



ADVOCATE



COGIC Scholars Fellowship

COGIC Scholars Fellowship Newsletter

ADVOCATE
Volume 13, Issue 3
August/September 2015

DATES TO REMEMBER

Holy Convocation
St. Louis, MO
Nov. 4-9
COGIC.org

COGIC Scholars Academic Forum
St. Louis, MO
Nov. 4,5 & 7
Cogic.org/cogicscholars

AAR/SBL
Atlanta, GA
Nov. 21-24
Aarweb.org

Inside this issue:

Should Training for Ministry be Optional	1-2
Book Announcement	3-4
What Are COGIC Scholars Doing	4
COGIC Scholars Academic Sessions	6
COGIC Authors	6
Research Inquiry	6

COORDINATOR SPEAKS

Thank you to all who came out and supported the COGIC Scholars sessions during the AIM Convention in Tampa, Florida. We were blessed by all the presenters, Sister Glenda Goodson, Dr. Eric Greaux, Dr. Charles Hill, and Sister Sherry DuPree. I am also grateful for Dr. Billie Bragg and Dr. Cynthia Bragg who did an exceptional job in facilitating the sessions. This Fall, we look forward with great anticipation to the publication of our book, *With Signs Following: The Life and Ministry of Charles Harrison Mason*. We are expecting to celebrate its publication during the Holy Convocation. Look for COGIC Scholars during the Holy Convocation. Come and celebrate with us (see announcement).

***Dr. Raynard D. Smith

SHOULD TRAINING FOR MINISTRY BE OPTIONAL?

When I received my calling to preach as a teenager, Evangelist Alonzo T. Turner from Bridgeport, CT, wrote me a letter and admonished me to read Paul's letter to Timothy in I Timothy 4 and II Timothy 2. There it was, like a gem almost out of sight. "Do your utmost to present yourself to God, approved, a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly interpreting the message of the truth." "Study to shew thyself approved..." (15v. KJV). I literally memorized both chapters and held them as a sacred gift from my godfather in ministry. He was the annual guest revivalist at my step-father's church, Thomas Temple COGIC, Pompano Beach, Florida, named in his honor, (Pastor Charles Thomas). I received Christ as Lord with the Baptism of the Sprit. It is unlikely that the Evangelist had a clue that he was transmitting a sacred trust to a little stringy teenager who would later become the pioneer dean of the first fully accredited Pentecostal Seminary in North America, the C.H. Mason Seminary, an affiliate of the Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia. I was so thirsty for truth. I saved enough to purchase a Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, edited by Henry Snyder Gehman, Princeton Theological Seminary. My training began as I read the Bible intensely and became a fierce defender of doctrine, as I understood it. Mother Annie M. Ridley of Delray Beach, FL, a District Missionary, saw my sincerity and raised funds every fifth Sunday afternoon to make sure I entered college. My father had been deceased six years earlier, and my mother's financial resources were completely depleted. They made an investment in me, which I view to this day as an act of grace and love. I went to Mississippi to Saints Junior College, the Church of God in Christ's only school that was accredited by the State. I transferred to Morehouse where I struggled academically, but through faith and perseverance graduated. My acceptance at Crozer Theological Seminary

represented a shift in my theological terrain because of its reputation for theological liberalism. My field work assignment in ministry was performed at Memorial Church of God in Christ in Haverford, Pennsylvania at the request of the late Bishop OT Jones, Jr., pastor, who became my primary mentor in ministry. Recently I asked my ophthalmologist surgeon how long was my surgery, and what was his level of skill and training. He remarked that the surgery was between eleven and seventeen minutes and, beyond his graduate training, it would take around 1,000 surgeries to achieve his level of competence with this particular surgical procedure with all the advances in technology. I observed that it took three (3) years of graduate training in law for my youngest son to receive a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree. It takes an average of seven years to qualify as a general practitioner of medicine. How is it that a hardened criminal can come out of prison, join our church, confess a call to ministry within twelve months, receive ordination, get assigned to a church, pay a jurisdictional report and qualify to become a Bishop with less than a High School diploma? We have an unlearned contingency within the church who would defend such a person with the reasoning, that if the Lord called him to preach, so who are we to judge? There are people among us who believe that God will anoint ignorance and curse intelligence. Dr. Martin Luther King once spoke about ministers who generate “more heat than light” and more “perspiration” than “inspiration.” There are still jealous leaders among us who speak of a seminary as a “cemetery” in order to generate a laugh. Such persons even contend that “if you open your mouth, the Lord will fill it.” To that reasoning I say “God will fill your mouth with air.” Does it make common sense that you will not trust an untrained teacher with your children, an untrained doctor with your body, an untrained lawyer with your legal issues, but no training is required with your soul and spiritual life? A minister who has never read one book in his life should not be preaching. Tuning into your favorite key saying: “more and more” about “less and less” is not preaching. Gravy alone as a full diet will kill you. It is criminal to preach in a local church or conference with no revelatory knowledge or good biblical content as a result of mining the text and praying through a message so God can anoint it. “High five three people and tell them....” The pulpit is not a playpen and the church is not a stadium. The knowledge of God gets lost in such a context. We are called to preach the word, not a group of fads and phrases. Proverbs 1: 7 says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge but fools despise

It is time for leadership to view scholarships for theological training as an investment in the future.

wisdom and instruction.” 1. Seek quality training for ministry from some legitimate source. Seminary training is highly specialized and will require a bachelor’s degree to begin. There is a middle ground for people who are seeking basic training for ministry. Ideally, it would be worthwhile to find a basic Bible College in your region that will give you basic primer survey classes. Be cautious with online classes. They require that you have computer skills. Many are money schemes designed to lure government grants. Ensure that they have some kind of accreditation or certification. 2. Find a trained mentor in ministry and submit to that person. For every Timothy there is a Paul to give you the proper guidance in ministry. You must be able to trust their education, wisdom and experience. I am a debtor to the many mentors who have poured into my ministry over a period of time. Without them my ministry would have ended a long time ago. 3. Give training for ministry a priority. The C.H. Mason Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta should never be placed last on the bucket list of denominational priorities. I am puzzled as to how we can attempt to manage a fully accredited Theological Seminary for less than \$500,000 annually. Can this cover basic student scholarships? It is time for leadership to view scholarships for theological training as an investment in the future. Commencement Day 2015 at the Interdenominational Theological Center brought back memories of the sacrifices made to initiate our first Seminary. I left a promising suburban parish with my wife and son to pioneer our first Seminary during the seventies. Dr. Arenia C. Mallory also made the sacrifice of leaving her comfort zone in Jacksonville, IL, at the request of our founding Chief Apostle Bishop C.H. Mason to develop Saints Industrial and Literary School in Lexington, MS, during times of adversity against the odds. She informed me that her first hurdle was false accusation. We survived challenges against massive opposition from within by leaders who listened to bad information and rumors. Church leaders beware of bad information based on pathological gossipers who hate progress and live off conflict. The reward came from students who had next to nothing but a desire to acquire theological training and returned to make a difference in the life of the church. C.H. Mason Theological Seminary is the one institution that we must never think of closing. The late General Omar Bradley once stated that “It is time we steered by the stars, not by the lights of each passing ship.”

***Leonard Lovett. Ph.D

BOOK REVIEW

Miller, D.E. Sargeant, K.H., & Flory, R. (Eds.). *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*. Oxford University Press, 2013. 432 Pages. ISBN: 9780199920594

The Double Side of Global Pentecostalism

The emergence, growth and global dynamics of Pentecostal/Charismatic movements have continued to attract the gaze of scholarship. While some scholars in the sociology of religion and world Christianity consistently romanticize Pentecostal tenets, others demonize or provide slanted perspectives on the movement and its manifestations with regard to the origins, public engagements and transnational ambitions of such groups. Such individual and often biased investigations raise questions about the ambiguous character of global Pentecostalism in different geo-cultural constituencies. It is to this ambiguous and complex characterization of Pentecostal Christianity that this volume is dedicated.

Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism is edited by, Donald E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant and Richard Flory. It consists of 14 articles treated under seven headings by historians, theologians and social scientists who mostly address the situation in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Framed by questions of origins, growth, internationalization and the socio-political/spiritual engagements of Pentecostal movements, the book argues for the ambiguous character of Pentecostal movements due to the varying but often common characteristics within the movement. Significantly, it suggests that the growth and global status of Pentecostal Movements have been engineered by the movement's ability to employ Holy Spirit power within its ranks and to engage with the public in local and global contexts.

The first section examines the origins of modern Pentecostal Movements in terms of place and periodization. Here, Allan Anderson argues for a multiple-origins narrative from different parts of the world, while Cecil Robeck profiles the Azusa Street event as primordial for the emergence of global Pentecostalism in the twentieth century. Both authors, however, agree that the use of media, particularly periodicals and newsletters, and the creation of complex networks across international boundaries have been instrumental in the spread of global Pentecostalism. In section two, Andrew Chesnut and Henri Gooren address the factors which have determined the growth of Pentecostalism in some places as opposed to others. While Andrew Chesnut employs a 'religious market' theory to substantiate his account of the growth of the movement in Latin America and the attraction of Roman Catholics to the movement, Henri Gooren situates the stagnation in Pentecostal growth in Paraguay within the lack of socio-political, economic and cultural factors that serve as substrata for the emergence and growth of the movement. By profiling the 'religious market model' over the role of spirituality, Chestnut may be expected to trigger resentment from Pentecostal adherents who would rather point to Holy Spirit power as instrumental for the growth of the movement. However, Chestnut's thesis suggests that both socio-economic and religious agencies may be strategic for Pentecostal missionary engagements.

In Section three, Paul Freston and Robert Woodberry investigate the sociopolitical function of Pentecostalism. They argue that the hitherto ambiguous role of Latin American Pentecostals in politics has been replaced by total involvement and has brought some Pentecostal adherents to positions of power. However, Woodberry maintains that Pentecostal engagement with politics and democratization is far more complex because of the unpredictable character of the movement in varying local/global contexts. Timothy Wadkins and Danny McCain's thesis in section four decisively offer two case studies on the impact of contemporary Pentecostalism in El Salvador and Nigeria, respectively. Both authors claim that Holy Spirit power is momentous in assisting individual movements to become agents of transformation in their various contexts. In section five, Afe Adogame and Juan Francisco investigate the transnational character of Pentecostalism. They show that indigenous Pentecostal Movements in Africa, the United States and Latin America are creating networks across national boundaries and making inroads into new host territories with their religious worldviews. Alexander and Attanasi examine gender practices in Pentecostalism and suggest that women's leadership in Pentecostalism is a problematic issue. However, in practice, global Pentecostalism is egalitarian, involving the leadership of both women and men for as long as they are led by the Holy Spirit.

The last section of the book investigates the relationship between spiritual and social experiences within Pentecostalism. While William K. Kay demonstrates how Asian Pentecostals employ gifts of music from the

Holy Spirit for individual and communal use. Margaret M. Poloma and Mathew T. Lee maintain that so experiential an understanding of Pentecostalism must be responsible for the rapid growth of the movement.

The strength of this book lies in the ability of the authors to provide multiple and sometimes contrasting perspectives on the same aspect of Pentecostalism, and the statistical evidence provided for the growth and impact of global Pentecostalism. Such a kaleidoscopic characterization of the movement suggests that, in interpreting trends in global Pentecostalism, social scientists need to develop a more contextual approach. Perhaps the authors could have shown how the lack of consensus amongst scholars on several aspects of the movement remains a significant issue in Pentecostal studies. However, the book remains one of the most systematic and comparative analyses of global Pentecostalism and, as such, a new focus for empirical studies. The additional appendix with graphical statistical data on global Pentecostalism by Todd M. Johnson and John C. Green makes this book a timely resource for students of theology, history of Christianity, world Christianity and the sociology of religion.

*****Amos Bongadu Chewachong, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Edinburgh**

WHAT ARE COGIC SCHOLARS DOING

Dr. Cynthia Bragg (Baltimore, MD) writes, “This Fall, I am teaching 4 courses: 1) Sociology of Religion (which I’m excited about because I developed this course); 2) Social Problems; 3) Gender and Violence, and 4) the Black Family in America, which are 2 graduate level courses offered in the evenings. I will also be presenting a paper at the American Sociological Association (ASA) in Chicago, August 23, 2015. My focus is on the Black Church and churchwomen engaged in activism.

Sister Cleorah Scruggs DeBose (Flint, MI) reports, the Alpha Kappa Alpha Inc. National Ivy Leaf Magazine featured a write up on her book, *Boaz Found Me: A Love Story and the Companion Guide*, and they also featured the National Multicultural Diversity Day & Institute (NMDI), a 501c3 nonprofit organization of which she is the founder and president. For more information, see csdministries.org/diversity.html

Dr. Jamal Dominique Hopkins (Pasadena, CA), under the auspices of the JD Institute during the months of July, August and early September, hosted a lecture and tour of the Dead Sea Scrolls at the California Science Museum. He was a speaker at the Boston University’s Social Justice Institute Conference on Race, Poverty, and Sexuality where he lectured on Biblical Opposition to Same-Sex Marriage.

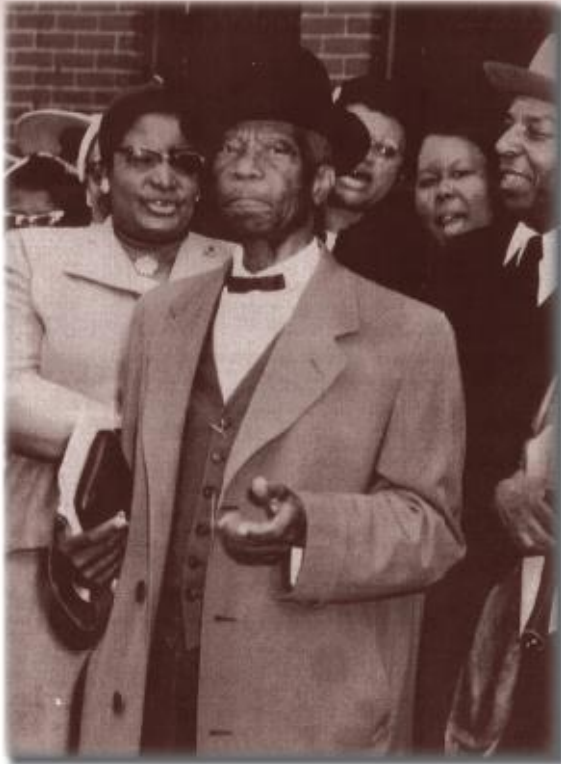
Dr. Eric Williams (Cambridge, MA) served as a Teaching Fellow last Spring in both the Department of African and African American Studies and the School of Divinity at Harvard University, This Fall he returns to Harvard University as Lecturer in African and African-American Studies. He is also teaching “Introduction to African Diaspora Studies” at Boston College this semester in Boston College’s African and African-Diaspora Studies Program.

Elder Oscar Owens Jr. (Los Angeles, CA) writes, “I’m in my final phases of my Doctor of Ministry program at Azusa Pacific Seminary, writing my doctoral project. My goal is to complete all by this November 2015. I welcome your prayers.”

Elder Aaron Howard (Los Angeles, CA) was interviewed on the history of the First Jurisdiction of Southern California Centennial. A documentary DVD was produced and can be purchased through the jurisdictional office. In addition Elder Howard presented on the history of the Azusa Street Revival and history of COGIC in California during the Centennial Celebration of First Jurisdiction of Southern California. Elder Howard was also interviewed by the Los Angeles County Museum, where his artwork is on exhibit, see: <http://unframed.lacma.org/2015/06/16/then-and-now-aaron-howard-lacmas-unofficial-artist-residence-supporter-and-advocate>.

WITH SIGNS FOLLOWING

The Life and Ministry of Charles Harrison Mason



Born to ex-slaves in Civil War Tennessee, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason had a vision for the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) that thrives today in an international Pentecostal church with more than five million members.

***With Signs Following:
The Life and Ministry of
Charles Harrison Mason***

examines the social, cultural, and religious aspects of Bishop Mason's leadership and creative genius in establishing COGIC as a distinct Black Church tradition. ***With Signs Following*** shares four decades of research from leading scholars that addresses the sociological, theological, psychological, social-ethical, and historical perspectives of COGIC and Mason's ministry.

**Available
Fall 2015**

Print 9780827243194, \$39.99

EPUB 9780827243200

EPDF 9780827243217

CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher Brennan

Ithiel Clemmons

David D. Daniels III

Glenda Williams Goodson

Robert R. Owens

Craig Scandrett-Leatherman

Raynard D. Smith

Frederick L. Ware

Pre-order today at CBP21.com



COGIC Scholars Academic Forum During the Holy Convocation

The 108th Annual Holy Convocation will take place in St. Louis, MO, at Americas Center from November 4-9, 2015. The COGIC Scholars Academic Forum will be having their regular sessions as part of the O T Jones Institutes on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10am until 12noon. This year on Wednesday, we have invited Dr. Leah Gunning Francis of Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO, to discuss her new book, *Ferguson and Faith: Sparking Leadership and Awakening Community*. Dr. Francis will lead us in continuing our conversation on the Ferguson event that has spawned the Black Lives Matter movement. In response to Dr. Francis' book, Jim Wallis writes, "Leah Gunning Francis's conversations with both the clergy and the young activists show how important it is for communities of faith to reach out to a new generation of young leaders and help elevate and nurture their gifts. What many of the clergy, interviewed in this book, realized in the course of the Ferguson protests was that rather than sitting back in their sanctuaries and waiting for the young people to seek out the church for guidance or leadership, it was *the church* that needed to go out and meet the young people where they were, joining them shoulder to shoulder, on the streets, in the struggle for justice." Also, on Thursday, we invite you to come and join us in celebration of the publication of, *With Signs Following: The Life and Ministry of Charles Harrison Mason*, a collection of essays on Mason published by Chalice Press. Many of the contributing authors will be present to speak about their chapter and the overall contribution of the book to scholarship on the COGIC. We plan to have plenty of copies of the book on hand for an author-signing. And finally, we invite you to join us on Saturday. Dr. Antipas Harris, Associate Professor of Practical Theology and Ministry at Regent University will be presenting to us from his latest book, *Holy Spirit, Holy Living: Toward a Practical Theology of Holiness for Twenty-First Century Churches*. You are invited to accompany us for three days of spiritually and intellectually stimulating discussions. For an update follow us on our Facebook page *COGIC Scholars* and website: <http://www.cogic.org/cogicscholars>.

COGIC AUTHORS

The International Youth Department has published a book with Anntwanique Edwards, Teresa Hinkle-Jones, Rhonda Robinson, Victoria Sanders, and Veronica Smith as contributing authors, entitled *Symphony of Sisterhood: A Sister to Sister Project* (Memphis, TN: COGIC Publishing House, 2015).

Atty. Barbara J. Warren McKinney has published a book entitled, *When is the First Lady Ever First*, (Xulon Press.com: 2014).

RESEARCH INQUIRY

Dr. Cynthia Bragg is seeking to connect with anyone who may have old newspaper clippings, pictures, magazine articles, or stories about Mother Elizabeth J. Dabney. Contact her at Cynthia.bragg@morgan.edu.

If you have an interest in academics and scholarship and are looking for a group of Pentecostals with whom you can share your passion, consider joining the COGIC Scholars Fellowship. We are a supportive network of scholars within COGIC pursuing academic excellence, recognizing that life in the Spirit and the intellectual acumen need not be antithetical.

For more information, visit our website on www.cogic.com, click on COGIC Scholars, or contact Dr. Raynard Smith, Coordinator, at rdsmith20@earthlink.net, or write to COGIC Scholars Fellowship, 36 Dorothy Ave., Edison, NJ 08837, or call (732) 767-1430.

Connect With COGIC SCHOLARS FELLOWSHIP VIA FACEBOOK

