

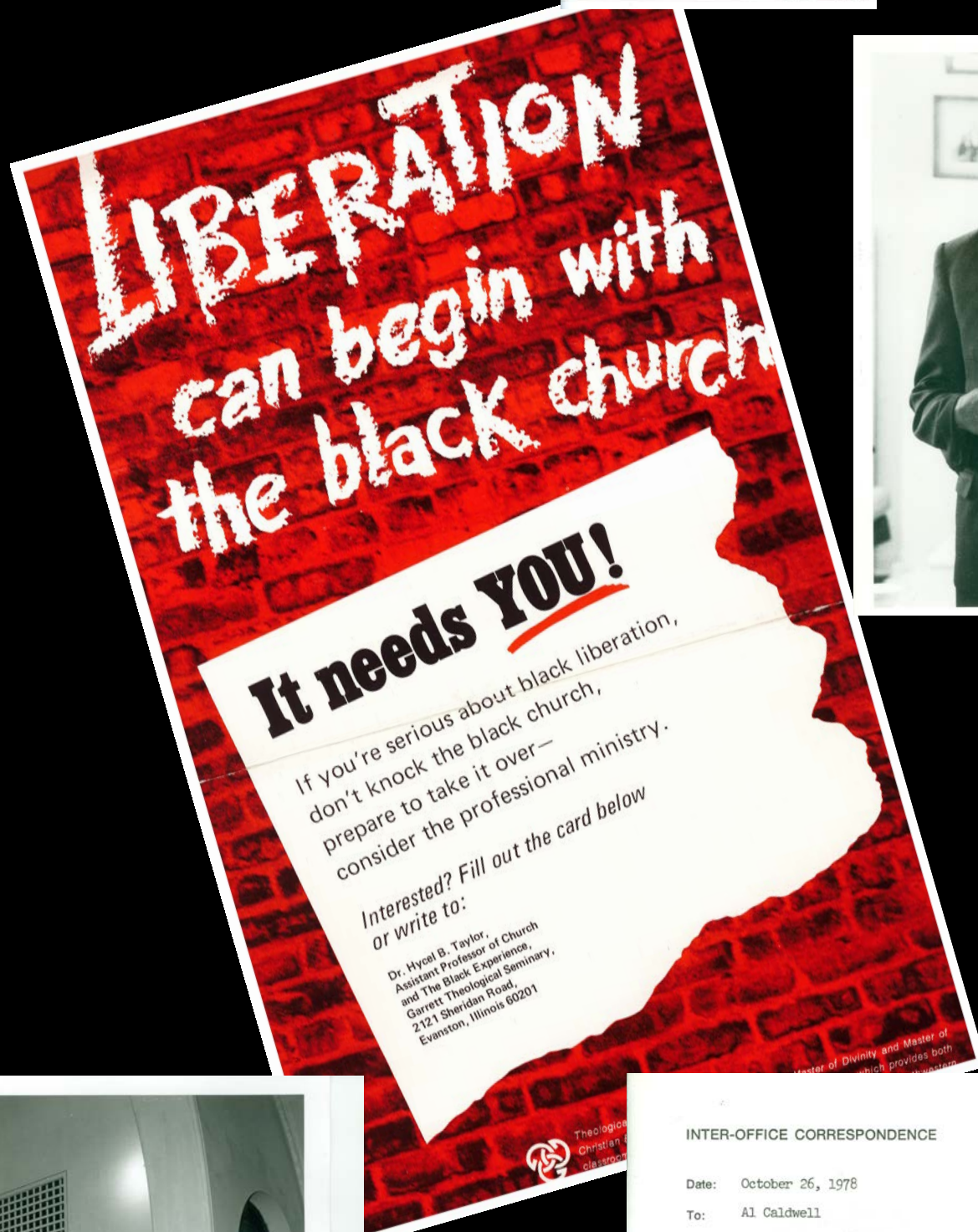
“Looking Back, Stepping Forward: A Photo Exhibition”

The Center for the Church and the Black Experience has served as a site of hospitality, inspiration, innovation and hope for black students, faculty, staff and community members since its inception fifty years ago. This photo instillation seeks to commemorate select historical moments that highlight the beauty and brilliance of Black life cultivated through the intentional work of the CBE. This instillation is not a full representation of the history of CBE. We know our history often goes beyond what is chronicled in archives, so we want acknowledge the unnamed faces, unheard voices, and personal stories of the Black folks unrepresented in the annals. We honor your intelligence, leadership, voices and bodily presence, because without the collective effort of each Black person existing and persisting at Garrett-Evangelical, we would not have made it to this fifty year milestone. So, we celebrate every Black body that has inherently radicalized G-ETS through irrevocable joy, artistic expression, Black brilliance, Black worship, impeccable fashion and style, bold leadership, transformative protest and communal love. Take a look back by re-membering the past as we step forward into a moment of redefining and reimagining Black life at Garrett-Evangelical for the days to come.

Curator: Gina A. S. Robinson

Creative Director: LaSheena Williams

1970's



INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

**Garrett-Evangelical
Theological Seminary**
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201
Telephone: Area Code 312/869-2511

Date: October 26, 1978

To: Al Caldwell

From: Hazel Domangue, CBEC

Subject:

As per our telephone conversation, please arrange for the library to have on display books, periodicals, and other such materials relating to Dr. Howard Thurman as an effort to not only publicize Dr. Thurman's visit but as an educational process to those who utilize the library facilities. Also, as was mentioned over the telephone, the Church and the Black Experience Center would like to reserve several dates for usage of the display case in the lobby for the following occasions:

- From two weeks to the entire month of February, 1979 - Black History Month
- From two weeks to the entire month of April, 1979 - Consultation (Thurman)
- During the week of May 14, 1979 - Black Theological Scholars Consultation
- Early weeks in June, 1979 - African Study Tour Group

Please confirm these dates. Your cooperation is appreciated.

April 79

A DECADE 70'S A BEGINNING AND NOW THE 80'S

10 YEARS

"Where to NOW, BLACK PEOPLE?"



Garrett-Evangelical
Theological Seminary
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Newsletter

1980's

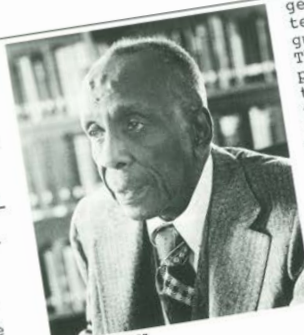
the Church and the Black Experience

Volume 4 No. 1
December 1982

CBE Celebrates the Life of Dr. Howard Thurman

April 19-20, 1983 will be a signal period of celebration for The Church and the Black Experience and the Garrett-Evangelical community. Those days will mark the inauguration of the Howard Thurman Consultation of Black Theological Scholars. This bi-annual event will bring to the campus black persons significantly involved in research, publication, and social and ecclesial praxis relative to the black experience. Through lectures, forum discussions, workshops, and the preached word, intention is to explore the meanings of the black religious experience, to the end of surfacing new insights and action directives for pursuing a vision of human community which images justice, equity, and inclusiveness under God.

The Consultation is named in honor of one for whom the achievement of such a community was a lifelong commitment and passion, the Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman. Born in Daytona Beach, Florida, in 1900, Thurman became a pastor and educator of unusual spiritual perception. He was acclaimed one of the



Howard Thurman
1900-1980

best preachers of this century. His lectures and meditational writings informed the thought and resourced the spirits of generations of scholars, social activists, and parish pastors. His career included service on the faculties of Morehouse and Spelman Colleges, deanship of the chapels of Howard and Boston Universities, founding pastorship of the unique Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples (San Francisco), and chair of the Howard Thurman Educational Trust. He was a man of international repute, constantly in demand as a speaker by those who sought to experience his spellbinding presentations.

Dr. Thurman lectured twice at Garrett-Evan-

gelical Seminary, the latest occasion in 1978 as guest of The Church and the Black Experience. Upon his death in 1980, the decision was made by that office to rename its major lectureship as to honor the memory of one whose life was such a rich contribution to the church and to the black experience.

Co-sponsorship with BMCR

Joining the CBE in the sponsorship of this inaugural Consultation is the Chicago chapter of the Black Methodists for the Church Renewal. This is reflective of a long and valuable partnership in the task of equipping black persons for the ministries of the United Methodist Church.

A highlight of this year's program will be the presence of Mrs. Sue Thurman, who will share in the presentation of the festschrift which has been done in honor of her husband. The work, entitled *God and Human Freedom*, is being published by Friends University Press and is due to be released by the Consultation date. Its nineteen contributors include such names as Benjamin Mays, Robert Williams, James Earl Massey, Jurgen Moltmann, J. Deotis Roberts, Martin

Storefront seminary polishes pastors' skills

Chicago Sun-Times, Saturday, February 9, 1980

TAYLOR ADDED: "We have no intention of spoiling them. We want to enhance the organizational ability and preaching talent, in many ways, than some of the students their own instincts. They come from people and to the traditions of the black that is immediate and direct."



STOREFRONT CHURCH staff members of the Chicago Religious Institute. (l. to r.) Ruby Chaires, Rev. C.W. Jones and Joyce Favors. (Sun-Times Photo by Don Bierman)

FROM STOREFRONT TO STEEPLE

Old-time religion
gets a new
lease on life

In the spirit

Church: Second Baptist Church of Evanston.
Atmosphere: Warm as toasted bread.
Liturgy: Eclectic and electric.
Sermon: He'll be ring ring true.

"I come here for a joyous time. I just become uplifted"

the Fourth Annual Mondecai W. Johnson Institute of Religion

Colgate Rochester/Boxley Hall/Crozer
1100 S. Goodman St.

District 65 drops harassment case

Teachers see King's spirit
as the harasser

Trinity College

Black
Emphasis
Week
Feb. 10-16, 1980



The Rev. Hycle B. Taylor told 150 p for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday that "The battle is no longer microscopic." (Daily photo by N

Dr. Hycle B. Taylor
Director of Black Church Studies
Garrett-Evangelical Seminary
Evanston, Illinois

Fri. March 20 at 11:20 a.m. on campus
8:00 p.m. at New Bethel C.M.E.

EVANSTON RESIDENT Hycle B. Taylor also spoke to the board, comparing the harassment of the school administrator to "subtle indications of Ku Klux Klanism."

"We sense the onslaught of a lynch mob that is cloaked in the modern garb of the (council), which proposes double standards that are discriminatory along the lines of race."

THE REV. TAYLOR said the board must take full responsibility for not protecting the accused administrator. He criticized the immaturity and incompetence of DEC leaders. Taylor also charged that there was duplicity in DEC's method of representing various members, and that its grievance procedure is "manipulatable."

ETHICAL ISSUES
SEMINAR
THEME: "HUMAN RICHES"

"A Theological Perspective"
"A World Perspective"
"A Black Perspective"

Dr. Taylor will be the principal speaker for the Lenten Learning Session. His topic will be "What Makes A College Christian?"

Guest Speaker: Dr. Hycle Taylor
Professor of Theology
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Evanston, Illinois

Sunday - Wednesday,
March 2 - 5, 1980

Jarvis Christian College
Hawkins, Texas

THE CHURCH AND THE BLACK EXPERIENCE
PRESENTS

OCTOBER 27-28, 1987

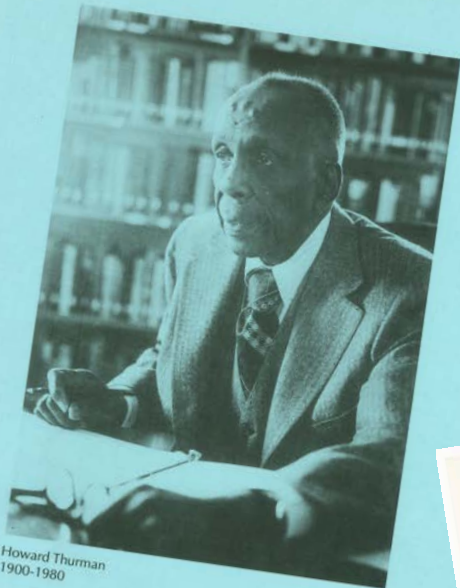
BUILDING & PROMOTING



THE BLACK FAMILY

Garrett-Evangelical Theological
Seminary
Evanston, Illinois

HOWARD THURMAN CONSULTATION INAUGURAL PROGRAM APRIL 18-20, 1983



Howard Thurman
1900-1980

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Evanston, Illinois

1980's



REV. & MRS. WILLIAM A. DYSON

THE CHICAGO RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE

Chicago Religious Institute is here; her faith in God she holds ever dear, come Chicago Religious Institute roll along; send forth your children brave and strong. May rejoice to be on your team, to cast your tidings into life's flowing stream, hoist your banner, that your children can say, Chicago Religious Institute, you help my day.

There are so many things within your doors, that those who despair, no more. Many good instructions are the reasons why, if you want help, Chicago Religious Institute, you should try.

Rev. William A. Dyson

Faculty of The Chicago Religious Institute



Seated left to right: Dr. Philip A. Harley, Dr. Larry Murphy, Rev. C. W. Jones; Top row: Rev. Leo Constantino, and Rev. John Jackson.



Carl H. Mabury



Stanley Hallett



Rev. Hycle Taylor



Joyce Favors

10TH ANNIVERSARY

DAY LONG PROGRAM

December 5, 1980

Breakfast	8:00 a.m.	Cafeteria
Class Visitation	9:00 a.m.	
Convocation	11:00 a.m.	Chapel
Preachers		Dr. Julius Del Pino ('76) Assistant Professor of Church Administration and Pastoral Theology, St. Paul School of Theology Kansas City, MO
		Rev. Carlton Eversley Level III Student, Garrett-Evangelical
President's Alumni/ae Luncheon	12:00 NOON	
Speaker		Rev. Hector Grant, Director Division of Ordained Ministry The United Methodist Church
Workshop Room 205	1:30 p.m.	"WHERE WE WERE, WHERE WE ARE, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?"
Panel		Rev. Thomas L. Brown ('72) Pastor, Ebenezer Baptist Church Indianapolis, Indiana
Dr. Gessel Berry, Moderator ('71) Pastor, New Gresham UMC Chicago, Illinois		Rev. Tallulah Fisher Williams ('77) Associate Pastor St. Mark United Methodist Church Chicago, Illinois
Rev. Gregory Ingram ('75) Pastor, Quinn Chapel AME Church Chicago, Illinois		
Rev. Julia Brogdon ('79) Interim Pastor Parkway Gardens Christian Church Chicago, Illinois		
Break	2:45 p.m.	
Five (5) Small Group Discussions Rooms 105, 106, 207, 208, 211	3:00 p.m.	Reflection Question: "IN LIGHT OF TODAY'S THEME(S), HOW AND IN WHAT WAY DOES THIS INFORM UNDERSTANDING, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE PRACTICE OF MINISTRY?"
Plenary Session	3:30 p.m.	
Leisure Time	4:00 p.m.	
Awards Banquet BANQUET SPEAKER	6:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn, Evanston, Illinois Dr. James Cone, Professor of Theology Union Theological Seminary, New York

CBE

G-EBS

G-ETS

OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

Date:

To: My faculty colleagues

From: Hycle Taylor

Subject: Announcement

Garrett-Evangelical
Theological Seminary
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201
Telephone: Area Code 312/869-2511

This letter is to formally announce my resignation as Director of The Church and the Black Experience (CBE) program, effective June 30, 1980. After ten (10) years of successful building of an administrative and programmatic foundation for the CBE, I now see the necessity to give full time to the creative work of research and teaching which will equip students to become effective religious and social change agents to meet the challenges of the 1980's. I feel confident and rewarded in the fact that under my direction, G-ETS has established and maintained for ten (10) years the strongest and most productive "Black Studies" program of any seminary in the country. Although the title, Black Studies, has borne a stereotype which never fully defined the CBE, as a program dedicated to excellence in black ministry, the CBE office made possible an unprecedented and significant presence of black faculty, students, and staff secured with the needed structural, political, and academic arrangements in this predominantly white learning environment. In addition, it has created an interracial educational context where human reconciliation under God is becoming a true possibility.

There is now a new imperative for me to move to full concentration in my academic position as "Professor of the Church and the Black Experience," the title designating my faculty position upon my appointment in 1970. Through my membership in the fields of Theology (applied), and Preaching and Worship, I will teach students how to apply critical theological analysis to real life situations which they will confront in the parish. Also, I will direct the Church and Community track of the Doctor of Ministry program. Deriving from my research will be the completion of some long overdue manuscripts. Among my incomplete writings are: a critical study of "Black Studies" programs in seminaries, an interpretive history of The Church and the Black Experience program here, and a Poetic Theology of Black Christian Culture in America.

Being the Director of the CBE has been a significant and edifying challenge in my life for a decade. My commitment and dedication to students and the masses of oppressed people to whom the ministry of Christ must be directed, is now met by a greater challenge which is evident in a renewed and yet unchecked upsurge of attacks on "Black Studies" programs all over the country. While I move to a different front of the battle, it is my sincere hope that my successor/s in the Directorship of the CBE will meet the challenge with a greater dedication and commitment.

1990's



FALL QUARTER 1999



DR. LINDA E. THOMAS
CBE Director and Assistant Professor of Theology and Anthropology

at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
2121 Sheridan Road Evanston, Illinois
CBE OFFICE: 847-866-3914

FALL FORUM

"Applying Eurocentric Theological Principles in the African American Church"
Tuesday, October 19 Noon - 1:30pm
Room 107

FALL LECTURE

DR. MICHAEL DYSON

Professor of Religious Studies, Senior Fellow of the DePaul Humanities Center,
DEPAUL UNIVERSITY, CHICAGO
Wednesday, October 20 7pm
G-ETS Chapel of the Unnamed Faithful

OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, October 21 3:30 - 5:30pm
Maceo Pembroke Room

CULTURAL SHARING

Rev. Sidwell Mokguthu of Pretoria, South Africa
Tuesday, November 16 Noon - 1:30pm
Room 107





Seminary welcomes new CBE director

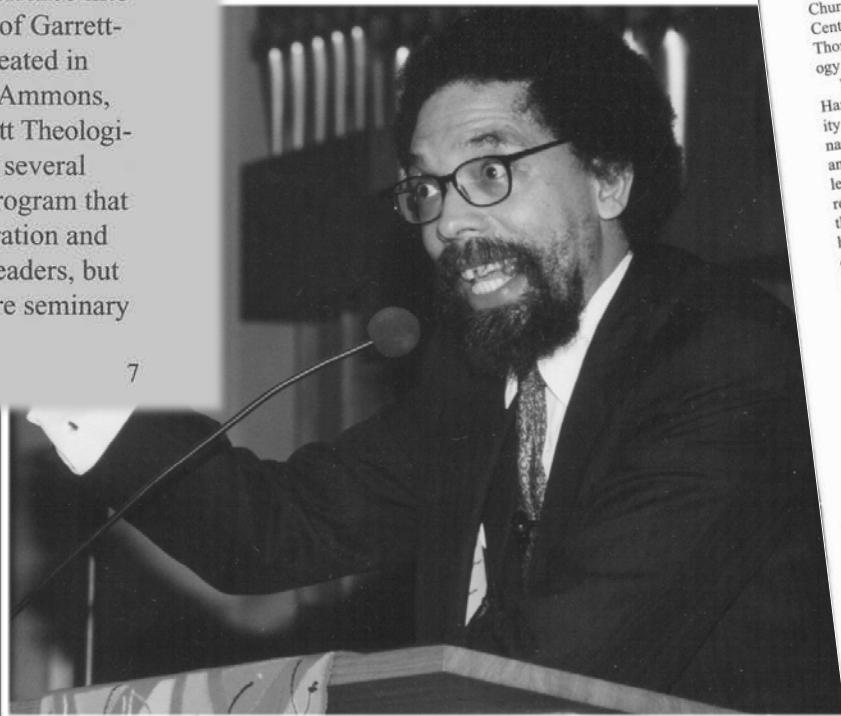
When Linda Thomas takes over as director of the Center for the Church and Black Experience, she'll be helping to nurture a vision that started almost 30 years ago, a vision that sought to develop African-American church leaders and integrate the African-American experience into the church as a whole.

In addition to acting as director of CBE, Thomas will be assistant professor of theology and anthropology. She comes to Garrett-Evangelical from Iliff School of Theology where she was assistant professor of anthropology and religion. Previously she was dean of students and lecturer at Wesley Theological Seminary, and she has been pastor of two churches in New York. Thomas has done extensive research in the congregational life among the poor in post-apartheid South Africa. That research was supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trust. "I'm excited about being director of CBE because it will provide me an opportunity to offer leadership in implementing a dynamic model of leadership as we enter the 21st century," Thomas said.

Thomas joins a notable list of past CBE directors, all of whom have worked to further CBE's primary goal: to integrate the black experience into the total life and learning of Garrett-Evangelical. CBE was created in 1970 when Bishop Edsel Ammons, who was then on the Garrett Theological Seminary faculty, and several students conceived of a program that would improve the preparation and training of black church leaders, but also would affect the entire seminary



Linda Thomas



7

1990's

1998 Fall Lecture

By Betty Campbell

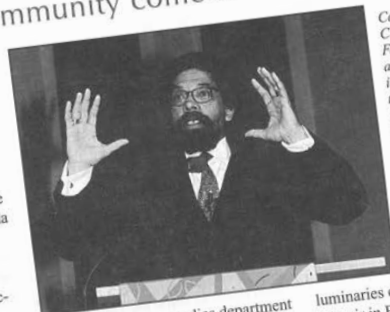
On October 14, 1998, the Garrett-Evangelical seminary community welcomed Cornel West as the 1998 Fall Lecture speaker. The lecture was sponsored by the Center for the Church and the Black Experience. The Center is under the leadership of Linda Thomas, assistant professor of theology and anthropology.

West, currently a professor at Harvard University, spoke to a capacity crowd of persons from the seminary and the Chicago area academic and religious communities. In his lecture, he outlined the historical relationship between the church and the black experience and addressed how the church can help deal dynamically with problems facing society today.

West has had a distinguished academic career, graduating from Harvard in 1973 and receiving his MA and PhD degrees from Princeton University in 1975 and 1980. Prior to joining Harvard's faculty, he served as professor of religion and director of



Guest speaker Cornel West with president Neal Fisher and faculty member Linda Thomas.



Cornel West in the Chapel of the Unnamed Faithful. West's academic interests include problems facing the African-American urban underclass and the development of an ongoing dialogue between African-Americans and Jews.

the Afro-American studies department at Princeton University.

In recent years, West has been a highly visible and eloquent speaker in the ongoing racial debate, appearing on television shows such as *Firing Line*, *Nightline*, and *Good Morning America*. He has been a passionate advocate for community-based political action, working with individuals such as Bill Bradley, Jesse Jackson, Kweisi Mfume, and Bishop Desmond Tutu. West is currently part of President Clinton's National Conversation on Race and, since 1994, has co-chaired, along with Sylvia Ann Hewlett, the National Parenting Association's Task Force on Parent Empowerment.

In addition to his activities as teacher, activist, and speaker, West has published numerous articles and twelve books. His books include *Jews and Blacks: Let the Healing Begin*, *The Future of the Race*, and the best-selling *Race Matters*. His latest book are *Restoring Hope*, a compilation of interviews with African-American

luminaries discussing hope and despair in Black America, and *The War Against Parents*, co-authored with Sylvia Ann Hewlett.

Linda Thomas, director of the Center for the Church and the Black Experience, brought West to the seminary because he is "the ideal of a rigorous scholar who also is committed to vigorous faith development, not only in academia, but in the larger faith community." As a way of strengthening bonds among seminary, church, and community, Thomas received support in hosting this lecture from Trinity United Church of Christ (Jeremiah Wright, pastor), St. Mark United Methodist Church (Myron McCoy, 1982 G-E, pastor) and from the seminary lecture committee (Rosemary Ruether, chair).

Thomas plans to continue providing programs that will revitalize the Center and make it "a beacon that shines its light on great things that are happening as the church approaches the 21st century." ■

January 1999





CALLING ALL PASTORS, CHURCH MUSICIANS, CHOIRS AND DANCERS!

summer music and worship seminar

Preacher, Teacher, Conductor, and Grammy Award Winning Vocalist who co-led The United Methodist Church 1996 General Conference music and worship, and directed music and worship for the 2000 General Conference.

Rev. Cynthia Wilson
Ph.D. Student-Liturgical Studies
Garrett-Evangelical
Coordinator and Plenary Speaker



Min. LaShawn D. Gary
St. John AME
Aurora, IL

Min. Kina Nicholas
from Shekinah Glory
Dance Ministries
Valley Kingdom Ministries
International, Holland, IL



COURSE OFFERINGS INCLUDE:

- Biblical and Theological Foundations for Choir, Dance, Instrumental Worship Leadership
- Community Building within Ministry Units
- Passionate Worship: PERFORMANCE OR PRAISE ???

Saturday, July 25, 2009 • 8:30am - 4:30pm
Maple Park United Methodist Church • 11705 S. Elizabeth, Chicago, IL 60643

Saturday, August 15, 2009 • 8:30am - 4:30pm
Second Baptist Church • 1717 Benson Ave., Evanston, IL 60201

For more information, contact us at cbesummer@gmail.com or call 1.847.866.3984

2000's

AWARE SPRING 2005



The Center for the Church and Black Experience Family Reunion Conference: "Renewing our Commitment to Theology, Preaching, and Social Justice"

brought home black alumni from near and far spanning classes over the last 55 years. We were reminded that the Center for the Church and the Black Experience, initiated over 30 years ago by the leadership of Edsel Ammons and President Merlyn Northfelt and crafted by the first director, Hyclel B. Taylor, is really a child of black students including Gessel Berry and Herbert Martin, who, in the wake of the tumultuous 1960s and early 1970s demanded black faculty and black curricula as a justice issue. This was the first time that black alumni have been welcomed back for a special reunion. One returning graduate of the class of 1959 remarked, "I'm glad that I lived to see this day!" The conference was an opportunity to reflect on how far we have come since the pre-CBE days when two blacks would graduate per year and when there were no black faculty, administration, or staff. However, Emily Townes, our keynote lecturer, reminded the group that those who are fortunate to be "servants in the big house" of our institutions must constantly work to open the door wider for others and remain rooted in black people's realities.



"I'm glad that I lived to see this day!"

The reunion conference, featuring several of our graduates serving with excellence in the church and academy, was marked by outstanding lectures, substantive discussions, preaching and worship, common meal times, and space for fellowship and renewal. CBE anticipates making available materials from the conference including DVD tapes of the lectures and worship as well as a conference journal compiling the lectures and sermons. Persons interested in these materials may contact Georgetta Glover, Program Coordinator of CBE, at 847-866-3914 for more information on receiving these reunion materials. ↑



The Joseph Harrison Jackson Lecture



James Hal Cone

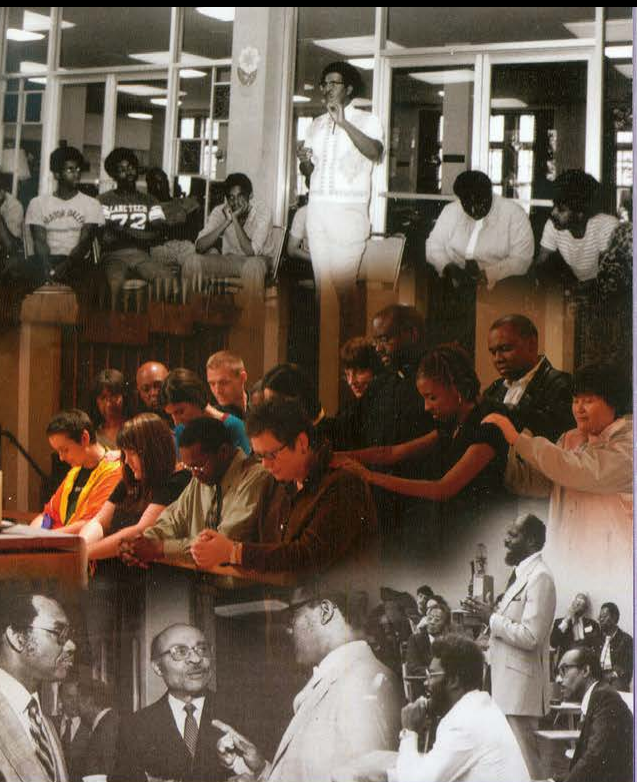
Wednesday, April 26, 2000 at 7:00 p.m.
"God and Black Suffering"
Chapel of the Unnamed Faithful

Thursday, April 27, 2000 at 4:00 p.m.
"The Vocation of a Theologian"
Chapel of the Unnamed Faithful

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Evanston, Illinois

Dr. James H. Cone
Alum of Garrett-Evangelical
Charles A. Briggs Distinguished Professor
of Systematic Theology
Union Theological Seminary, New York City

2010's



1970-2010

Celebrating Our



Our Mission



The Center for the Church and the Black Experience (CBE), founded in 1970, offers the seminary and the broader community opportunities for understanding Christian faith via interracial and cross-cultural perspectives. It also seeks to facilitate greater understanding of religious leadership dynamics, organizational change, and public outreach and witness of black churches in relation to the broader religious and social context. Black faculty members and other scholars operating through CBE provide research, mentoring, and training via classroom teaching, publishing, seminars, workshops, and consultation to churches, community agencies, and the Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary community. Courses taught by CBE faculty are open to all students and are designed to be fully integrated into the overall curriculum of the seminary. CBE recognizes a responsibility to highlight the richness of the African American religious experience while at the same time enabling students, and church leaders in general, to maximize their broader theological learning and equip themselves for effective professional leadership in increasingly multi-cultural ministry contexts.

"If it wasn't for the women..."

Rev. Dr. Cheryl Townsend Gilkes



Jayne I. Goggins
Administrative Assistant

The Church And The Black Experience
Staff



Maxine Perry
Project and Research Secretary



Jo Ann Cramer
Financial Aid and Admissions
Secretary

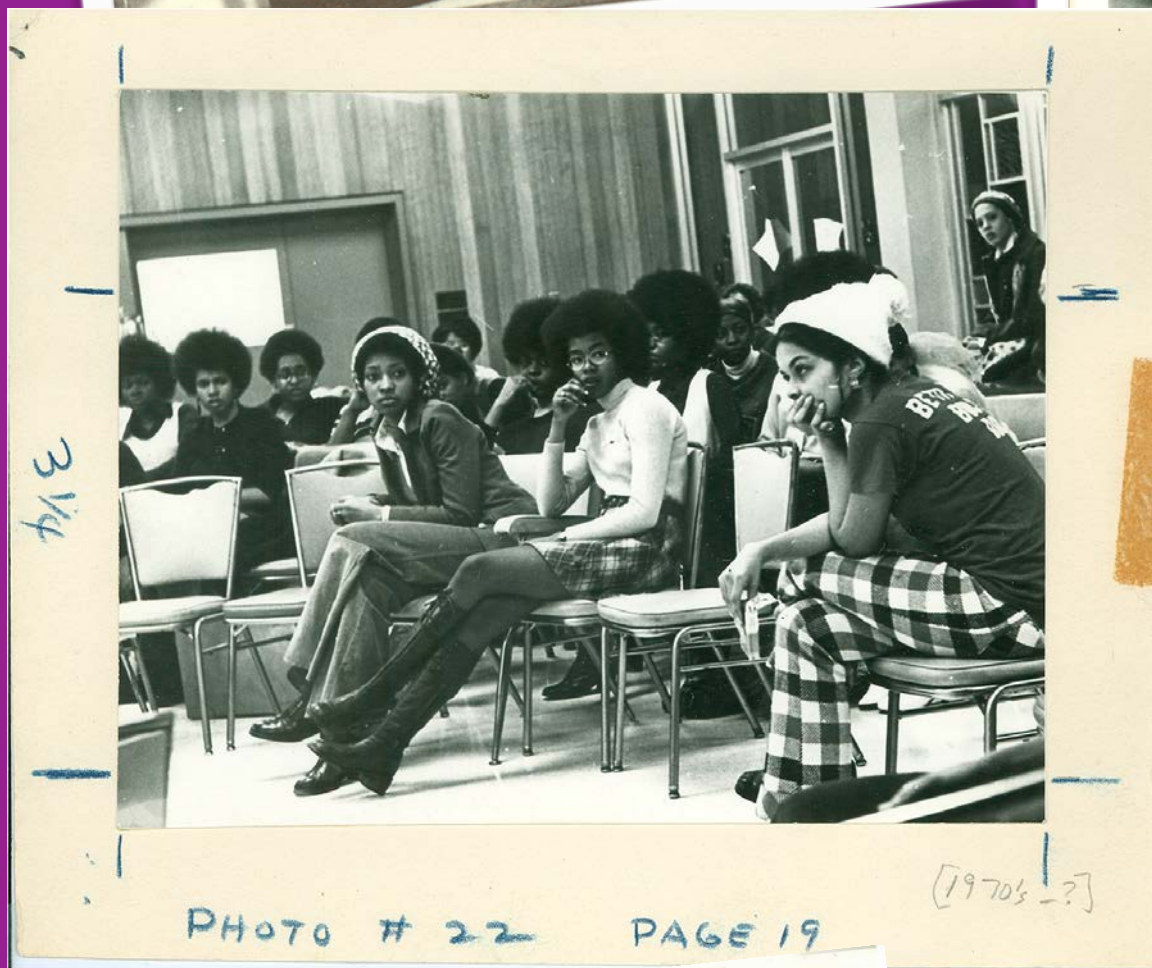


PHOTO # 22 PAGE 19

(1970's - ?)



"Do the work your soul must have..."

Rev. Dr. Katie G. Cannon

Black History Month Chapel
February 20, 1992



Celebrating the Souls
of Black Women

ANNE ELIZABETH STREATH WIMBERLY

Dr. Anne Elizabeth Streath Wimberly is Director of the Evanston Ecumenical Action Council Hospitality Center for the Homeless. As its director, Dr. Wimberly is responsible for facilitating the center's wholistic ministry with homeless individuals focusing on social service, medical, nutritional, occupational, educational and religious supports. Dr. Wimberly began her ministry with the homeless in 1985 after moving to Evanston from Tulsa, Oklahoma - a ministry to which she felt personally called.

In the years preceding her move to Evanston with Dr. Edward P. Wimberly, Garrett faculty member, Dr. Anne was an Associate Professor at the Oral Roberts University School of Theology and School of Music; an Associate Professor of Music at Atlanta Junior College, Atlanta, Georgia; Assistant Professor of Music at Worcester State College, Worcester, Massachusetts; and the first female and first Black Doctoral Teaching Fellow at the Boston University School of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts. She was a Music Consultant and Demonstration Teacher in the Worcester and Newton, Massachusetts Public Schools, a Music Specialist in the Detroit, Michigan Public Schools, and the Director of Music as a US-2 Missionary at the former Methodist Home Board of Missions-sponsored Harwood Girls' School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She is currently a field faculty member for Vermont College of Norwich University, Montpelier, Vermont, and Adjunct Faculty at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago. She is also Coordinator of the Black Clergy and Spouse Retirement Transition Project underwritten by grants from the Kendall Fund of the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry; and she functions as Organist and Choir Director at Sherran United Methodist Church in Evanston.

Dr. Wimberly holds a B.Sc. in Education from Ohio State University, a M.Mus. from Boston University, a Graduate Certificate in Gerontology from Georgia State University, and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership with a cognate in Gerontology from Georgia State University. She has done post-doctoral studies and research as Scholar-in-residence at the School of Theology at Claremont, California Institute for Religion and Wholeness under the direction of Dr. Howard Clinebell.

Dr. Wimberly has served on national and international committees related to church and academe and is a noted lecturer and clinician in the areas of music and gerontology. She has written numerous articles in these areas and is co-author of the 1986 publication, *Liberation and Human Wholeness: The Conversion Experiences of Black People in Slavery and Freedom*. She is listed in editions of the *International Who's Who in Music*, *Who's Who of African Women*, *Who's Who Among Black Americans*, *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*, and *Men and Women of Distinction*. She was elected to Pi Kappa Lambda, Music Honor Society and to Kappa Delta Pi, Honor Society in Education.



January 1999


AWARE

A quarterly publication of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Inside

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Helen Fannings Ammons joins husband in retirement



Helen Fannings Ammons retired at the end of October from her post as director of student life. She and her husband, Bishop Edsel Ammons, have devoted an impressive number of years to Garrett-Evangelical. Bishop Ammons' years at the seminary included his years as a student (starting in 1948 and ending in 1957, after some time away), eight years as a faculty member (1968-76), and five years as bishop-in-residence (1992-97). He has also been a seminary trustee since 1979. Helen was a trustee for five years (1972-77) and an administrator for 21 years (1977-98).

See inside article for more information on the retirements of Helen Ammons and two other administrators.

The Church
and

THE



BLACK EXPERIENCE
NEWS

GARRETT-EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois 60201 Vol. 5 No. 1

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE:
FEMINIST AND WOMANIST ETHICS IN TANDEM

by Toinette M. Eugene

My title may sound like a fabulously mixed metaphor. Nonetheless, it is intended. If our goals are justice and peace for all, feminist and womanist ethicists will need to work together. In this article I want to explore how my perspectives as an African-American womanist ethicist both share in and differ from that of other scholars in the academic community, feminist and otherwise.

What Is a Womanist?

While Anglo-American feminists have founded their analysis in women's experience, African-American women prefer to ground theirs in the experiences of all oppressed people struggling for liberation. The poet and novelist Alice Walker borrowed a term from African-American culture that captured this commitment. A "womanist," according to Walker, is "committed to survival and wholeness of an entire people, male and female. . . . A womanist is a feminist of color. 'Womanist' is taken from the black folk culture expression of mothers to female children: You acting womanish—like a woman—acting grown up, being grown up, responsible, in charge, serious."

Thus, to be a womanist is a way to affirm oneself as black while simultaneously connecting with feminists and with the African-American community, including, of course, black men. This suggests that two main concerns of womanist theology are survival and community building. And the ethical goal of this community is a positive quality.

Walker's words admonish black women not to take on a disproportionate amount of responsibility for community building. She suggests that they can avoid this trap by connecting with other women's community organizations concerned about women. Sojourner Truth, Ida Barnett Wells, Mary McLeod Bethune, Shirley Chisholm, and Marian Wright Edelman are some whose lives have embodied this admonition.

In making the feminist-womanist connection, however, Walker proceeds with great caution. While affirming an organic relationship between womanists and feminists, she also declares a deep shade of difference between them: "Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender" (*In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1983, xi). This encourages womanist scholars to explore black women's history and culture without being guided or controlled by what white feminists have already identified as women's issues.

For the womanist, mothering and nurturing—in the broadest sense—are vital. Walker's womanist reality begins with mothers relating to their children, and with black women who are not necessarily biological mothers but who nurture great numbers of black people in the liberation struggle. Harriet Tubman, Mahalia Jackson, Rosa Parks, and Barbara Jordan are examples of these types of "mothers."