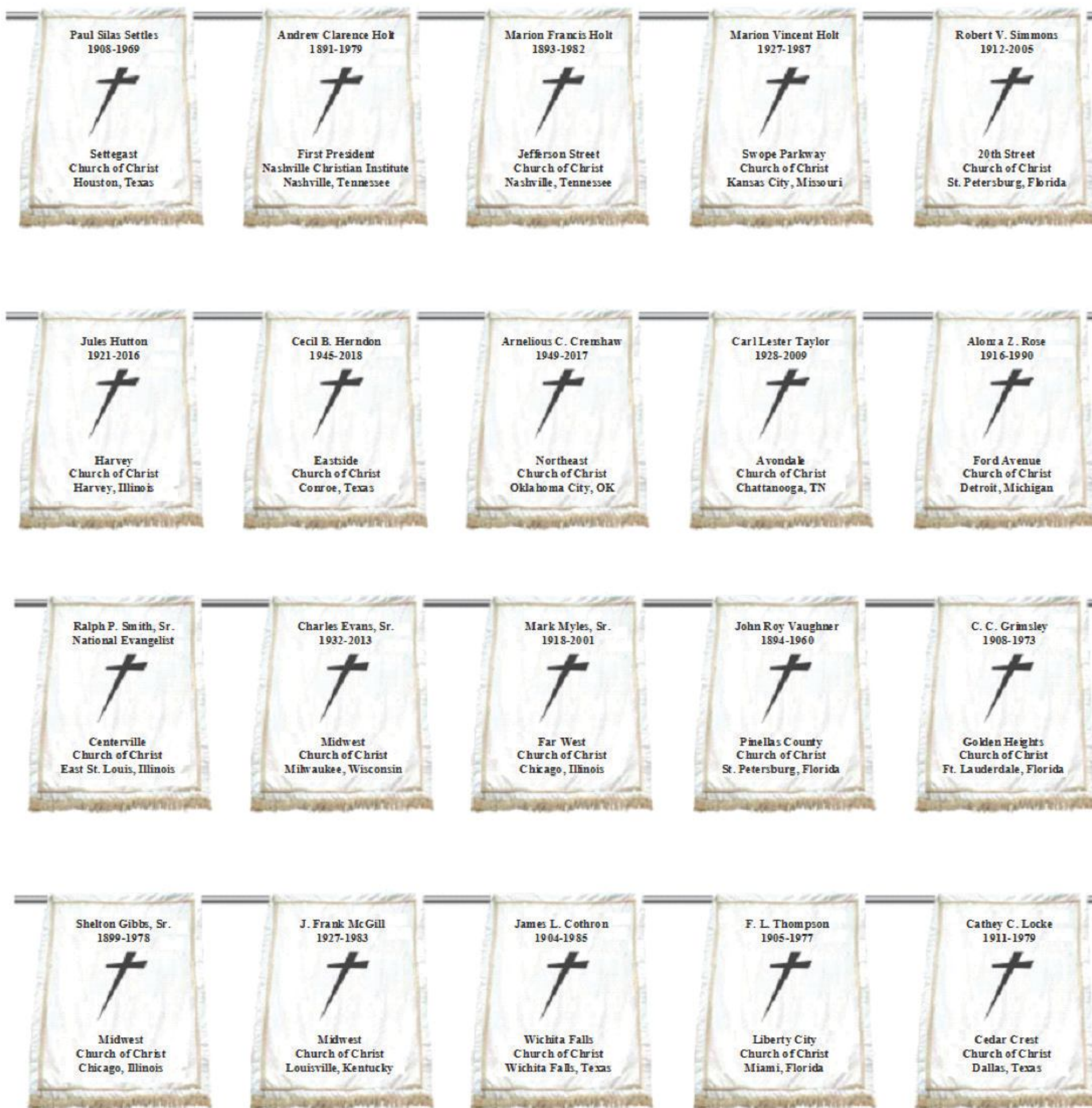
“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

“And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”

“And How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?”



“One Lord... One Faith... One Baptism”



Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells

"There is a Prince and a Great Man Fallen This Day In Israel" (2 Samuel 3:38)

By: W. F. Washington, Ph.D.
Ministers' Institute Conference 2019

Roosevelt, although separated from our human family, we cannot but mourn our great loss, in the home-going of so great a gospel preacher, so noble a heart, and strong an arm, as that of Roosevelt Wells. Feeling that his ministerial example speaks to us and to our brotherhood, this note would be a just tribute to his mighty memory.

Death is the "touch of nature" which pre-eminently "makes the world all kin." God did not make it. It came in with sin. Yet we may say and still be reverent, that without it, as man has been since the fall, he could not live forever in his own world. We sometimes come to think that greatness cannot and should not die, and we marvel that the bolt should strike the tallest tree.

We sometimes inadvertently feel that mortal giants like Roosevelt Wells should not have died. It is in moments like these the instinctive, universal utterance of the hearts of our brotherhood remembers the lament of King David for his son Absalom – "...*know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?*"

The worshipping assemblies of the African American churches of Christ are in harmony with us this day. From one end to the other, of our broad land over this new made grave. In which this grand old soldier of over eight decades, conqueror in all, the patriot hero, the people's

preacher, rests from his labors, honor and arms.

"A man has fallen." I do not here mean a mere male, human individual. A walking homosapien that wears a hat. I speak of that which God meant when He said, "*Let us make man in our image and after our likeness.*"

A man that had a heart of faith and yielded to it. A man that shaped his circumstances. A man that cared not for himself. A man of justice. A man in generosity. A man in magnanimity. A man who met spiritual emergencies.

A man who dared and bore his burdens in the heat of the day. A man who preached without fear or favor. A thunderbolt in spiritual warfare, a dew drop in the day of peace. Truly, "a man has fallen this day in Israel." He was a prince in quiet dignity. A prince in calm, indomitable resolution. A prince in utter disregard of consequences when the gospel was at stake. Who does not know, who does not feel, who does not own that it is so?

In his unostentatious life, he carried the gospel to the remote nations of the world and whose reputation will never die. His name will live among us as long as the African American churches of Christ will live, whose standard of truth he so often bore will live!

"...*Know ye not that there is a prince and great man fallen this day in Israel.*"

(II Samuel 3:38)

African American Church of Christ “Defenders of the Faith”

Many times we fail to acknowledge gospel preachers within our fellowship who are considered to be distinguished “**Defenders of the Faith**” and consummate “**Champions of the Cross.**” The specific criteria we have aptly ascertained for this noteworthy recognition is formulated upon their successful engagement in documented “**Marquee Debates**” against religious false teachers in addition to their uncompromising “**Defense of the Holy Bible.**”

Furthermore, these men have blazed the uncharted wilderness trails of our theological experiences by “**establishing congregations**” across the nation based upon the premise of New Testament doctrine. The *Christian Courier* takes this opportunity to recognize the following individuals both present and posthumously for their unfaltering devotion to the cause of Jesus Christ and His visible kingdom:



Dr. W. F. Washington, Sr. Living Legend – Present Pioneer
New Golden Heights Church of Christ
Fort Lauderdale, FL



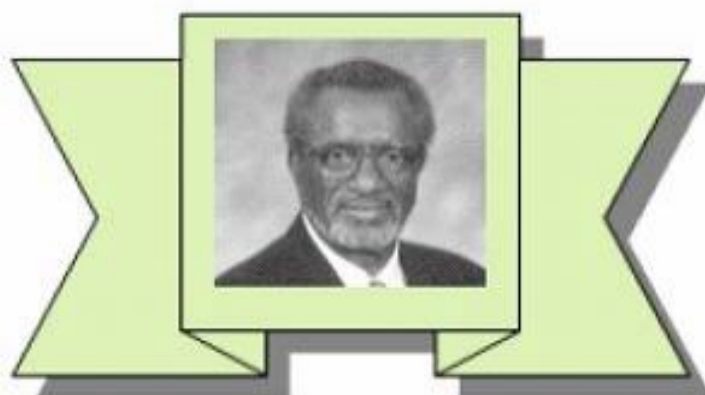
Dr. Jack Evans, Sr. Living Legend – Present Pioneer
President Emeritus – Southwestern Christian College
Terrell, Texas



Dr. G. P. Holt, Sr. (1923-2001) Deceased Pioneer
Kingsley Terrace Church of Christ
Indianapolis, IN



Dr. Roosevelt C. Wells (1933-2019) Deceased Pioneer
Harlem Church of Christ
New York City, NY



Dr. Nokomis Yeldell, Sr. (1929-2007) Deceased Pioneer
Norris Road Church of Christ
Memphis, TN



Humphrey Foutz (1933-2006) Deceased Pioneer
Central Church of Christ
Baltimore, MD