

All-Black Governing Bodies

The History and Contributions of All-Black Governing Bodies



A Report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Approved by the 205th General Assembly (1993)

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All-Black Governing Bodies

The History and Contributions of All-Black Governing
Bodies in the Predecessor Denominations of the
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Published with the Approval of
the 205th General Assembly (1993)
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Developed by the Special Committee to Document the
History and Contributions of All-Black Governing Bodies
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

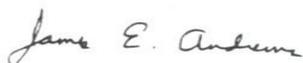
Recent scholarship has devoted extensive attention to the loss of members, money, and meaning within the “mainline” Christian denominations. Even more tragic for Presbyterians is the decline in a sense of identity. Historically, Presbyterians have always valued the importance of their heritage. They have understood that as a people of God, we cannot know who we “are” until we have learned who we “were.”

What does it “mean” to be a Presbyterian today as we approach the end of the twentieth century? A century ago, our denomination largely reflected the dominant demographic trends of the time. Within the course of this century, those same trends have considerably altered our American landscape.

As we approach the year 2000 A.D., we celebrate the fact that our Reformed heritage has been enriched by the many contributions of racial ethnic peoples. This volume is testimony to our African American brothers and sisters whose own identity as a people of God is inextricably part of our Reformed heritage.

On behalf of the Office of the General Assembly, I am proud to present this study that documents the spiritual journey of many of our African American brothers and sisters in Christ. It is my hope that it will encourage other racial ethnic peoples to preserve their history so that they may “tell to the coming generation[s] the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done” (Ps. 78:4).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James E. Andrews".

James E. Andrews
Stated Clerk

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FOREWORD

The 201st General Assembly (1989), in response to *Overture 89-2*, directed Moderator Joan SalmonCampbell "... to appoint a task force of not more than six [persons] to document the history and contributions of all-black presbyteries of the South" (*Minutes*, 1989, Part I, p. 589).

The task force, appointed by Moderator SalmonCampbell, was: James Foster Reese, chairperson (Kentucky); N. Joyce Punch, vice-chairperson (Texas); Nancy Arnez (Washington, D.C.); Lawrence W. Bottoms (Georgia); Robert T. Newbold Jr. (New Jersey); and Ferdinand O. Pharr (South Carolina). Nancy Arnez resigned in 1991 for health reasons. Mattie Grigsby (North Carolina) was then appointed to the task force.

The task force was staffed by Joyce E. Evans, specialist in the Office of the General Assembly, Louisville; and Kristin Gleeson, deputy director in the Department of History, Philadelphia.

The task force recognized that its work would not be complete without the study of all-Black synods. It therefore expanded its work to include all-Black governing bodies. In August of 1991, Darius L. Swann, Ph.D., was engaged as researcher/writer. Dr. Swann, along with the committee members and the staff, entered actively into the collection of materials (published and unpublished), visited sites where primary sources were available, contacted persons who had significant historical information, recorded extensive oral interviews, and reviewed numerous articles, programs, and photographs.

This published history documents how all-Black presbyteries and synods provided training grounds for Black leadership in the Presbyterian church and the large communities; developed innovative program models;

sensitized the church to issues of justice, race, and inclusiveness; and made distinctive and far-reaching contributions. This is a history that had to be recorded.

This publication only represents a beginning of a history that continually unfolds. Individuals, sessions, congregations, and governing bodies must continue to identify, gather, record, and deposit the work and witness of the persons, programs, and activities of the all-Black presbyteries and synods of the predecessor denominations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As Blacks continue to pursue their history in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the church should also encourage in-depth histories and contributions of Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans and other ethnic or racial groups who have enriched this communion.

Lawrence W. Bottoms died in 1995. The task force affectionately dedicates this history to his memory and his contributions to the church of Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

History is always written after the fact. Events that the historian records may, at the time of their occurrence, have seemed ordinary, unremarkable, even trivial. Seen from the vantage point of the present, however, past events are invested with new significance. Now we say, “Aha, that was what was going on!” or “Now I understand what was happening. I see, I see.” Present events throw into sharp relief the past, and the past illuminates the present.

The main subject of this work is the history of the all-Black governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and their predecessor bodies. These governing bodies had their origins and development in denominations that found themselves unable effectively to integrate Blacks into their structures for more than a century because of historical circumstances and prior judgments about African Americans.

Historically, the relationship between the different Presbyterian churches (with the possible exception of the United Presbyterian Church of North America) has been characterized by ambiguity and ambivalence.¹ The ambiguity is expressed in the Presbyterian churches’ attitudes and deliverances in matters affecting African Americans and their peculiar situation in the society of the United States. These attitudes and deliverances have offered strong advocacy for justice at one juncture, and weak, evasive action or silence at another. Their real convictions have appeared doubtful, uncertain, and sometimes inexplicable.

The ambiguities in the churches’ actions relating to Black issues have colored the feelings of African American Presbyterians about their church. This is explicitly true in the conflict concerning slavery, the rights of Black people, and the racism that continues to be a dilemma for people of

the United States, including Presbyterians. How could these churches accept the practice of the United States of declaring life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to be divinely endowed rights, while holding in chattel slavery thousands upon thousands of Black men and women? Furthermore, the Black presence has been an underlying factor in many matters ostensibly relating to biblical authority, social witness, evangelism, and the unity and mission of the church.

African American Presbyterians have responded to the ambiguous nature of the churches' concern and treatment with a distinct ambivalence toward the churches themselves. Gayraud Wilmore, in his essay, "Identity and Integration: Black Presbyterians and Their Allies in the Twentieth Century,"² notes a deep and pervasive ambivalence as the prevailing attitude since 1980 among African Americans of the Presbyterian Church toward the predominantly White, middle-class denomination. Wilmore identifies the source of this ambivalence in the desire of African Americans for cultural identity, on the one hand, and a desire for integration as an indispensable characteristic of a church that is Christian and visibly united on the other.³

Black Presbyterians have witnessed occasional prophetic stands by their denomination(s) that nurtured a hopeful allegiance. A failure of courage on other occasions has induced alienation. The overall effect has been ambivalence, which is reinforced by the failure of the church to incorporate into its program and work the insights, elements of decision making, and worship style that Black Presbyterians have brought or developed through decades of hardship. Integration of structures, to the extent that it was attempted, generally left Blacks feeling powerless, too scattered to exert weight upon the wheels of power.

Why write history? some may ask. More specifically, why write this history? First, I suspect that there is something about African Americans' sense of time, preserved from the fractured residue of their African culture, that pushes them to remember and tell. John S. Mbiti, in *African Religions and Philosophy*, describes the African sense of time as characterized by a long past, the present, and a

very short future. Time is seen as moving continually into the distant past, called “zamani.” Those who participate in the present are not only those who are biologically alive, but also those whom he terms the “living dead,” or those who are remembered by someone who is alive. By Mbiti’s definition, most of those who are actors in the pages of this story form the “living dead,” and their presence is indeed real to us. So this book uses the remembrances gathered in oral interviews to help reconstruct a history that is receding into “zamani,” to serve the present.⁴

Furthermore, there is reassurance by memory. Seeing the past stretching back behind us, we divine that it was not just a succession of ordinary yesterdays, but a fabric woven into a meaningful design in which we can trace the working of God. In a society where one’s contributions have been constantly devalued, history reassures us of the worth of our own experiences. History allows us to distance ourselves from our own experience and thereby get a better sense of what God has been doing through and with us.

This history is not just for African Americans since the testimonies and deeds recorded in these pages are also a part of the past of all those who call themselves Presbyterian. The struggles that have gone on around the issues of slavery and race have deeply affected the whole church and its witness both at home and abroad. The existence and work of the all-Black governing bodies were major factors in the development and outlook of both congregations and individuals that poured their gifts into the church as a whole. This narrative may serve to strengthen the self-understanding of American Presbyterians of whatever race, culture, or background. Black Presbyterians stand in relationship to their church in a way similar to Langston Hughes’ perception of African Americans in relation to their country: those who seek to preserve and extend the best for which the church has stood. Hughes’ passionate prayer was that America might be the dream that our myths have fashioned.

O, let America be America again—
The land that never has been yet—
And yet must be
The land where every man is free.

O, yes,
I say it plain,

America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath
America will be!
An ever-living seed,
Its dream
Lies deep in the heart of me.⁵

As Hughes, speaking for marginalized Americans, calls the nation back to its faith, the Black constituency within the Presbyterian church has oftentimes played—and may still play—a prophetic role, calling the church back to its true nature and mission. Like the grain of sand inside the shell of the oyster, it has caused a measure of discomfort, even irritation, because the prophetic word may not always have been recognized as such. But there is no other way to produce a pearl. It is our wish that this book may help Presbyterians, even when it causes discomfort, to hear, repent, and renew.

The presence of Africans (later African Americans), and their organization into separate presbyteries and synods, has been among the most critical factors affecting the policies and direction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessor bodies. At first glance, this may seem an untenable assertion since in most general histories of the denomination African Americans appear as hardly more than a footnote to important events in the Presbyterian past. It can be argued, however, that the African American presence has been a key factor in determining the most fundamental matters relating to Presbyterian identity and mission.

The ambiguities present in the history of Presbyterians dealing with Black people developed naturally in the revolutionary milieu of colonial America. Any attempt to record and illuminate the history of the Black governing bodies requires an appreciation of the social context in which they were conceived and formed.

From the colonial period, the Presbyterian church found its constituency divided on the issue of slavery. Some

outstanding Presbyterians, like Samuel Hopkins and David Colman, expressed strong antislavery sentiments that equated slavery with sin.⁶ Other Presbyterians leaned toward its defense.

A more detailed discussion of the attitudes toward slavery and race will be found in the next section of this book. Enough has been said to suggest that an unbridgeable chasm had appeared early in American church history in regards to the admissibility of slavery and the place of Blacks in churches of most denominations. The inferiority of Blacks was advanced to solve the moral and ethical dilemma posed by holding in bondage human beings declared to be equal and free. Here in this early struggle were planted the seeds of the ambiguous responses of the Presbyterian church to African Americans and their situation. In spite of all the covering over of fissures (Old Side-New Side, Old School-New School, North-South), a basic and deep division remains in the heart of this church. The ebb and flow of the strength of the liberal and conservative wings of the church is the source of the very ambiguity that has manifested itself in marked inconsistencies in action and declarations.

The reconstruction of this history has not been an easy task. Primary sources are the Minutes of the General Assemblies and, of course, the minutes of the various all-Black presbyteries and synods. Unfortunately, in a significant number of instances, these basic records are missing or incomplete. For example, there is only a single set of minutes extant for the approximately two decades of the existence of the Afro-American Synod that was related to the southern Presbyterian church (PCUS). Some history has been reconstructed from secondary sources: magazine and journal articles, books, speeches, and brief historical summaries in bulletins celebrating special occasions, etc. The archives of the Philadelphia and Montreat offices of the Presbyterian Historical Society have provided a great deal of useful material.

Individual members of the committee have also collected from other persons and provided from their own files

items such as documents, program bulletins, pictures, etc., which have been extremely helpful.

The committee that was charged with this task decided early to supplement written sources with oral interviews from a large number of persons who have served in the Southeast and are knowledgeable of the work and history of the all-Black governing bodies. These persons are listed as oral sources. Informants, however, were not equally available from all areas.

The book is structured in six chapters. Chapter I provides the social context for the participation of Blacks in the religious structures of the United States. Context is necessary to real understanding. The chapter attempts to depict the Presbyterian stance relating to African Americans in the context of the secular debate over the latter's status in the church and the question of their evangelization. The question of how Black Presbyterians should be governed ecclesiastically was largely determined by the attitudes formed during the pre-Emancipation period.

Chapter II deals with the nature and character of Black Presbyterian congregations after Emancipation. The nature of the evangelizing process had its effect upon the growth and character of the churches and the emerging governing bodies. This chapter looks at some representative Black congregations, some of which had their roots in antebellum White congregations. This fact underlines the differences in approach between the northern and southern wings of the church and explains the rationale for the emergence of all-Black governing bodies in the South. The emphasis of two of the Presbyterian bodies on education through the close linking of congregations and schools had important positive and negative effects upon the growth of effective presbyteries and synods.

Chapter III recounts the story of the formation of all-Black presbyteries and synods. Particular attention is given to the role of educational institutions in the growth and strengthening of churches and, indirectly, the work of the judicatories. Extrajudiciary management systems and the

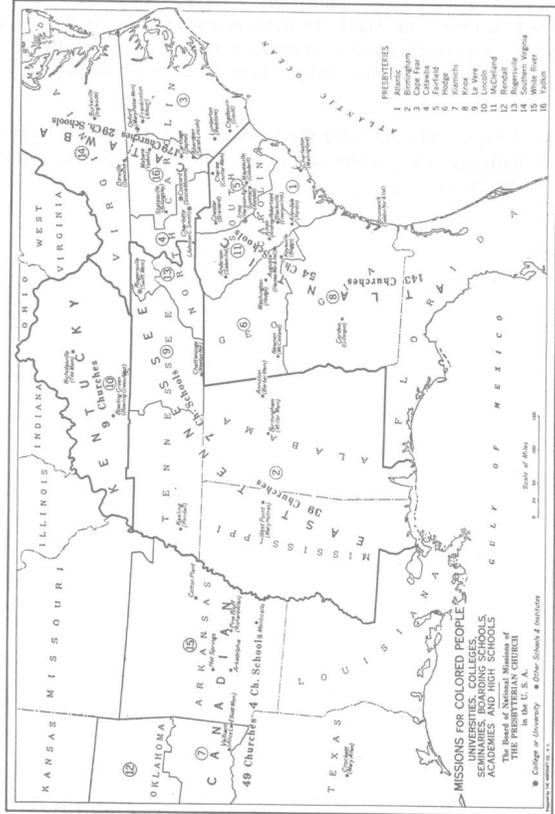
control of finances for institutions affected the amount of responsibility and power Black governing bodies actually exercised.

Chapter IV summarizes the emphases and programs of the all-Black presbyteries and synods, the contribution of educational institutions, and some examples of outstanding male and female leadership that developed in the context of the yoked church-school system. Special attention is given to the different strategies and structures of the predecessor bodies and the impact of the several mergers upon the Black constituency.

Chapter V describes the processes by which, in the post-World War II period, the all-Black judicatories gradually achieved control of their affairs and eventually were integrated with formerly White synods and presbyteries. These developments, set in the context of a growing civil-rights movement that culminated in the 1960s, put forth a number of notable Presbyterian leaders whose bases were the Black presbyteries and synods. As the period of all-Black governing bodies came to an end in 1988, an attempt is made to assess the accomplishments and values of those years of separate existence.

Chapter VI concludes the book by looking ahead to assess what challenges the present and future hold and what this history has to teach us.

MISSIONS FOR COLORED PEOPLE



CHAPTER I

Presbyterian Attitudes Toward Slavery, African American Slaves, and Free Persons

To fully appreciate early Presbyterian attitudes toward slavery and African slaves, we must understand the context in which church members and leaders found themselves. That means understanding the views of the founders of the nation, because Presbyterians were prominently present at the constituting of the United States. A number of contemporary historians have expressed the view that the issue of slavery was central to the conflict at the Constitutional Convention (1787).

Gunnar Myrdal, in his monumental study, *An American Dilemma*, identifies “[the] American Creed [as] the cement in the structure of this great and disparate nation.”⁷ This creed embodies the “ideals of the essential dignity of the individual human being, of the ... inalienable rights to freedom, justice, and a fair opportunity.”⁸ Myrdal finds the roots of the American Creed in the philosophy of the Enlightenment and in basic Protestant Christianity—more specifically in the Bible and in English law.⁹

The first two, Enlightenment and basic Protestant Christianity, are important to this study. The ideals of Enlightenment philosophy found expression in the Declaration of Independence; and the tenets of Christianity, based on Old Testament prophecy and the teachings of Jesus, were forces shaping the American Creed.¹⁰

In spite of the high idealism and liberalism of the Declaration of Independence—“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Hap-

piness”—the historical record makes it clear that African slaves were severely devalued even before 1660 when the first recognition of slavery was acknowledged in the Virginia statutes. That is to say, prejudice and discrimination against Blacks was already firmly established before Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence.¹¹ The changes that Jefferson, James Madison, and other founding fathers found it expedient to make in drafting the documents that are the foundation of the American republic, bear out the conclusion that human equality was not the prevailing popular view at the time. One historian has commented:

The American Revolution began with the deletion of Jefferson's bitter condemnation of the slave trade in the Declaration of Independence, and ended with a clause written into the Treaty of Paris for the return of stolen or escaped slaves. ... The Articles of Confederation were completely silent on the matter of slavery.¹²

When bargaining and trading began during the formulation of a national constitution, founders like Jefferson, Madison, and George Mason (who were personally opposed to slavery) made concessions to the supporters of slavery who were mainly from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. (Jefferson continued to hold slaves himself though agonizing over it and understanding the ultimate consequences of it.) Not only was the period for importing slaves extended from 1800 to 1808, but slavery was allowed to extend into new western territories that opened up south of the Ohio River.¹³

Even the most liberal of the Founding Fathers were unable to imagine a society in which White and Negroes would live together as fellow-citizens. Honor and intellectual consistency drove them to favor abolition; personal distaste, [drove them] to fear it. Jefferson said just this when he wrote: “Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people [Blacks] are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government.”¹⁴

Not being able to summon up the moral courage needed to rise above racial prejudice and adverse to experimenting with any social order that impinged on the right of private property, “the Fathers, unhappily, ambivalently, confusedly, passed by on the other side.”¹⁵

The Slavery Dilemma and Presbyterian Leadership

If the national leadership lacked the courage to realize the dream embodied in the Declaration of Independence, should it be expected that Presbyterian church leaders should do more? The answer is “yes” because the church had, in addition to the secular idealism of a Jefferson or a Madison, the great biblical vision of a better country and the faith of the new creations in Christ.

To their credit, a few Presbyterians unambiguously opposed slavery as a moral evil and unsound policy. Among these were Benjamin Rush and David Rice. Rush, who was strongly influenced by the Quakers, summoned his fellow clergy to action with a strong warning on the consequences of slavery:

Remember that national crimes require national punishments, and without declaring what punishment awaits this evil, you may venture to assure them, that it cannot pass with impunity, unless God shall cease to be just or merciful.¹⁶

Another Presbyterian minister, David Rice, was one of the few Virginians to condemn slavery as sin and for his stand he was forced to emigrate from the South.¹⁷ Jacob Green, a pastor in Hanover, Morris County, New Jersey, and one of the drafters of that state’s constitution, condemned the inconsistency of his countrymen’s demand for liberty for themselves while subjecting others to slavery. “I am persuaded,” he said in a sermon preached in 1788, “these united American States must, and will groan under the afflicting hand of God, till we reform in this matter.”¹⁸

These men stood out as exceptions to the general rule. On the other hand, because of the strong currency of the doctrine of natural rights, few proslavery spokespersons were willing or able to challenge directly the antislavery arguments. Their main argument was the natural inferiority of Blacks to Whites. Eventually, even those who were sympathetic to the plight of the enslaved and tried to ameliorate their condition accepted this viewpoint. Samuel Davies, for instance, reputedly the first Presbyterian to carry out evangelistic work among slaves in Virginia, expressed this opinion:

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The Appointments of Providence, and the Order of the World, not only admit, but require, that there should be civil Distinctions among Mankind; that some should rule, and some be subject; that some should be masters and some Servants. And Christianity does not blend or destroy these Distinctions, but establishes and regulates them, and enjoins every man to conduct himself according to them.¹⁹

Although many churchmen and churchwomen could not bring themselves to condemn slavery and call for its abolition, there were few prior to the 1830s who were willing to defend slavery directly. This fact may be attributed in part to the Great Awakening, the spiritual revival that broke upon the land in the years between 1725 and the American War of Independence. It was a spiritual movement, but it was also a democratizing one, for it beckoned into the churches a wide diversity of people of disparate backgrounds. The awakening transformed American Christianity from a religion of the spiritually select to a spiritual experience available to common men and women. By raising the value and confidence of ordinary people, it encouraged the development of a democratic spirit.²⁰

The missionary zeal generated by the spiritual energy of this revival movement kindled interest in missions to the Native Americans, but also raised freshly the question of whether African slaves should be evangelized. Eventually, most churches would answer affirmatively but with reservations and conditions. Nonetheless, the idea that Black slaves might become brothers and sisters in Christ added a new dimension to the dilemma that the majority of Americans faced.

By clearing an avenue down which Negroes could crowd into an important sector of the white man's community, the Awakening gradually forced the colonists to face more squarely the fact that Negroes were going to participate in their American experience.... Most important of all, however, the Great Awakening re-emphasized the axiomatic spiritual equality of Negroes with white men.²¹

A marked change in the South's attitude toward slavery seems to have occurred in the early 1830s. Prior to that time, the justification of slavery had been in equivocal and defensive terms, emphasis being given to the "providen-

tial” placing of slaves in their situation. From about the early 1830s, however, the pro-slavery sentiment assumed a more positive, assertive, and militant character.²²

Several factors and events of that period suggest possible reasons for this change.

- Between 1780 and 1800, several northern states, including Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York, passed statutes abolishing slavery within their borders. Southern states, however, stiffened in their resistance to any abolitionist schemes.²³ Meanwhile, the African slave trade continued. In its 1806–1807 session, Congress passed a law prohibiting trading in slaves after 1808 in the face of vehement opposition by representatives of the slaveholding interests. The law was not enforced and the battle over its passage may have had the unintended effect of strengthening southern resistance. It prompted slaveholders to hone new arguments in defense of a system that supported the largely agricultural economy of the South. At the same time, a sharpening abolitionist attack opened an ominous rift in the national spirit.

- Shortly after the passage of the ineffective law prohibiting the slave trade, the American Colonization Society was founded in 1816–17. Originally, the idea of colonizing free African Americans somewhere in Africa was supported by those who wished to emancipate the slaves but could not contemplate their existence as social and intellectual equals alongside Whites. Their bias made them receptive to the argument that Black people were not ready for the demanding roles of freedom, and that slavery was a providential school for preparing them socially, culturally, and intellectually for eventual freedom. This eventual date, of course, was never specified.

- In that period (1800–1835), several slave rebellions and uprisings in the United States alarmed Whites in the slaveholding states and provoked them to a harsher, more repressive treatment of slaves. In 1800 in Henrico County, Virginia, Gabriel Prosser and Jack Bowler gathered more than a thousand slaves and marched on Richmond. Denmark Vessey, who had bought his own freedom in

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1800, planned an elaborate insurrection in Charleston, South Carolina in 1822. It was estimated that as many as 9,000 individuals were involved. The most famous of all the insurrections was that of Nat Turner in Virginia, in 1831. In his effort to gain freedom for Blacks, Turner and his forces (in a twenty-four-hour period) killed sixty White slaveholders before being overpowered and captured by state and federal forces. As a result of these and many other such uprisings, frightened Whites strengthened repressive legislation to bring African Americans under control.

The ambiguity of the Presbyterian church's stance on the slavery and emancipation questions is seen at all levels. While in an earlier period a churchman—Jacob Green (1722–1790)—had issued an unqualified condemnation of slavery,²⁴ the Synods of New York and Philadelphia adopted an overture in 1787 calling for the procurement of eventual abolition.²⁵ By urging its members to educate their slaves looking to emancipation at a moderate rate, this court of the church in effect made the argument that Blacks were not ready for freedom.

The Synod of the Carolinas, considering the ordination of James Gilliland, a native son of that state, refused to ordain him because of his forthright antislavery stand. The synod timidly advised Gilliland to work privately for the emancipation of slaves, but to do nothing publicly that might destroy the peace of the church.²⁶

Nowhere is the moral dilemma of the Presbyterian church in relation to the issue of slavery more clearly demonstrated than in the Presbytery of Transylvania (Kentucky). As a presbytery in a border state, it probably represented as much as any the collision between forces supporting radical action against the slave system and others who placed the unity and peace of the church before the demand for justice and moral righteousness.

In 1797, the presbytery, struggling with the issue of slavery and its implications for church people, addressed the question, Is slavery a moral evil? Yes, they replied. But to the question, Are all persons who hold slaves guilty of moral evil? they gave a negative answer. The question that

followed, Who are not guilty of moral evil in holding slaves? was left unanswered. Instead, presbytery “resolved that the question now before presbytery is of so much importance that the consideration of it be put off till a future day.”²⁷

Andrew E. Murray, in his work *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, has recorded in extensive detail the agonized struggle that individual Presbyterians and judicatories underwent in the years between 1818 and 1860. While individual ministers did occasionally take unequivocal stands against slavery, sometimes having to leave their southern pulpits as a consequence, few governing bodies, at any level, found the moral courage to do so.²⁸

The issue of slavery was inescapably forced on the General Assembly’s agenda by the case of George Bourne and the Presbytery of Lexington, Virginia. After several years in the pastorate of the South River Church in Port Republic, Bourne and several elder commissioners carried to the General Assembly of 1815 an overture asking whether members of the church who retained people of color in slavery could be Christians.²⁹ Bourne himself had become convinced that slavery was a sin because it was man-stealing as defined by Scripture. In support of his inquiry, Bourne referred to, without naming, ministers in his presbytery who owned slaves and some who maltreated them. The assembly, without making a pronouncement, attempted to dampen down an issue that was sure to become a raging fire. It called for peace and charity among the brethren and expressed the pious hope that members would provide for the religious instruction of slaves in preparation for the time “when God in his providence may open a door for their emancipation.”³⁰

The Presbytery of Lexington, enraged by Bourne’s conduct as their representative to General Assembly, put him on trial on December 27, 1815. The formal charges were stated as follows:

Common fame charges the Rev. George Bourne, our Commissioner to the last General Assembly with having brought very heavy charges in the Assembly against some ministers of the Gospel in Virginia, whom he refused to name, respecting their treatment of slaves, the tendency of which was to bring reproach

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upon the character of the Virginia Clergy in general ... and with having made several unwarrantable and unchristian charges against many of the members of the Presbyterian Church in relation to slavery.³¹

Bourne refused to retreat and his presbytery deposed him. Bourne appealed to the General Assembly and in 1818 that body upheld his deposition. While issuing a statement that offered a strong condemnation of slavery in its opening paragraph, it emasculated its impact with qualifications, studiously avoiding the question of man-stealing.³² The entire pronouncement is worth reading because it is one more glaring example of the ambiguity that has marked the Presbyterian church's relation with African Americans (see Appendix I).³³

It should be noted, however, that the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA), which came into being in 1858 through the union of the Associate Synod and the Associate Reformed Synod, took a strong unambiguous stand against slavery. At the time of the union, the new church established as one of its eighteen principles this statement on slaveholding: "*We declare, That slaveholding, that is the holding of unoffending human beings in involuntary bondage and considering and treating them as property, is a violation of the law of God and contrary both to the letter and spirit of Christianity.*"³⁴ The location of the UPCNA congregations may partially account for this courageous position; most of them were located in northern and border states. The impact of that tradition would be felt in the negotiating of structures when the UPCNA merged with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. exactly a hundred years after its founding.

Unlike the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. chose to plead the "peace and unity" of the church as a reason for not exercising the discipline of its members in what was seen as an evil practice. After 1818, the Presbyterian church issued no pronouncement on slavery for nearly two decades, which was at a time when the national debate on the issue reached its highest pitch.

Presbyterian Work Among Slaves

Charles Hodge and the Princeton Theological Seminary group preached the doctrine of no action. Samuel Miller is said to have admonished his students that any preaching on slavery ought to be with caution. Hodge's concerns are clearly expressed in a statement in 1836 in the *Biblical Repertory*:

The opinion that slave-holding is itself a crime must operate to produce the disunion of the states and the division of all ecclesiastical bodies in [the] country. We shall become two nations in feeling, which must ... render us two nations in fact. With regard to the church, its operation will be much more summary. If slaveholding is a heinous crime, slave holders must be excluded from the church. ... Should the general assembly adopt it, the church is *ipso facto* divided. ...³⁵

As we have seen, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. sought to mitigate its weak moral position on the slavery issue by admonishing its members to provide religious instruction for their slaves in preparation for some vague future emancipation. We examine now what this church did along these lines and with what results.

Notwithstanding the fervor (some would say fanaticism) of the abolitionists and the Jesuitical arguments of the pro-slavery adherents, the large body of Presbyterians, North and South, seemed simply to wish that the whole slavery issue would go away. When forced to face the issue they temporized. The Presbyterians acknowledged that slavery was an evil practice and not in accord with the tenets of their faith, but they could not bring themselves to declare that slavery was sin. That would have required disciplinary action against slaveholders, which they had not found the courage to adopt. As is the case of the 1818 General Assembly (PCUSA) pronouncement, a sweeping denunciation of slavery ended in a small squeaking denouement (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1818, pp. 20–21).

The escape hatch constructed by the church at large produced consequences that continue to prevent the church from accepting and cherishing its diversity. In both the North and the South, White Presbyterians accepted and acted on the notion that Black people were inferior in

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culture, intelligence, and morals. From this stubborn perception, two consequences issued. First, while grudgingly admitting the humanity of African Americans, Whites assumed them to be of a lower order for whom a slave status was not inappropriate since they were obviously not equipped to appreciate or exercise freedom. Blacks, they reasoned, needed to be treated differently until they acquired the maturity and discipline that was necessary for the exercise of individual and collective freedom.

Secondly, flowing from the foregoing assumption was a view that slavery was a school through which Blacks could develop discipline, morals, integrity, and other qualities in which their White masters found them lacking. Far from seeing slavery as an outrage against the humanity of persons, pro-slavery advocates, as well as those who supported eventual emancipation, could think of the slave system as essentially benefiting those held in bondage.

In the period following 1830, those Presbyterians who were not promoting immediate emancipation adopted the path of giving religious instruction to their slaves. This was done to amend those character flaws in which the bond servants were observed to be prone.

Charles Colcock Jones, who would certainly be considered an enlightened Southerner, saw the evil of slavery but could not bring himself to condemn it outright. Rather, he seemed to try to preserve his innocence and/or ameliorate his guilt by preaching constantly to his fellow southern slaveholders their responsibility to give their slaves religious instruction. Jones wrote in one of his numerous publications on the subject:

And what is the moral and religious condition of this *people*? ... We are aware of the ignorance which prevails among them of the word of God, of the doctrines and duties of Christianity, and of the superstition which is necessarily connected with that ignorance. We know the extreme febleness of their sense of obligation to improve the means of grace and of instruction, placed within their reach, and expressly designed for their good. We know how defective is their standard of character, and even of *Christian* character; and what constant care and trouble, and frequently what grief they are to the churches with which they are connected, and how gross are the crimes for which they are

ordinarily disciplined. We are acquainted with their violations of the marriage contract; their general disregard of virtue, honesty, and truth; their want of kindness to each other, and fidelity in business: their tendency to drunkenness, and to idleness; and their profanation of the Sabbath day. These characteristics attach to them, *both in a state of slavery, and in a state of freedom*, and they are generally considered as degraded as any other class of people in the United States.³⁶

Presbyterians, like most other church denominations, avoided the moral dilemma of slavery by asserting a distinction between religious liberty and civil freedom.

During the period of slavery, those slaves who were Christianized generally attended the church of their masters. Special seats for Blacks in the balconies or at the rear nullified any notion that before God masters and slaves were on equal footing. Having slaves worship in White churches was a way of control. Charles Jones, in his writings on the religious instruction of the slaves, advises against separating Blacks from the Whites.

The organization of the negroes into churches, *independent* of white churches and ecclesiastical bodies, and in no manner subject to their review and control, in the present ignorant and degraded state of the negroes, would be disastrous to the progress of scriptural knowledge and piety among them, and productive of confusion and every evil work in the communities where they would be tolerated.³⁷

At the time of the writing of his book, Jones estimated that half of the colored population was not provided places in the houses of worship.³⁸ He estimated that there were 1,846,028 Black youth under the age of twenty. It is almost impossible to verify the accuracy of Jones' figures since the General Assembly (PCUSA) *Minutes* do not begin to reflect its African American membership until 1848.³⁹ General Assembly records show some churches and/or Sunday schools in which "Colored" members outnumber Whites. A partial list includes:

Pleasant Grove, S.S.; Riceboro, Ga.

38 Blacks out of 41 (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1848, p. 150)

Cub Creek, S.S.; Charlotte C.H., Va.

40 Blacks out of 54 (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1850, p. 567)

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- Roanoke, P.E., Cub Creek, Va.
86 Blacks out of 114 (Ibid.)
- Salem, Black River, P; Bradleyville, S.C.
168 Blacks out of 224 (Ibid., p. 577)
- Indiantown, P; Parsonage, S.C.
352 Blacks out of 504 (Ibid.)
- Williamsburg, P.; Kingstree, S.C.
212 Blacks out of 346 (Ibid.)
- Bethel, P.; Walterboro, S.C.
116 Blacks out of 144 (Ibid.)
- Centre Ridge, P.; Richmond, Ala.
38 Blacks out of 65 (Ibid., p. 583)
- Bethel, V.; Sumterville, Ala.
93 Blacks out of 153 (Ibid., p. 584)
- Lake Providence, S.S.; Lake Providence, La.
72 Blacks of 97 (Ibid., p. 587)
- Carmel, P.; Natchez, Miss.
54 Blacks out of 99 (Ibid.)
- Emmaus, P.; Bellemonte, Tenn.
40 Blacks out of 73 (Ibid., p. 593)

Whatever the congregational arrangements, a crucial factor in the religious nurture of enslaved Black people under the tutelage and control of White congregations was preaching and instruction. Having successfully convinced themselves of the inferiority of the Black race in culture, intelligence, and morals, White Presbyterians, along with other Christians, offered Blacks a regular diet of preaching and instruction that was designed to make them better slaves. Those biblical passages (such as Eph. 6:5–8, Col. 3:22–25, 1 Peter 2:18–25, 1 Cor. 7:20–24) that stressed obedience, humility, honesty, and hard work became the standard fare of sermons and catechetical instruction.⁴⁰ Black Christians, bearing the yoke of slavery, were not unaware of their masters' double standards. The Negro Spirituals supply an instructive comment on the teachings that they received. That the intelligence and perspicacity of

Black believers was not lacking is attested to by Charles C. Jones, who in his instructive suggestions to Whites who preached to Blacks had this to recommend:

*The matter of preaching should, of course be the pure word of God; thoroughly studied, clearly presented, forcibly illustrated, and practically applied. If a minister is of opinion that any kind of preaching will do for the negroes, let him try it, and he will presently be of another mind. They are good judges of a good sermon. They are human nature [sic], and like to be treated with some consideration, and are as fond of an able ministry as are any other people. He who preaches to negroes, should study just as profoundly, and as extensively, as he who preaches to the Whites.*⁴¹

This period of tutelage in White congregations came to an end for the most part with the American Civil War. The resulting split in the nation and the Presbyterian church had a momentous impact on African Americans, the majority of whom now entered a new life as free men and women. This new life included new structures—their own congregations and eventually their own presbyteries and synods.

CHAPTER II

The Nature and Character of Black Presbyterian Churches After Emancipation

Presbyterians were severely divided as they approached the challenging task of evangelizing African Americans. Not only was the Presbyterian church divided into the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (northern) and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (southern), the denominations were split by the American Civil War and the slavery conflict. They earlier had split into Old School and New School concerning theological and social issues (including slavery) and questions of polity. The Old School was the larger faction in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Led by Princeton Seminary theologians, the Old School feared splitting the church and denounced slavery only at the eleventh hour when the American Civil War was approaching an end. In 1864, they appointed two committees, one in Philadelphia and another in Indianapolis, to investigate the possibilities of evangelizing Black freedmen and freedwomen. It is to the credit of both the Old School and the New School that they recognized nothing less than a holistic ministry would be sufficient for addressing the needs of Black women and men who had suddenly been thrust into freedom but without any preparation for it.

The 1848 and 1850 General Assembly (PCUSA) records, as evidenced by the listing above (p. 19), show substantial numbers of Blacks in relatively few churches. While it was the common pattern in the antebellum South for Blacks to worship in White churches, some separate Black Presbyterian congregations were organized, mainly in the northeast.⁴² But the great masses of newly emancipated women and men were unchurched and lacking in the wherewithal to begin life in freedom. In a circular distributed by

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the eastern (Philadelphia) committee, a graphic description is given of their plight:

In the providence of God, a new and touching cause reaches our ears for Christian sympathy, effort and contribution. Without any agency of their own, colored people, lately in servitude, to the number it is believed, of nearly half a million, have been thrown within the national lines, in a condition, in most cases, of almost utter physical and moral destitution. Their sufferings in long weary journeys—often almost without clothing, often without shelter in inclement weather, and long without bread, sinking exhausted by the way, sickening and dying in large numbers—have been such as no tongue can tell. ...

Beneficent associations have done much toward relieving their physical wants. But these people are more than mere animals; they have immortal souls.

They need the ministration of the gospel, in health, in sickness and in the hour of death.

They need to be taught to read the word of God. Such as can read, need the ministrations of the colporteur, conveying to them the pages of religious truth.

Masters now of their persons, time and families, they need instruction in the new duties that thus develop upon them.

In a word, they need everything that the ignorant, destitute and perishing can need.⁴³

Through such appeals, the two committees raised funds and were instructed to work chiefly with military and contraband camps and hospitals. These facilities, captured from Confederate forces, were often given to house freedmen's schools and churches.

The number of Black Presbyterians in the slave states prior to emancipation was estimated by southern church leaders to be fourteen thousand. The great majority of these were certainly members of White congregations, for there is only one verifiable Black Presbyterian church in the South prior to the American Civil War.⁴⁴ This was founded by the Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina, and became known as Zion Church. With the end of the conflict and emancipation, a change took place. The southern attitude toward African Americans remained essentially as it was during the slave period. Southerners expected Blacks to return to their former relationship and be

prepared to submit to a status of inferiority in order to worship with their former masters.

Leon Robert Anderson refers to the views of Walter L. Lingle, certainly one of the more progressive southern Presbyterians on the matter of race:

... during American slavery there was little need for special evangelistic work among Negroes apart from the normal duties of the average pastor. The slaves were members of the white churches and received the same message at the same time as the other members of the church, and the pastoral oversight from the session as other members received.⁴⁵

How the same message and oversight could apply to slave and masters whose situations were totally different, if not inimical, is hard to understand. It was such a lack of sensitivity that led Southerners to expect Blacks to submit to their former status of inferiority in order to continue to worship with their former masters.

Black ministers, understandably, demanded equality and were, therefore, disposed to leave the southern church and affiliate with the northern church, which was establishing separate Black congregations. The northern church declared the South to be missionary territory and sent large numbers of teachers, evangelists, and missionaries to work among the freedmen, especially in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, and to a lesser extent in Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, and Tennessee.

The bitterness caused by this action can be sensed in the correspondence between Leighton Wilson, secretary of the southern church's Sustentation Fund and S. C. Logan, secretary of the northern assembly's Committee on Freedmen. Wilson wrote to the effect that the southern church had pioneered in this work and continued "up to that period when the Southern county was deluged with Northern agents of every hue and stripe, the great mass of whom seemed to regard themselves as heaven-commissioned to fill the minds of the negroes with hatred and animosity toward their former owners."⁴⁶ He suggested that it would be better for the northern church to subsidize the work of the southern church which understood Blacks

better. It was clear, however, that Blacks would be expected to submit to certain “prudential regulations” in order to worship with their former masters.

The northern church rejected this idea and some White southern ministers crossed over to the northern church in order to participate in the ministry to Blacks who were in desperate need of help.⁴⁷ The crossover of southern clergymen to accept work supported by the northern church was notable in North Carolina in the area that became Catawba Presbytery. The establishment of the Charlotte Church, Colored was a strategically important event both in the founding of higher education and theological education in the South and the development of Black governing structures.

In regard to matters of church governance, it seems certain that Blacks who retained membership in White congregations of the southern church had no voice in the governance of the church at any level. They did not serve on the session, nor did they serve in any of the ordained offices of the church. They were certainly not sent as commissioners to the presbytery, the synod, or the General Assembly. In some instances where Blacks worshiped separately, their leaders were designated as “watchmen.” This was probably an accurate description of their function. In the one recorded instance in which a White southern presbytery ordained Blacks to the ministry (in the period immediately following emancipation), their service was specifically restricted to serving Blacks. They were not accorded equity of status with White clergy.⁴⁸ Even in those instances in which separate congregations were established, they were under the control of White congregations from which they had emerged.

Some Representative Beginnings

The metamorphosis of these groups of Black Presbyterians from voiceless and largely powerless enclaves within White congregations is an important aspect of the development of self-governing bodies (presbyteries and synods) in the South. The nature and circumstance of their genesis and development as fully Presbyterian judicatories ac-

counts to a significant extent for the relative weakness of the middle judicatories in which these churches held membership.

Under the almost complete control of the Board for Freedmen that was established in 1864, the work among freedwomen and freedmen developed for some time. This entity provided the teachers, missionaries, and evangelists who did the foundational educational work and organized most of the first independent Black congregations. Through the Board of Freedmen, the General Assembly was kept informed of the growth and progress of the work among African Americans.

The story of the founding of the all-Black presbyteries and synods begins with the establishment of separate self-governing congregations. While this account does not deal with the historical record of sessions, a brief review of the emergence of a few selected congregations will shed light on the process of development of middle-level governing bodies, which is our primary concern. What follows are brief histories of representative congregations of the Atlantic Synod and the Catawba Synod—the earliest and strongest of the Black synods.

First United Presbyterian Church Charlotte, North Carolina

In Charlotte, as elsewhere, prior to emancipation Black slaves worshiped in the churches of their White masters. The First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte (White), organized in 1832, apparently had some Black members early in its history. They were seated in a section specially reserved for them. Eventually that part of the sanctuary set aside for Black worshipers was needed for other things—perhaps to accommodate a growing White membership. The Blacks withdrew for a time, attending “brush arbor” churches and listening to the open air preachers of the African Methodist Episcopal and Baptist persuasions. Being thoroughly steeped in Presbyterianism, however, they were not inclined to join another denomination. At the request of the Blacks, the pastor and session of the First Presbyterian Church arranged for a special service on Monday nights

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that was held in the basement of the church. This arrangement continued for six months, after which the congregation moved into a building of its own.⁴⁹ For reasons beyond its own historical importance, this church became a major focal point for Black Presbyterianism in the south-east. It was the womb from which emerged the largest and best known of the Presbyterian educational institutions in the region, Biddle Institute (now Johnson C. Smith University). First Presbyterian Church also was at the core of the oldest and most populous Black presbytery, Catawba.

The key actor in the founding of the Charlotte church was one of the three ministers who was instrumental in the founding of Biddle Institute and Catawba Presbytery. Samuel C. Alexander, pastor of the Steele Creek and Pleasant Hill Presbyterian churches and member of the Concord Presbytery of the southern church, was a graduate of Columbia Seminary. Alexander received his ordination in 1861.

Alexander was not a stranger to working with Blacks. The Steele Creek Church had a Black membership that in 1860 numbered 110. Alexander, then, continued under new circumstances a service already established. His wife, Nannie R. Alexander, writing many years later recalls:

Steele Creek had two church buildings, known as the "Old" and the "New" Churches. The new one was occupied for services during the mild weather, the old, in the winter. He held meetings in the old building for the colored people while the Sabbath School was in session in the new, on Sabbath mornings. Thus he gained the confidence and affection of them all in these sections of the country.⁵⁰

The personal motivations of Alexander and others who defected from the southern church appear to have been primarily a sincere desire to advance the cause of the newly emancipated African Americans. However, Alexander's decision may also have been prompted in part by other factors. By 1865, things were not going smoothly for him at Steele Creek—the church was behind in the payment of his salary, and there was some dissension between pastor and congregation. After both parties petitioned Concord Presbytery, a judicial committee recommended the dissolu-

tion of the pastoral relationship. The next year Alexander sought and received a commission as a missionary of the northern church.

It seems possible that the strained financial circumstances of the southern church and/or the better resources of the northern church encouraged some southern ministers to defect and receive commissions from the northern church. Several members of Concord Presbytery were suspended by that presbytery, and these men later joined the northern church.

The widow of Alexander, writing years later, describes the unfriendly climate in which he had to work.

Just how soon in that year [1866] the church in Charlotte was organized by my husband I do not remember, but no place to locate either church or school building, could be secured then, such was the opposition of the white people to the work.⁵¹

When the Blacks of Charlotte learned that Alexander would be available to hold services for them on a regular basis, they were elated. Catherine Hayes, a member of the Steele Creek congregation, called on Alexander to discuss the matter of forming a Black Presbyterian church. Having gained his assent, she sent this terse message to Mrs. Frank Byers: "Come down out of the gallery to the ground floor in your own church."⁵² These two women, with Adaline Johnson, Charlotte Alexander, Alex Alexander, and Frank Byers, were the charter members of the new Charlotte Church, Colored.

Although, as indicated above, southern Whites were generally uncooperative concerning northern missionary endeavors among Black people, Alexander was able to secure a parcel of land on C Street (now Caldwell Street) from a businessman who was in financial straits. For the first six months of its life, the infant Presbyterian congregation met in a small room rented from the First Baptist Church (Black). So successful were their efforts that at the end of a six-month period the congregation was able to purchase a lot at the corner of Third Street and Davidson Street. An old military barracks building, given by the Freedmen's Bureau, was transported from the fairgrounds and erected on

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one of the corner lots. It served as both church sanctuary and school. The school would later develop into Biddle Institute.⁵³

The church formally organized in 1866 and was named the Charlotte Church, Colored in 1867. In that year, it had a communicant membership of 54 and a Sunday School enrollment of 120. By 1869, the communicant membership had increased to 83. During 1869, the church purchased the property of a Lutheran congregation located at College Street and Seventh Street, which is its present location. By the time the relocation took place, the membership totaled 125.

Since its founding, the church has undergone several name changes. In 1895, with the approval of Catawba Presbytery, it adopted the name Seventh Street Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, North Carolina. It kept this name until 1967, when the Brooklyn Presbyterian Church, reputedly begun by the Seventh Street Church as a mission, merged with it. It then became the First United Presbyterian Church, which is its present name.

The significance of the First United Presbyterian Church to this study is its centrality in the establishment of Catawba Presbytery and the founding of Biddle Institute.

Cotton Memorial Presbyterian Church Henderson, North Carolina

Further to the northeast, the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA) developed work in Henderson, North Carolina. Nowhere is the integral relationship of church and educational work better illustrated than in the work at Henderson. The UPCNA established twenty-six mission centers in Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Virginia, beginning as early as 1865. Fifteen of these centers were discontinued or transferred to other denominations by 1914. The work of the mission in Henderson, North Carolina, continues today.

Records show that a Presbyterian church was organized in Henderson in 1888, by S. S. Sevier with six charter

members. It was originally called Simpson Chapel and was affiliated with Cape Fear Presbytery, Synod of Catawba of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

The UPCNA General Assembly voted to establish a mission in Henderson in 1889, and in 1890 the center opened under the supervision of John D. Irons, D.D., who was staying in Henderson for health reasons. The Board of Freedmen's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church of North America purchased, for \$1,700.00, a thirteen-acre parcel of land just beyond the city limits. A school building and teacher's cottage at the church's Bluestone Mission in Virginia were razed and reconstructed on the Henderson Institute site in 1890. The formal opening of Henderson Institute was observed on September 1, 1891, under the leadership of J. M. Fulton who, for health reasons, had left his work as pastor of Fourth Church, Allegheny, Pennsylvania, to relocate to a milder climate. The work met with almost instantaneous success. The first year's enrollment was 556 and the principal was led to request additional teachers and buildings. During his two-year tenure, Fulton saw more than seven hundred students enrolled in the day school and an additional two hundred students enrolled in the night school.

Fulton experienced what other White missionaries in other places had also experienced: a southern White attitude that refused to acknowledge the Black man's common humanity. In 1893, he wrote:

The whole race is fenced in by the deep conviction of the whites, that the Negro was appointed by the Lord to do only menial [labor], and beyond that he cannot go. This is not prejudice on the part of the white people, but it is a religious conviction. The southern people will never do anything to change this condition. When we attempt to help the colored man we are told it is no use. ... The only hope for the colored race is in the church—the benevolent people. The nation helped to crush the colored man and the Indian. The one she forsakes, the other she helps. Why this difference? Since God has put this work upon the Church let us arise to a realization of the needs of the people and strive to fit them for citizens of earth and heaven.⁵⁴

Under C. L. McCracken, Fulton's successor, the mission became more church-oriented. McCracken worked for

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good relations between the institute and the mission operated by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. A cordial, cooperative relationship between the two was established and maintained. In 1898, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. turned over its entire work in Henderson to the UPCNA board. As a result, the religious work was greatly strengthened.

In 1900, the first Black chief administrator, J. L. Cook, was appointed to the principalship. After a very successful three-year tenure, terminated by Cook's death, John Cotton assumed the leadership and continued it for thirty-one years.

In 1911, Jubilee Hospital was established and continued to operate until 1929. It was among the small number of hospitals founded and operated by Presbyterian denominations in service to the newly freed men and women.

The congregation at Henderson continues today as one of the strongest of the former UPCNA churches.⁵⁵ Until the merger of the UPCNA and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., this congregation was a part of the Tennessee Presbytery. At the time of the merger in 1958, it became a part of Cape Fear Presbytery.

Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church Charleston, South Carolina

Presbyterian seeds fell on fertile grounds among Blacks in South Carolina. This state had a higher number of large plantations than North Carolina so the Black population was proportionately greater than that found in North Carolina. The congregation that became Zion Church had its beginnings with the Black slaves who attended the Second Presbyterian Church, a White congregation. While most Blacks continued to worship in the balconies of White churches, here and there separate Black churches were formed. In Charleston, South Carolina, in 1847, John B. Adger, a White minister, won the consent of the citizens of Charleston, the members of the Second Presbyterian Church, and his presbytery to organize a separate African American congregation. The White people of Charleston

contributed \$7,700, an amount sufficient to construct a large building. Under the leadership of Adger's successor, John L. Girardeau, "the congregation grew until Zion Church, the largest in the city, was erected. It seated one thousand Negroes on the main floor, and two hundred and fifty whites frequently crowded into the balcony. ..."56

This reversal of the usual seating pattern was evidently due to the eloquence and power of Girardeau's preaching. Starting with thirty-six members in 1847, the membership grew to six hundred by 1854.

This arrangement (Whites joining a Black congregation) was considered so unusual that permission was granted by Charleston Presbytery, under a special covenant signed by thirty-two of the sixty-four members, which declared in part:

That we enter this church as white members of the same, with the fullest understanding that its primary design and chief purpose is to benefit the colored and especially the slave population of this city, and the white membership is a feature added to the original organization for the purpose of better securing the ends of that organization. We declare, further, that we have chosen to attach ourselves to this church, not only for the benefit of ourselves and our families, which we believe will be secured by such a connection, but also that we may assist by our means and our personal efforts in the support and procreation of this missionary work.⁵⁷

John B. Adger had been a missionary to Turkey, which may account in part for his sensitivity to the inadequate provision of the physical accommodations for Blacks in the gallery and the need for preaching more attuned to their situation. At any rate, it was Adger who put forth the proposal to establish a separate Black congregation, an arrangement generally frowned upon by most southern Whites. Charles Colcock Jones specifically advised against separating Blacks into independent congregations. Many White people feared that the separation of Blacks into congregations of their own would provide them the opportunity to hatch insurrection plots.

Adger, however, persisted and was able to convince the citizens of Charleston to grant permission for a separate

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Black church. The sermon, which he preached and which led to the approval of his project by the Second Presbyterian Church and by Charleston Presbytery, was from the text regarding the poor having the gospel preached to them. He said in part:

The poor of this city are easily distinguishable. Nowhere are the poor more distinctly marked out than our poor, and yet strange to say, nowhere are the poor so closely and intimately connected with the higher classes as are our poor with us. They belong to us. We also belong to them. They live with us, eating from the same storehouses, drinking from the same fountains, dwelling in the same enclosures, forming parts of the same families. Our mothers confide us, when infants, to their arms and sometimes to the very milk of their breasts. Their children are, to some extent unavoidably the playmates of our childhood ... and then, either they stand weeping by our bedside or else we drop a tributary tear by theirs, when death comes to close the long connection and to separate the good master and his good servant.

Such, my friends, are those whom we consider the poor of this city. See them all around you, in these streets, in all these dwellings; a race distinct from us, yet closely united to us; brought in God's mysterious providence from a foreign land, and placed under our care, and made members of our households. They fill the humblest places of our state of society; they serve us; they give us their strength; yet they are not more truly ours than we are truly theirs. They are our poor—our poor brethren; children of our God and Father; dear to our Saviour; to the like of whom He preached; for the like of whom He died; and to the least of whom every act of Christian compassion and kindness which we show, He will consider as shown also to Himself.⁵⁸

During the American Civil War, Girardeau left his congregation to serve as chaplain to the Twenty-third Regiment of the South Carolina Volunteers. He fell a prisoner to the Federal forces. According to southern church sources, following the war, some 116 Blacks petitioned for Girardeau's return to his pastorate. He did, and subsequently, he enrolled more than 450 persons. The following year most of the Black membership joined the northern church.⁵⁹ Northern church accounts say that during Girardeau's absence, the church property was used by Jonathan Gibbs, a Black missionary sent by the northern church. According to this account, Gibbs withdrew when Girardeau returned. The congregation, however, demanded that Girardeau accept the deliverances of the Old School Assembly, including

a pledge of loyalty to the Union. This Girardeau refused to do, and the congregation recalled Gibbs to the pastorate. So began Zion Presbyterian Church (later merged with Olivet church to become Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church as it is known today).⁶⁰ This church became a part of Atlantic Presbytery.

St. James United Presbyterian Church
James Island, Charleston, South Carolina

Coastal South Carolina proved fertile ground for Black Presbyterians. The area around Charleston, including the sea islands, was heavily populated by African Americans in the days before developers discovered the attractiveness of these islands as recreational resorts for the affluent. The growth of Presbyterian congregations can be partially attributed to the Presbyterian emphasis on education and the church-school tandem pattern that was common all over the South. Another early church in the Charleston area was organized on James Island, off the South Carolina coast. James Island, which is fourteen miles long and five miles wide at its broadest point, lies two miles off Charleston and is bounded by the Ashley, Cooper, and Stone Rivers and the Atlantic Ocean.

Following the pattern already described, this church had its origins in the James Island Presbyterian Church. Though controlled by Whites, it had, in the years preceding the outbreak of the American Civil War, 234 slave members and only 35 Whites. The Black slaves were enrolled under their baptismal names and under the names of their owners.

The Saint James congregation was organized some time in 1866 or 1867 as a part of Atlantic Presbytery. Although the church's own written accounts do not agree on the year, it is clear that Black people were motivated by their emancipation to come out of the White James Island Presbyterian Church and organize themselves into a new congregation. This new congregation was led by Richard Backman, Troutman Cromwell, Lazarus Fludd, Billie McDowell, and Samuel Washington.

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According to one account, Paul Campbell, an ex-slave who had been licensed to preach at the first session of Atlantic Presbytery in Charleston, began to preach and teach soon after the war. The first worship settings were brush arbors, and there Campbell conducted prayer meetings and other services. Later, local sympathetic Whites helped to organize a church and construct a building. However, the church the Whites helped organize was affiliated with the northern church.⁶¹

Another version of the Saint James story has the founders mentioned above (Backman, Cromwell, Fludd, McDowell, and Washington) organizing the first meeting of the congregation on a spot that is the site of the present church. Building materials were brought by hand and by teams to construct the first building. The building was described as a very large rectangular frame building with a porch across the front, three front doors, a bell tower, and a gallery.

The Committee for the Education of Freedmen reported to the General Assembly in May 1868 that the Colored Presbyterian Church on James Island was completed in 1868 at a cost of \$800.00, had a membership of 400 communicants, 80 Sunday school students, and 89 pupils in the day school (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1868, Annual Report of Committee on Freedmen, p. 34).

About that time, a White minister, Hampleton H. Hunter, came from the North to work among Black people on James Island. He served with distinction until 1893. In subsequent years, the church was led by several ministers who served as moderators of the session or as stated supply.⁶²

In 1921, a Biddle graduate, Marion A. Sanders, and his wife Ona Belle, came to assume leadership. They served for forty-one years. Under their leadership, the congregation grew to nine hundred and the Saint James Parochial School, eventually offering classes from kindergarten through high school, became a vital community institution. The school received Board of National Mission support from 1926 to 1958 when it closed. During its period of operation,

the school was recognized as the premier institution for African American children on James Island.

Since its organization in the 1860s, this congregation has operated in four church structures. The latest structure was built near the site of the original building and was dedicated on June 19, 1977, under the leadership of C. L. Campbell Jr.

Saint James Presbyterian Church was one of the early churches in the Atlantic Presbytery. Today it is the largest Black congregation in the area that formed the Atlantic Synod.

Ladson Presbyterian Church
Columbia, South Carolina

The Ladson Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, is still another chapter in the story of the founding of the all-Black presbyteries and synods. It grew out of the White Presbyterian church whose Black members were under the discipline of the session but could not hold church office.

According to the records of the First Presbyterian Church (White) of that city, Blacks were members of that church even prior to 1838. In that year, at the initiative of the Blacks, a separate chapel was built for them in the 1700 block of Sumter Street. They held worship services at this location from 1838 to 1876. In 1866, under the supervision of G. W. Ladson (a White minister who was paid by the White congregation to preach to the Blacks), the Black church was organized with session, deacon board, and trustee board. In the early years of this congregation, its Sunday school attracted both Whites and Blacks. In 1869, its enrollment showed 101 Whites and 325 Blacks. As in most of the early Black Presbyterian congregations, the Sunday school played a vital role. A thirst for knowledge, as well as spiritual hunger, attracted men and women to Sunday schools. These schools presented opportunities for learning reading and writing skills, as well as Scripture.

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Although the Ladson Church was organized in 1866, the property was not transferred to it until 1895. Eventually, Ladson Presbyterian Church broke its ties with First Presbyterian Church (White), which belonged to the Hopewell Presbytery (PCUS). It then became a part of the new Knox Presbytery, which was affiliated with the northern church (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.). The reason for the rupture was the refusal of Hopewell Presbytery to accord equality of status in ministry to its Black clergy.

Zion Hill Presbyterian Church Amelia, Virginia

One of the earliest efforts (though not resulting in the earliest presbytery) was work begun by northern Presbyterians in Amelia, Virginia. In the case of Russell Grove Church (now Zion Hill Presbyterian Church), we are fortunate to have a complete history of the early developments, written a little more than a decade after work began. The writer was Thomas C. Murphy, who was sent by the Presbyterian Committee of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as a missionary to the freedmen and freedwomen of Virginia. This was in response to the recommendation of the General Assembly that each pastor write a history of his church and deposit it with the Presbyterian Historical Society. Murphy compiled a history of the church in 1876. The details of this account draw heavily upon Murphy's work and oral tradition (see Appendix II).

The war had been over about ten months when Murphy arrived in Amelia. He was detailed to preach, to organize, and to superintend schools for the freed men and women. He was promised two lady teachers as soon as a suitable location and building were found.

The development of the schools somewhat overshadowed the work of developing churches in this rural agricultural area, but the cluster of Presbyterian churches that were planted and grew in Amelia and Nottaway counties attest to the work done in this regard. In March 1866, the two lady teachers arrived. They were N. C. Russell (in whose honor Russell Grove Church and Russell Grove School were

named) and Samantha J. Neil, a young widow from Limestone, Clarion County, Pennsylvania, an almost legendary figure whose memory has been kept alive in Amelia and Nottaway counties. Murphy dates Neil's work from 1866, but local oral accounts date it from 1864. The discrepancy may be due to the likelihood that Neil made an earlier trip to Amelia. The story is that she initially came to Virginia searching for the remains of her husband and his three brothers who had perished in the Battle of Chancellorsville, May 3, 1863. (Mrs. Neil had been married only five months.) The late Margaret A. Richardson, who had been her student, relates the story that has often been told of Samantha's arrival at Amelia Courthouse in Virginia:

She came down, riding in a covered wagon, but not being able to find any trace of her husband and his three brothers; she returned home and sold her house and turned everything into cash and came back to Amelia County to be as near as she could to where it was reported her loved ones were killed. She said, and I quote her words as she spoke them many times, "They have died trying to help the colored people, so now I intend to try living to help the colored people."⁶³

Despite the discrepancy in dates, all accounts agree on the essential facts. While Russell conducted her school near the Amelia Courthouse, Neil ran her school in an old wheelwright shop under a big oak tree six miles from the courthouse. Here, the Big Oak Presbyterian Church was organized on August 26, 1866. After Russell returned to Pennsylvania, Neil was transferred to Russell Grove. The school she developed became Ingleside Seminary, a prestigious academy for girls. It eventually moved from Amelia to Burkeville in Nottaway County, but the parochial elementary school continued at Russell Grove until 1931.

Although the newly emancipated Black men and women were in the worst of economic circumstances, they contributed in concrete ways to their own education and advancement. The first land for the Freedman's Chapel was deeded by a free Black man, Walter Jackson, and his wife who had come into possession of a thousand acres that had belonged to Nathaniel Harrison, a White man. Harrison had married a Black woman slave and at his death the land had come into the possession of his wife and children. An acre

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of land was deeded to W. F. White and J. S. Murphy, in trust, to be used exclusively for school and church purposes on behalf of the freedmen.

The lumber for the building was cut and hewn by the freedmen themselves. Further, though seldom noted, some of the teachers were Black men. The chapel and school were opened in the summer of 1866 under the charge of two African American students from Lincoln University, then Ashmun Institute. Again in the summer of 1867, J. M. Davis (a Black man from Philadelphia) taught for about two months and was partly supported by Blacks.

The church at the Freedmen's Chapel was organized September 16, 1866. Ruling elders elected, and installed, were Randall Booker, John Lawson, Peter Gray, Berg Reaves, and Magee. The Russell Grove Church was organized March 15, 1868. Some of the elders were transferred from the chapel and installed at Russell Grove.

The work at Amelia grew and prospered in spite of the bitter opposition of some of the local Whites. Both Neil and Murphy experienced this personally.

The churches that resulted from their work became a part of the Presbytery of Southern Virginia, which was organized in 1887.

Conclusions

As these selected accounts show, a number of early Black congregations of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had roots in White congregations. While some White southern Presbyterians professed their interest in evangelizing Blacks who had been slaves, their unwillingness or inability to adjust to the changed relationship between the two races doomed the southern church to witness a wholesale exodus of freed men and women. This resulted in the establishment of new congregations under new governing bodies allied to the northern church.

Moreover, the northern missionaries recognized the tremendous hunger for education among the freed men and

women and quickly established a pattern of church and school yoked in one mission thrust. The pastors of newly formed congregations partially supported themselves by teaching. Among all the denominations, the Presbyterian churches (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and United Presbyterian Church of North America) were in the forefront in establishing schools, institutes, and seminaries to prepare newly freed persons for church membership and citizenship in the community.

Given the peculiar situation existing in the South following the war and the unreformed attitudes of White Southerners toward Blacks, a system of ecclesiastical governing bodies to shepherd this new constituency had to be expected. It is to this development that we now turn.

CHAPTER III

Race and the Determination of Presbyterian Church Structures

The story of the birth and development of the African American governing bodies (presbyteries and synods) in the South has neither been fully told nor appreciated. It is highly improbable that the interplay between racial segregation and geographical accident can ever be completely disentangled. This accounts for some of the ambiguity with which the Presbyterian church has dealt with its Black constituents. When one considers the differences of outlook and situation with which each of the four components of the present Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Presbyterian Church in the U.S., United Presbyterian Church of North America, and Cumberland Presbyterian Church—displayed prior to the several mergers, the reasons for the church’s ambiguous stances become apparent.

All things considered, by the end of the Reconstruction period in 1877, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (northern) had generally accepted the prevailing southern views on race. This view was taken in spite of the antebellum abolitionist agitation of some people. In the Compromise of 1877, northern politicians agreed to let the South deal with the “Negro problem” in its own way in return for the South’s acquiescence in northern domination of the federal government.⁶⁴

The Presbyterian Church in the United States (southern) continued to oppose granting African Americans the right to establish separate, self-governing congregations since that would have sacrificed White people’s control over them. At the same time, they were not prepared to treat their Black brothers and sisters as equals.

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The United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA), which had taken a forthright stand against slavery in the antebellum period, had few White congregations in the South. Most UPCNA congregations found the area inhospitable to those of strong antislavery sentiments, so they moved out of the South. The few congregations that remained were made up primarily of African Americans, and when their single southern judicatory (Presbytery of Tennessee) was established, it was on a geographical rather than a racial basis. The effect, however, was much the same—an all-Black body.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which united with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1906, insisted upon and got territorial boundaries of presbyteries and synods redrawn to ensure racial segregation. The Synods of East Tennessee (later Synod of the Blue Ridge) and Canadian were formed as a result of this insistence. They covered areas (Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, and parts of Texas and Oklahoma) in which the northern church's missionary effort was not as strong as in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia.

Taken together, the policies and attitudes of these constituent denominations assured that African Americans in the South would be set apart in judicatory structures that separated them from their White brothers and sisters. Although in recent times, prior to the 1983 reunion, many White northern Presbyterians immigrated to the South, few, if any, found their way into the congregations of their own denomination in the South, which were mostly African American. (Some presbyteries in Georgia and Alabama had a few White congregations.)

In view of their de facto segregated situation, the question of why African American Presbyterians should continue in a "White church" periodically raised its head. Some outside the denomination have suggested that Blacks and Presbyterianism were ill suited for each other. It certainly cannot be denied that a much larger percentage of African Americans found their spiritual home in Baptist and Methodist churches rather than in Presbyterian congregations.

It has commonly been supposed that the reason for the failure of the Presbyterian church to attract Blacks in the South in large numbers was its cold, aristocratic, and unexpressive style of worship. The conventional wisdom has been that Blacks valued emotion over reason.⁶⁵ This conviction is expressed or implied again and again in statements of White contemporaries. Such an explanation, however, is too easy a solution to a complex question. In the early years of freedom, a number of factors influenced Blacks to prefer Baptist and Methodist congregations over Presbyterian ones.

- As compared to the Presbyterian system of government, the freedom and independence allowed by the Baptists' congregational polity must have been attractive. Prior to the establishment of Black presbyteries and synods, the Presbyterian practice of governance allowed White domination or control even where separate Black congregations existed.

- Due to the social restrictions that racism forced upon them, African Americans have found in their churches the primary means of social development and the bridge between religious and secular life. In its 1918 report on colored evangelization, the Presbyterian Church in the United States observed: "The chief thing about the Negro is his religion. It not only ministers to his spiritual nature but it furnishes almost the sole means of cultivating his social instincts."⁶⁶ Contrast this with White churches in the South, which during the period of slavery and after deliberately fostered the notion that religious and civil relations were distinctly separate. Such a notion was intended to forestall any assumption by African Americans that brotherhood in Christ extended also to civil society. In racially diverse denominations, like the Presbyterians, the social development that free congregational life nurtured tended to be inhibited.

Nevertheless, the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had some positive aspects that attracted substantial numbers of Blacks into their membership.

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- The United Presbyterian Church of North America, of course, took a courageous and forthright stand on slavery, though most of its constituency was outside the South. (When the Associate Synod of North America, one of the two constituent groups forming the UPCNA in 1858, sent its moderator to South Carolina in 1849 to read the synod's action in regard to slavery, the Presbytery of the Carolinas revolted and declared its independence of the Associate Synod.)⁶⁷

- Perhaps the most attractive thing the northern churches had to offer African Americans was a large commitment to the education of the freed men and women.

The General Assembly Committee on the Religious Instruction of the Freedmen (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.) in its 1864 report expressed considerable misgivings about the education or religious instruction of the freedmen in the light of "their unsettled posture" (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1864, p. 322). The General Assembly, nevertheless, adopted an action to establish two committees for the education of freedmen—one headquartered in Philadelphia and the other in Indianapolis.⁶⁸ In 1865, the two committees merged into an eighteen-member committee (nine ministers and nine elders), empowered to employ missionaries and teachers, secure necessary facilities, and provide general supervision of the whole southern field.⁶⁹

The reunion of the Old School and the New School in 1870 brought further reorganization to the committee. The General Assembly took two important actions: (1) the establishment of a separate agency and board for the vigorous prosecution of the work among the freed men and women; and (2) the combining into one agency the work of the Freedmen's Department of the Presbyterian Committee of Home Missions and that of the Committee on Freedmen. Over the years, some in the church continued to urge that the work be brought under the Board of Domestic Missions (or National Missions), but this did not occur until 1923.

Through their freedmen's committees, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the United Presbyterian Church of North America supported an impressive network

of educational institutions of varying levels across the southeast. These were clearly seen as an integral part of the evangelization effort of the church. By 1870, a scant five years after the commencement of its work, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Freedmen's Committee reported 69 churches, 29 ministers, 27 catechists, and 101 day-school teachers.⁷⁰ Three years later the numbers had increased to 103 churches, 38 ordained ministers and licentiates, and 71 teachers. (This figure of 71 teachers appears not to include ministers, licentiates, and catechists, totaling 63, who doubled as teachers.) By 1889, churches numbered 237, ordained ministers and licentiates 116, and teachers 165.

These figures give some indication of the large commitment of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to the education of the freed men and women. Other records substantiate its support of a network of educational institutions ranging from parochial elementary schools to colleges and seminaries. The United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA) also supported a substantial number of schools in the areas where the denomination had work. This included primary- and secondary-level schools in Virginia, a high school and hospital in North Carolina, and six primary- and secondary-level schools in Wilcox County, Alabama. Knoxville College in Tennessee (with a college, medical school, seminary, and agricultural college) was the capstone of the UPCNA educational effort on behalf of African Americans.

In almost every instance, the educational institution was paired with a church. The schools, in addition to offering a sound education, became major tools of evangelism, bringing members into the Presbyterian denominations and feeding students into theological seminaries.

The 1866 assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. noted that Ashmun Institute was founded in 1854 in Pennsylvania with the stated aim of preparing Blacks as missionaries to Africa. After the American Civil War, its name was changed to Lincoln University to honor the fallen president and its program broadened to prepare men to meet the needs of southern freed men and women. The

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1866 assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. also noted the establishment of the Freedmen's College of North Carolina (later Biddle Institute and still later Johnson C. Smith University). The latter institution was intended for "the education of Freedmen, and for training a Calvinistic ministry for the coloured race."⁷¹ Lincoln University and Johnson C. Smith seminary graduates carried on a friendly rivalry as long as the Lincoln Theological Seminary lasted. Lincoln, being the older institution, sent volunteers and ministers into the South in the days immediately following the American Civil War. Some of its students spent summers in the South, serving without pay as teaching volunteers in the schools and Sunday schools established by the northern church.

For some African Americans, this Presbyterian investment in their education elicited their loyalty forever.⁷² Considering that the Presbyterian church was, with some exceptions, a new entity in the African American experience, the rate of Blacks' adherence to it was quite impressive. Although the southern Presbyterian church claimed it had fourteen thousand Black members at the inception of northern missionary activity, the figure cannot be substantiated from the records of the General Assembly. The total number of colored communicants in the states of the Confederacy recorded in the General Assembly (PCUSA) *Minutes* for 1860, the last year before the schism of North and South, was 11,494. By 1914, fifty years after the start of missionary activity, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had organized 412 congregations with 26,311 communicants who gave a total of \$247,188.20. This work was supported by 461 teachers in 138 schools, enrolling 19,166 pupils.⁷³ An impressive achievement! Such growth on any of the foreign fields would have been received with loud acclamation.

The adherence of Blacks to the Presbyterian church in the Carolinas—this area had and has the heaviest concentration of Black Presbyterians in the country—can be partially explained by the dominance of Scotch-Irish Presbyterian settlers there. The Sumter-Clarendon County area of South Carolina and the Charlotte area of North Carolina

particularly have been fertile soil for African American Presbyterian churches, and the former has supplied a disproportionate number of men and women for the ministry. William L. Metz, D.D., once wrote:

The writer feels quite safe in asserting that the Presbyterian Negro who will be nothing else if he cannot be a Presbyterian or find a Presbyterian church somewhere is a Sumter of Clarendon County Presbyterian Negro. ... The writer has made contact with all kinds of Negro Presbyterians as to their stability, but the most stable are of the two counties mentioned.⁷⁴

At any rate, the situation of Black Presbyterians in the South was unique. As the fruit of an unwelcome (by White Southerners) northern missionary enterprise, they found White Southerners, Presbyterians included, somewhat less than cordial. Blacks in other denominations regarded Black Presbyterians as having few advantages from their connection with a predominantly White church and the serious disadvantages of unwanted control by a White majority. The superior, paternalistic attitude of southern White Presbyterians can be extrapolated from a statement of James Snedecor published in *The Presbyterian Examiner* in 1913, titled "A Southerner's Attitude Toward the Negro":

Formerly the Negro had few rights, but many privileges. ... Among the privileges he once enjoyed was attendance at the same church with the white man and of hearing the gospel preached with true emphasis upon the life. Commenting upon the social and religious influences of the old regime, Dr. Dickerman declares that "to share in such a domestic life, to grow up from infancy under the eye of such superiors, and in the companionship of their children, could bring even to slaves a fineness of sensibility, a moral tone and an intelligence that do not rise spontaneously in any character."⁷⁵

The Freedmen's Board report in the *Home Mission Monthly* in 1915 reveals a similar assessment: "The Nineteenth Century emancipated the Negro from bondage. It rests with the Twentieth Century to give him emancipation from the slavery of sin" (*Home Mission Monthly*, Vol. 29, No. 6, 1915, p. 145).

The geographical separation of southern Blacks from their northern brothers and sisters, and the less than friendly attitude of White Southerners conspired to create a

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sense of isolation among the new Presbyterians of the South. Due to their financial dependence upon the Freedmen's Committee, a paternalistic pattern of control developed for the southern work. Northern Black Presbyterians wanted no part of that paternalistic system under which their southern brothers and sisters labored. Any structures that pointed in the direction of a paternalistic system were resisted by northern Blacks. This deepened the sense of isolation of Black Presbyterians in the South.

It was natural for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to create governing bodies to structure the life and growth of the African American churches within the southern area where most White Presbyterians were members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The earliest of the all-Black governing bodies to be formed was the Presbytery of Catawba. Under the Enabling Acts of the General Assembly, this presbytery was organized on October 6, 1866. Ironically, the moving force behind the event were three White southern ministers: Samuel C. Alexander, Sidney S. Murkland, and Willis C. Miller. The Presbytery of Catawba developed into one of the most populous Black presbyteries anywhere. This historic event occurred near the Bethany Church (a White congregation) in the North Carolina county of Iredell. Iredell adjoins Mecklenburg County, the home of many of the churches of Catawba Presbytery. While there are conflicting views about the presbytery and the organization of the earliest churches, it seems probable that Catawba Presbytery was authorized by the General Assembly before any churches were formally organized.⁷⁶ The site of the organization of the presbytery was apparently the Freedom Mission, a congregation of Blacks gathered by Sidney Murkland on a farm that he personally owned and which was located near the Bethany Church (White) to which he had been called the previous year. Because he favored freedom for Blacks, Murkland had been forced out of the Bethany Church, but he continued to serve the Black congregation at his own expense. Other early congregations were McClintock and Seventh Street (Seventh Street discussed in Chapter II, pp. 29–30 of this book). Five additional congregations were added in 1867: Murkland, Westminster, Bethpage, Cedar Grove, and Belle-

fonte. In the space of ten years, the number of churches had grown to seventeen.

Samuel C. Alexander, Willis L. Miller, and Stephen Matoon (with the assistance of Alfred Stokes and Robert M. Hall) gave leadership in establishing missions in the Charlotte area. From their labors developed other Black congregations: McClintock, Mount Olive, Woodland, and Miranda. Sidney S. Murkland and Amos S. Billinsley, working in the area around Statesville, North Carolina, established the missions of Freedom, Cameron, Pittsburgh, Mount Tabor, Logan Chapel, Catawba, and New Center. At the same time, Luke Dorland (who was instrumental in the founding of Scotia Seminary—later Barber-Scotia College) worked with others to establish missions in the Concord area, at Bethpage, Bellefonte, Cedar Grove, and other places.⁷⁷ At the time of the 1980s reorganization, Catawba Presbytery had thirty-three churches with 5,143 communicant members, located in eight North Carolina counties.

Because of its peculiar situation, Catawba Presbytery originally had strange territorial alignments. It was placed under the Synod of Baltimore with which it was not contiguous. As the only presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in the South, it included nearly all the churches in the area of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. In 1868, the boundaries (at Catawba's own petition) were fixed along a line running southwest from Weldon, North Carolina, through Columbia, South Carolina, and Augusta, Georgia, to the mouth of the Savannah River. In 1868, two other presbyteries were recognized by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., namely the Presbytery of Atlantic and the Presbytery of Knox. The adjustment of the boundaries of the Presbytery of Catawba allowed the Synod of Baltimore to organize Atlantic Presbytery on January 1, 1868, with seven churches, six ministers, and three licentiates under care. Of the ministers, two were White and four were Black. All of the licentiates were Black. Atlantic Presbytery took in all the ministers laboring south of the line of division.

In November 1867, the Committee on Freedmen received an application from four Black ministers in the state

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of Georgia to be employed in the committee's work among the freed men and women. Three of these men had been ordained by Hopewell Presbytery (Presbyterian Church in the United States) to the full gospel ministry, but restricted in the exercise of their office to work "among their own people!" (The fourth man had been ordained by the first three men.) The committee investigated and found the area to be large and of great promise. The committee supported the application and the General Assembly enrolled them as the Presbytery of Knox with four ministers, one licentiate, and eight organized churches. Knox Presbytery has the distinction of being the first presbytery organized entirely through the efforts of Blacks.⁷⁸

The relation of some of these Carolina churches to southern church congregations is worth noting. McClintock was formed primarily of Blacks who came out of the Steele Creek Presbyterian Church, pastored by S. C. Alexander. The Murkland Church was made up of Blacks who had been members of Big Providence Church. Caldwell and Miranda were established with members who came out of Hopewell Church. Members of Rocky River Presbyterian Church formed Bellefonte. Cedar Grove developed out of the Poplar Tent Church, and Bethpage from a White congregation of the same name. DeGranval Burke records that some Black families remained members of White churches as late as 1910.⁷⁹

In encouraging the formation of the three fledgling presbyteries, the Committee on Freedmen was looking to the establishment of a synod that had already been petitioned for by both Catawba and Atlantic presbyteries. At that point, the three presbyteries had more than fifty churches, all of which had been organized within the space of two years.

The Committee on Freedmen of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA), in 1868, petitioned the assembly to give heed to the requests of Atlantic and Catawba presbyteries for the organization of a synod, pointing to the need for effective synodical review and control and its positive effect on the church's mission among freed men and women.⁸⁰

The Synod of Atlantic was formed with the three forenamed presbyteries: Catawba, Atlantic, and Knox. It was recognized in 1868 by the General Assembly of the PCUSA and directed to hold its initial meeting at Charlotte, North Carolina, on the Thursday before the second Sunday of October 1868. The assembly also specified that the meeting should open with a sermon by Sidney S. Murkland (or in his absence the oldest minister present) who should also preside until a moderator was chosen.⁸¹

Because of the travel distances involved, the Synod of Atlantic could not hold its first meeting as directed. General Assembly then directed it to hold such a meeting at the same time the following year (1869). In the meantime, the synod was placed on the General Assembly roll as if organized.⁸²

A year later the Synod of Atlantic, in its second stated meeting, laid out the boundaries of six presbyteries. In addition to the three already organized, it made plans for Fairfield, Yadkin, and East Florida presbyteries. The Presbytery of Yadkin appears in the *Minutes* of the General Assembly (PCUSA) for the first time in 1873.

In May 1886, Cape Fear Presbytery was organized at a meeting held in the Galilee Methodist Episcopal Church in Laurinburg, North Carolina, by a commission of the Atlantic Synod. Several congregations and missions had been established before this date, some going back to the latter half of the 1860s' decade (Panthersford, Franklinton, Haymount, Davie Street, Saint Paul, and Spout Springs).

Daniel S. Sanders (later to become president of Bidle University), with the help of others, was instrumental in holding together groups of Black Presbyterians who had come out of the Presbyterian Church in the United States until they could be organized. At the organization of Cape Fear Presbytery, Sanders was elected its first moderator and J. A. Savage its first stated clerk. The latter is remembered for his travel from church to church by oxcart across southeastern North Carolina to teach and encourage the churches.⁸³ Cape Fear Presbytery appears in the *Minutes* of the PCUSA General Assembly first in 1887.

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By 1887, the work in the southeast had expanded substantially, both in area and number of congregations. The General Assembly in that year moved to divide the work by creating a new synod, Catawba, which took in the work of North Carolina and Virginia. At the time of its formation, Catawba Synod was made up of the Presbyteries of Catawba, Cape Fear, and Yadkin.

The Presbytery of Southern Virginia was organized in 1888 with six ministers and eleven churches (two of the churches were newly formed). Unlike the Carolinas, Virginia was not Presbyterian soil. The formation of the presbytery, therefore, was important for strengthening denominational association. The work, begun early at Amelia, Virginia, by Samantha Neil and Thomas C. Murphy, served as a model for much of the work that followed. These four presbyteries continued to constitute Catawba Synod until it was merged with Baltimore and New Castle presbyteries to form Piedmont Synod in 1972. Even within Piedmont Synod, these four presbyteries maintained their identity as part of the Catawba Inter-presbytery Program Agency (informally called "the Unit") that provided a unifying structure until reunion in 1983. The realignment of boundaries (1988) brought dissolution.

The organization of two other Black synods and the presbyteries of the northern church (PCUSA) that constituted them occurs nearly four decades after the establishment of Atlantic Synod and nearly twenty years after its division into Atlantic and Catawba synods. The Synod of East Tennessee was organized in 1905, and its name was changed to Synod of Blue Ridge in 1935. In 1906, the Presbytery of Birmingham was divided to form three presbyteries: Presbytery of Rogersville, which included southwest Virginia and that part of Tennessee lying east of Claiborne, Granger, Hamblen, and Cocke counties; and Presbytery of LaVere covering that territory lying between the limits of Rogersville Presbytery on the east and the limits of Chattanooga Presbytery on the west.

In the year 1907, following the merger of the PCUSA with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (see discussion

on page 44), the General Assembly passed an enabling act constituting three Black presbyteries: Kiamichi and Randall in Oklahoma, and White River in Arkansas to form the Synod of Canadian.

The ministers and churches forming the Kiamichi Presbytery belonged originally to the Presbytery of Choctaw, which included territory allotted in 1832 to the Choctaw Nation. This presbytery consisted of the southeastern one-quarter of Indian territory after the establishment of the Oklahoma Territory in 1890. The name Kiamichi, taken from the Kiamichi River, is an Indian word meaning "Where you going?" The Presbytery of Kiamichi at first included two Indian (Choctaw) churches. However, one was disbanded and dropped. After becoming vacant, the other was transferred to the Presbytery of Choctaw, leaving the Presbytery of Kiamichi entirely Black.

An interesting historical note on Indian-African relations in that period is that, about the year 1881, the African Blacks who were slaves of the Choctaw were enrolled and adopted as citizens by the tribes to which they respectively belonged. "They then became eligible to receive a small part of [the Indians'] public school funds."⁸⁴

Lincoln Presbytery, an African American geographical presbytery, was erected in the Synod of Kentucky as a direct result of the merger with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The organization of these two synods, East Tennessee and Canadian, highlights the wide territorial extent of the work carried on among African Americans by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The population and centers of Presbyterian work among Blacks in Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas were much less numerous than those in the Carolinas and Georgia, but the impact of the work, especially in education, was nevertheless substantial.

Cumberland Presbyterian Church

The opening toward union between the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA) and the Cumberland Presby-

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terian Church (CPC) was made possible by an invitation by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to the PCUSA to enter negotiations looking to union. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. accepted. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church owed its beginning in part to the stimulation of the religious revival of 1800 in Kentucky and Tennessee. It had seceded from the PCUSA over disagreements with the alleged “fatalism” of the Westminster Confession and the parent denomination’s insistence on an adequately educated clergy. While these two concerns were ameliorated to the point that the CPC could contemplate reunion, there was one other sticking point. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church, essentially southern in attitude, insisted upon racially segregated governing bodies as a condition for entering the union.

The PCUSA, in considering the CPC overture, set up in 1903, a special committee to study the territorial limits of presbyteries. “It soon became clear that the task of this committee was not to provide for the orderly integration of the overlapping judicatories of the two churches, but to draw up plans for racially segregated presbyteries and synods.”⁸⁵ The committee’s report—after expressing platitudes about belief in the brotherhood of man, and in the spiritual equality in Christ and the Kingdom of God—recommended the amending of the Form of Government to allow the erection of racially separate governing bodies in the same territory. It said that “there must be no yielding of principles. ... [but] a wise expediency in their application [taking in consideration conditions and circumstances].”⁸⁶ In spite of spirited opposition by Catawba and other Black presbyteries, the *Africo-American Presbyterian*, outstanding Northern Black Presbyterian leaders such as Francis Grimke and Matthew Anderson, as well as some White Presbyterian spokespersons, the report was adopted and approved by presbyteries by a vote of 188 to 45 with eight abstentions. The vote, reported at the 1905 assembly, confirmed that the 1896 Supreme Court decision upholding the “separate but equal” doctrine was a true measure of the nation’s attitude on race. It also confirmed that no significant differences in views on the racial question any longer separated the North and the South. White racial superiority attitudes would

henceforth prevail in the North and South for the next half century.⁸⁷

United Presbyterian Church of North America

The Presbytery of Tennessee of the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA) was formed as a result of several circumstances arising out of that church's stance on race. As has been noted earlier in this work, the UPCNA took a very firm stand against slavery. The fact that this position was unpopular in the South prompted many families in these congregations to relocate in northern territory. The history of this presbytery, which eventually became all Black, is the story of White congregations gradually disappearing and Black congregations springing up and continuing down to the present. Fragments of churches, which were depleted by the emigration of members northward, continued to exist in the Appalachian foothills of east Tennessee. After the war, some covenanters petitioned for the organization of churches in east and middle Tennessee, and organized some churches as early as 1865. The Presbytery of Tennessee was organized in 1866 with congregations listed as Nashville, Palmetto, Lebanon, Big Spring, and Pistol Creek. At that time "Nashville was the colored Mission in connection with the work for Negroes under the Freedmen's Board."⁸⁸ Joseph G. McKee, a missionary appointed to work among the hordes of suffering freed persons who congregated around the camps of the Union army, initiated the work in Nashville in 1863. He immediately organized a church with Black elders and established the first free school for Blacks in the South. After several years of this work, the decision was made to shift the mission to Knoxville. This school, established in Knoxville in 1875, eventually became Knoxville College.

The White congregations in Tennessee Presbytery dwindled and disappeared, while Black congregations sprang up and survived in Tennessee, Alabama, Virginia, and North Carolina. Ironically, this emerging all-Black presbytery came about, not from segregationist views of the White congregations, but from a pervasive and public hostility against those who supported antislavery views.⁸⁹

Presbyterian Church in the United States

The picture of the all-Black governing bodies that was established by the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) is rather sketchy. In many cases records are incomplete or missing. With emancipation, great numbers of African Americans found their home in the independent Black denominations, i.e., Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal churches. Obviously, the freedom and independence of these bodies were an attraction. It is clear, however, that a considerable number of freed persons who had been exposed to the Presbyterian program and tradition preferred to continue in it, but most southern Presbyterians were unable to make the attitudinal adjustments to accommodate them. Ernest Trice Thompson, writing about the period immediately following emancipation, observes:

In the face of this mass movement away from the white churches, the Southern Presbyterian Church tried officially to retain its Negro members within its own fold, segregated in the balconies, as they had been during the days of slavery, made inadequate concessions in the face of mounting desertion, and finally determined on the establishment of an independent Negro church after the hope of building one was gone.⁹⁰

The inadequate concessions to which Thompson refers included:

- The ordination of Blacks to the ministry, without full recognition or the powers that Presbyterian ordination carries. At first these Black men were designated “watchmen” or “exhorters.” In cases where ministerial ordination was given, the ordinands were limited to work among “their own people.”

- Mechanisms for training Black ministers were created, but for a long time they were totally inadequate. Until the Tuscaloosa Institute (Stillman Institute) for training Black ministers was established in 1876, the best the church offered was for a Black aspirant to be placed under a White minister’s care to learn from him as much as he could. Even after Stillman was founded, it was not sufficiently supported for some time and, therefore, could not offer an adequate theological education for its students. R.

C. Reed, a Virginia minister, writing in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* in 1885, decries the low output and inadequate curriculum of the Tuscaloosa Institute. He compares unfavorably the Tuscaloosa curriculum and program with that of Biddle Institute and concludes that the southern church would do better at reaching Blacks through the agencies of the northern Presbyterian church.⁹¹ Of course, Reed's opinions did not prevail.

- Organically, Black Presbyterians in the PCUS remained in an anomalous situation. Prior to the organization of the independent Afro-American Synod (see p. 60), they were organized in presbyteries that did not belong to the White synods in which they were located or were in no synod at all. The presbyteries that existed were referred to as "independent." They did not participate in the governance of the church as a whole. For some time, attempts were made in some places to keep Black congregations attached to White congregations. In such instances, the two congregations shared a pastor and the Black congregation had its representation in the higher governing bodies through the commissioners chosen by the White congregation.

- The foundation of the southern Presbyterian church's quandary was the total inability of the great majority to accept Blacks in any position that suggested social equality, even in the governing structures of the church.

In the years immediately following the American Civil War, the Presbyterian Church in the United States organized few Black congregations. With few exceptions, the churches were dissolved or the ministers dismissed to presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. These dismissals and the dissolving of churches were due to the ambivalence of the White constituency toward Black churches and members. James Stacy, in *A History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, acknowledges this fact:

Making all due allowances for the desire on part of the colored people to have an entirely independent organization of their own, [one] cannot be oblivious to the fact that the white people were just as anxious to have them to themselves, and therefore the policy pursued towards them was not of such a character as to draw that people any closer to their organization. Indeed, it

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was difficult to determine the precise relation of the colored churches to the Presbyterian Church. They seemed to have been considered as an integral portion of the Church but simply "in accordance with the scheme of the Assembly to form an independent church of their own," but of which scheme no one could give an intelligent account.⁹²

The following presbyteries have organizational dates prior to 1897: Central Alabama (1890), Ethel (1891), North and South Carolina (1876), Texas (1888), and Zion (1891). These presbyteries, which were made up of Black congregations, did not function as parts of the synods in which they were located and their relationship to the General Assembly was informal.

In 1891, the southern Presbyterian church took serious steps to address its responsibility toward Black men and women when it set in place the Committee of Colored Evangelization, which continued until 1910. At that time it became a department of the Executive Committee of Home Missions.

The most significant development in relation to the Black constituencies of the PCUS was the formation of an "independent" Afro-American Presbyterian Synod in 1897. This development, characterized by the PCUS as purely spontaneous on the part of the colored men themselves, ostensibly had its genesis in 1893 when Black ministers, being dissatisfied with the growth of Presbyterianism among African Americans, began considering other possibilities. Actually, White Presbyterians had much earlier shown an inclination to separate the Black constituency. Such a plan was first broached in the 1869 General Assembly of the PCUS. In 1897, after three years of correspondence and discussion on how a separate and distinct African American Presbyterian church could be created, it was determined to call a convention for organizing such a church. E. W. Williams of Abbeville, South Carolina, was chosen to go to the General Assembly in Charlotte, North Carolina, and present the idea before that body. The assembly lost no time in acting and passed the following the resolution:

Whereas, this Assembly has learned of the purpose on the part of certain colored Presbyterians to call a convention for the

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purpose of organizing a separate and independent colored Presbyterian Church,

Therefore, be it resolved that should such a convention be called, any colored churches and ministers now under the jurisdiction of this Assembly are hereby permitted to withdraw for the purpose of joining said convention, should they desire to do so. And be it further resolved that a committee of which the Moderator of this Assembly shall be chairman shall be appointed to attend the convention bearing the fraternal greetings of this Assembly and give the colored brethren whatever advice and counsel they may desire.⁹³

The convention to organize the separate Black Presbyterian church was called in November 1897. Represented in Birmingham, Alabama, for the meeting were six presbyteries: Abbeville, Central Alabama, Chester, Ethel, North and South Carolina, and Texas. After a three-day meeting, an agreement was reached to proceed. On May 19, 1898, the convention met in the Berean Presbyterian Church in New Orleans, and on May 20, 1898, effected the organization of the Afro-American Presbyterian Church.

The scheme was first to organize an independent synod, loosely related to the PCUS. Later, with growth and expansion, a General Assembly would be formed and the Black Presbyterians who had been related to the PCUS would be totally independent of that denomination.

E. W. Williams, the leading spirit in this movement, had hopes of enlisting African American churches throughout the United States and Canada. He spent a whole year in 1897–98 traveling to more than thirty cities in New York, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Virginia, and Canada, acquainting others with the plan. It is curious that the record makes no mention of overtures to Black Presbyterian members of Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. churches in the South.

Williams' efforts failed to attract other Black Presbyterians outside the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and he expressed keen disappointment at Black Presbyterians who preferred to continue their relationship with the northern church, calling their action not only "unwise" but demonstrating "a deplorable lack of manhood and race pride."⁹⁴

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The experiment of establishing an independent Afro-American church did not succeed. The apparent reasons are several:

- There were few churches and none of them was large enough to supply the personnel and financial resources necessary for such a venture.

- The Afro-American Synod never received the full support of the African American members and governing bodies belonging to the PCUS. Ethel and Central Alabama presbyteries, the most centrally located and contiguous, did not join the new church, they maintained their relationship with the PCUS. It was observed that those presbyteries which opposed the independent church were the most heavily populated and had ministers with better theological preparation.⁹⁵

- The expressed intention (1897) of the PCUS to continue to support the “independent” church financially raises questions about the possibility of its real independence.

Unfortunately, minutes or other records of this organizational experiment in independence are almost nonexistent. Minutes for only one year (1905) are known to exist.

In 1916, a PCUS General Assembly Ad Interim Committee on the Afro-American Synod brought a report recommending the organizing of the African American ministers and churches into a synod that would be an integral part of the PCUS. The report proposed four presbyteries, consisting of twenty-five ministers and about seventy-five churches. These were constituted as the Afro-American Synod in 1917 and soon after designated as the Snedecor Memorial Synod in honor of James G. Snedecor, former superintendent of the Committee of Colored Evangelization and former principal of Stillman Institute.

In effect, the organization of the Black constituency into integral governing bodies within the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) took the circuitous route of an attempt at complete independence.

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The Snedecor Memorial Synod was enrolled at the 1917 General Assembly of the PCUS with the following presbyteries, churches, ministers, and elders:

<i>Presbyteries</i>	<i>Churches</i>	<i>Ministers</i>	<i>Elders</i>
Central Alabama	10	10	28
Central Louisiana	6	8	12
Ethel	18	5	31
North and South Carolina	14	10	46
TOTALS	48	33	117

This synod produced some outstanding ministers. As Moses Edward has noted, "Men of distinction sprang from the ranks of Snedecor Memorial Synod and proved themselves a credit, not only to their synod, but to the entire Church."⁹⁶ Among them can be listed William H. Sheppard, D.D., Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society, who labored for twenty years in the Congo, and who, with John Morrison, was instrumental in bringing to the attention of the world the atrocities committed upon the native people of the Congo by the government of King Leopold of Belgium. Sheppard received many honors from churches, educational institutions, and governments.

Other ministers from Snedecor Memorial Synod who served with distinction as missionaries to Africa were L. A. DeYampert, Alonzo L. Edmiston, P. H. Hawkins, and A. A. Rochester.⁹⁷

Among those who performed distinguished service in the home mission field were I. C. Champney, who pastored Salem Presbyterian Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and served for many years as stated clerk of the synod; J. H. M. Boyce, who organized and pastored Gregg Street Presbyterian Church for many years, served as moderator of the Central Alabama Presbytery in 1927, was moderator of Central Louisiana Presbytery in 1940 and 1948, and was received into Brazos Presbytery in 1951, where he later be-

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came the first Black moderator of that presbytery; W. A. Young, known as the “singing evangelist” and an eloquent preacher; and T. J. James who pastored in Hartsville, South Carolina.⁹⁸

The rapid growth of PCUSA churches and communicants in the Black communities of the South, the decisive moves toward governing structures, and the heartening stories of what freed people were doing to help themselves, did not result in ready and enthusiastic support of this mission work by the majority of White congregations. Stirring appeals, such as the one printed in the Freedmen’s Committee’s report for 1875 (quoted below) continued to appear in almost every annual report:

... Let the ministers of our Church, who are of the more favored race, mirror to their people, as never before, the vastness of this field “white already to [the] harvest,” the “more laborers” already waiting to enter and reap, while the Church fails to hire them, though she has every reason to believe they would gather “an hundredfold into life everlasting;” FOUR MILLIONS of people in all the poverty, ignorance, superstition, and moral corruption incident to two hundred and fifty years of bondage, lifted in a single hour to citizenship—American citizenship, with all its weighty responsibilities; no longer slaves but rulers, and so a power in the land—a power for good or for evil according as their moral and intellectual culture shall be cared for or neglected by those to whom they naturally and rightfully look . . .⁹⁹

In the annual reports in the early years of the PCUSA Board of Missions for Freedmen, the secretary gave statistics on the participation of churches in giving to the freedmen’s cause. In 1872, while only about 31 percent of the White congregations gave to this mission project, 78 percent of the freedmen’s churches contributed. In 1889, the committee reported receipts from Black churches of \$134,450.88. This was not inclusive of what the freed people paid for the support of the ministers, teachers, houses of worship, and schools and scholarship, which amounted to an additional total of \$31,092.47.

Weak support from the White churches notwithstanding, the work of the Presbyterian churches continued and grew. For that, much of the credit must go to the Black presbyteries and synods.

CHAPTER IV

The Development, Refinement, and Integration of the All-Black Governing Structures Within a Changing Church and Society

The world into which the newly organized presbyteries and synods emerged offered daunting challenges to Black individuals, organizations, and institutions. Were it not for the terror of slavery, like Pharaoh's army behind them, the freedmen and freedwomen might well have despaired. For some time, however, the excitement of being free summoned up their courage to go forward against all odds. For a brief instant, it seemed that the power and goodwill of the federal government would be used to ensure justice and opportunity for them.

In March 1865, Congress passed a bill creating the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands (in popular usage the name was shortened to the Freedmen's Bureau) to address the suffering occasioned by the war and the attendant ills: abandoned lands, scarcity of food and clothing, thousands of displaced and homeless persons, and the absence of organized civil authority. For the seven years of its existence (1865–1872), the Freedmen's Bureau attacked the problems by furnishing supplies and medical services to refugees and freed persons, establishing schools, supervising contracts between freedmen and their employees, and managing abandoned and confiscated lands.

This last responsibility was the source of the idea that the U.S. government pledged to freedmen "forty acres and a mule."¹⁰⁰

By regulating contracts between freedmen and freedwomen and their employers, the Freedmen's Bureau attempted to ensure that freed persons, mostly illiterate

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and unused to marketing their labor, were not unduly exploited. The dream of owning land of their own was rudely dispelled by President Andrew Johnson's amnesty proclamation pardoning most former Confederates, thus making them eligible to reclaim their abandoned lands. The "forty acres and a mule" dream died at the hands of a president who seemed determined to undermine the plans authorized by Congress. The bureau's commissioner, General Oliver O. Howard, known as "the Christian General" because he had prayed with his soldiers as a wartime commander, did nothing to reverse the president's action. Rather, he went on a tour across the South to convince White Southerners that the interest of the Freedmen's Bureau in a stable system of labor would not hinder the states' own plans.

Further, Howard tried to convince Blacks that in allowing the promise of land to be nullified, he had done nothing to harm their interests.

In Charleston, on the Sea Islands, wherever he went, Howard found the freedmen incredulous: they could not believe that General Howard, whom they trusted as they had no man since Lincoln, would take away the farms he had promised them.¹⁰¹

In Jacksonville, Howard climbed on a carpenter's bench and for an hour tried his best to convince a gathering of freedmen that working for their former masters for wages was just as good a way of making a living as owning one's own farm.¹⁰² Soon after that event, the former states of the Confederacy, assured of federal neutrality, passed the notorious Black Codes that restricted the mobility and the rights of the freedmen and freedwomen. Mississippi, for example, made it illegal for Blacks to own land outside a town, ending the hope for forty acres and a mule.

The stories of the all-Black governing bodies of the predecessor denominations, which today make up the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), are unimaginable without recognition of the role played by educational institutions. The story of these institutions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA) and the United Presbyterian Church in North America (UPCNA) has been told in its fullness by the late Inez Moore Parker, in her book *The Rise and De-*

cline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970 (published by Trinity Press, San Antonio, 1977).

In the matter of recognizing the crucial importance of education for the freedmen and freedwomen, church and government were of one accord. Certainly the most effective work of the short-lived federal Freedmen's Bureau was in education. The Freedmen's Bureau opened schools that were prematurely closed because of withdrawal of support in 1870. In its brief life, however, the Freedmen's Bureau fashioned a partnership with the churches in providing educational opportunities for the freedmen, and made grants to church committees serving the educational needs of the former slaves.

Before the termination of the federal Freedmen's Bureau, the churches were already supplying many of the teachers in the bureau's schools. It was estimated that in 1866 approximately half of the teachers in the bureau schools were supplied by the American Missionary Association and other church societies.¹⁰³ The educational movement was thus transformed from a political action to attain justice to a missionary enterprise carried on by inspired teachers supported by the church.

The most effective work was made possible by a Protestant consensus that identified evangelicalism with American culture.¹⁰⁴ In whatever way it came, the support of education for the freedmen and freedwomen was a blessing whose effects, like ripples in a pond, spread across the years.

The short Reconstruction period, depicted as a nightmare by most White Southerners, was for Black freedmen and freedwomen a period of hope comparable perhaps only to the 1960s era of the civil rights struggle. The period saw Blacks given citizenship and the right to vote. In those states where the Black populations equaled or nearly equaled the Whites, Blacks elected people of color to legislatures and to Congress. Despite the distorted account that some southern historians and popular media, like the film *Birth of a Nation*, have given of it, the Recon-

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struction was a period of some noteworthy achievements. Blacks elected or appointed to office were not measurably more corrupt or inept than Whites who had previously or have subsequently occupied those positions. Indeed, there were a number of really outstanding Black elected officials who served with distinction: Henry Highland Garnet, Francis L. Cardozo, Robert Smalls, A. A. Taylor, John R. Lynch, H. M. Turner, Oscar J. Dunn, and Jonathan C. Gibbs. Garnet, Cardoza, and Gibbs were Presbyterians. The state constitutional conventions in the Reconstruction period wrote some constitutions that served those states long after Reconstruction was past. "The fundamental ... social justice proclaimed in the reconstruction constitutions [the public school system, old age pensions, restrictions on monopoly of land] still remain."¹⁰⁵

Had Reconstruction been sustained for a generation, Black Americans would have been in a much more advantageous position to secure their full rights. Unfortunately, politics, greed, and racial hatred conspired together to bring Reconstruction progress to an untimely end. The conservative Southerners' vehement opposition to the elevation of Blacks to a position of equality spawned an order called the Ku Klux Klan, which conducted a virtual reign of terror against many Black communities. Interracial clashes became more frequent and massacres of Blacks took place. One of the most notorious clashes occurred at Hamburg, South Carolina, in July 1876, where White elements instigated a clash with the Black militia of that town. Being faced with overwhelming firepower brought from outside, the Black militiamen attempted to escape. Twenty-seven were captured and five of them were shot down in cold blood.

In the election of that year, South Carolina Reconstructionists, who were defeated by fraud and intimidation, asked President Rutherford B. Hayes to send troops to sustain them in office. His shocking response was to withdraw federal troops from the state.¹⁰⁶

Hayes' action was undoubtedly part of a corrupt bargain to gain the South Carolina electoral vote. With the

withdrawal of the federal troops, southern reactionaries regained control of state governments and entered upon an oppressive course of legislative action, passing laws to disenfranchise Blacks and reduce them again to a state of virtual slavery.

Even those southern Whites, from whom Blacks thought they had a right to expect friendship, concurred in their disenfranchisement. James G. Snedecor, secretary of the Executive Committee on Colored Evangelization from 1903–1916, offered this view in retrospect:

On Emancipation and Reconstruction

I pass these two epoch-making events with brief comments. Of Emancipation, we have made the best of it, and on the whole we would not exchange the present magnificent industrial and social condition for the old. Of Reconstruction we first endured, then began a silent unarmed rebellion in which we have won the last stronghold. The negro race was given the ballot for his protection. We have taken it away for our preservation.¹⁰⁷

It was in this era that the Black governing bodies and educational institutions were challenged to lead their people. With the exception of some state industrial schools, southern state governments made almost no provision for higher education of African Americans after Reconstruction was abolished. W. E. B. Dubois lists three agencies that provided a positive influence in overcoming the problems inherent in reconstructing society after the great civil conflict: the Black church, the Black school, and the Freedmen's Bureau.¹⁰⁸

The federal Freedmen's Bureau (having passed out of existence even before the Compromise of 1877), the Black churches, and the Black schools were left to be constructive forces in that difficult time. In the south, the Black Presbyterian constituency, although a part of a church that is predominately White, operated at the congregational level as any of the Black denominations (i.e., Baptists, A.M.E.), with the exception of the ten days or so devoted to meetings of the General Assembly.

There is, of course, another exception, and that refers to the scores of White northern missionaries and

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teachers who made their way into the countryside and towns of the south to teach Black children and adults in the early years. While this continued well into the twentieth century, within one generation the majority of these workers were replaced by African Americans. The schools, such as Biddle, Scotia, Knoxville, and Mary Allen, which had been founded specifically to train ministers and teachers to uplift the race, had wonderfully fulfilled their mission as the 1889 statistics of the Freedmen's Committee show. The committee reported that there were 295 missionaries, which included ordained ministers, licentiates, catechists and teachers, of whom 234 were African Americans. Sixty-one were White and the majority of these (41) were female teachers (out of a total of 88 teachers). Both through service as missionaries and the National Missions Committee, women played a crucial role in the educational mission to African American freed persons. The committee also reported the following:

1. The extensive investment of the Presbyterian church in the education of the freedwomen and freedmen of the South was understood as an integral part of the task of evangelization. In the light of the recurring and ongoing controversy that opposes evangelism to social action, the leaders of efforts on behalf of Black people never understood education and evangelism to be separate efforts. In 1864, the Committee on the Religious Instruction of the Freedmen recommended adoption by the General Assembly of a statement including this sentence: "the Presbyterian Church must be true to its historic doctrine and faith, that the hope of the African race, under God, is in Christian education, and in the 'liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free,' and not in the possession of civil privileges alone."¹⁰⁹

2. It is evident from parts of the report that there was also concern for ameliorating the danger that those freedmen, trained in the use of arms and military tactics, might enter into civil strife to obtain their rights. Nevertheless, the overarching concern behind the establishment of educational institutions was to raise up an enlightened church membership and an educated clergy.

The church had established Ashmun Institute (later Lincoln University) in 1854. Its location in Pennsylvania made its purpose and outlook somewhat different from that of the southern schools. Greatly influenced by the colonization movement, Lincoln's primary objective was to train African Americans to evangelize the land of their forebears. Between 1833 and 1891, some fifty-seven African American missionaries were sent to the northern Presbyterian mission in Liberia. Many Black church leaders, however, opposed the effort to colonize Black people in Africa. How many Lincoln graduates ever made it to Africa is uncertain. After the colonization movement faded, the church seemed to have lost its interest in preparing African American missionaries to evangelize Africa. Ironically, in the early decades of the twentieth century, Lincoln students kept up a steady drumbeat of requests for the appointment of African American missionaries and criticism of the Foreign Missions Board for its failure to recruit Blacks as missionaries to Africa.

From the beginning, Lincoln students showed a serious concern for their people in the South. In the summer of 1869, forty Lincoln students volunteered to labor without salary during their vacation among the freedmen and freedwomen in the South. Also, Lincoln graduates filled many of the posts as missionaries, teachers, and pastors before trained leaders from the South were ready.

Biddle Institute, founded some thirteen years after Ashmun Institute, was justified before the 1866 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. as necessary because

- the expense of sending poverty-stricken freedmen from the South to Lincoln University would be too great and
- there was a need to educate people in the climate of the field in which they were to serve.¹¹⁰

The expectation was "that the students gathered would be able to pursue their course of study while they exercised their gifts among the people."¹¹¹ From the outset, the concept was to establish a college and theological

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school. Considering that in 1866, there were few freedmen who could read and write, this seemed an ambitious venture indeed. Biddle Institute was founded with the expressed objective of educating preachers, catechists, and teachers among freed Black people of the South. In the beginning, in order to fulfill its objectives, the school operated on three levels: a preparatory school, a college, and a seminary. As other preparatory schools developed, Biddle eliminated its preparatory school.

The leadership at Biddle, as at most other Presbyterian schools, was initially all-White. Gradually, as Black leaders were educated, they took over the brunt of the work. The first Black appointed to the faculty was George E. Davis, professor of natural science in 1886. As academic dean, he impressed the administration with his ability and smoothed the path for a momentous change that came in 1891. That year Daniel J. Sanders was elected president of Biddle, the first Black president of that institution. He was indeed the first Black male to head a major institution. Sanders had already proved himself as pastor at Wilmington, North Carolina, as a leading figure in the organization of Cape Fear Presbytery, and as a representative of the Freedmen's Committee in its successful fund-raising effort in England and Scotland. A measure of the racism infecting the church is revealed in the resignation of all but one of the White faculty members upon Sanders' ascension to the presidency.

Sanders was representative of a whole class of teachers, ministers, and leaders in the route he took to secure an education. Born into slavery, he taught himself to read and write. Later, after being tutored by a White instructor while in Chester, South Carolina, Sanders entered Brainerd Institute, a Presbyterian school in that town, to prepare himself for enrollment in a theological seminary. In like manner, many of the early leaders received primary and preparatory education in parochial schools and the preparatory schools supported by the Presbyterian church. Eventually, they found their way to Biddle (Johnson C. Smith University), or some other institution of higher education, for college and seminary training.

The freedmen and freedwomen were initially attracted to churches conducted by men of their own race whose services were held in large, open-air spaces. But those ministers, themselves mostly uneducated, were unable to render effective service as teachers.

“Where a church was planted there was soon a cry for a school, and where a school was started there was soon a demand for a church, and so, by the very nature of the situation, evangelization and education became the mission work among the Freedmen.”¹¹² An examination of a listing of the major freedmen’s schools in that period reveals that with the exception of Haines Institute, whose founder and head was Lucy Laney, and Hardin Academy in Allandale, South Carolina, every school was headed by a clergyman.

As already noted, the mission to the freed Blacks was never wholeheartedly supported by the entire church. What is surprising and heartening is the extent of self-help achieved so rapidly by a people who came out of slavery with no worldly possessions. As the twenty-fifth annual report summarizes it: “Their freedom, dear and sweet as it was to a long-enslaved race, rendered them penniless, homeless and friendless, having absolutely nothing with which to begin their new life, not a foot of land, not a cabin, not a tool or farming utensil, only their muscles and their simple faith in God.”¹¹³ Though the Board of Missions for Freedmen rather paternalistically felt it had to “teach” self-support and financial independence, there are frequent evidences that African Americans from the earliest period of freedom actively gave to help themselves. For example, in a year (1897) when the committee’s total receipts were \$193,637, freedmen and freedwomen gave \$70,017.58 to support their schools and churches. In 1889, church property valued at \$10,000 was given for the benefit of Knox Church, Louisville, Kentucky, by Andrew Ferguson, a Black member of that church.¹¹⁴ A study of the figures shows that freedmen’s contributions increased even in years of economic recession. The secretary observes in the 1895 report that “Only the arithmetic of Heaven can calculate what it cost these people to contribute this year this large sum [\$63,385.28] toward their own self-support in the matter of schools and churches.”¹¹⁵

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In 1866, the first year after the end of the American Civil War, African Americans under the PCUSA Freedmen's Committee gave \$1,548.55. In the first decade of the committee's life ending in 1875, their contributions totaled \$67,077.80. In the second decade, 1876–1885 they gave \$131,161.48, and in the seven years ending in 1882, they gave \$417,908.02.

From the early days, Blacks who found themselves in a position to do so, contributed generously. In Danville, Virginia, the land used to establish church and schools was donated by Blacks. At Amelia, Virginia, Thomas Murphy records that land for the school and church that became Russell Grove (now Zion Hill) was given by a Black family. Thereby hangs an interesting bit of history.

As was true in many other places, Whites, who did not look with favor on educating Blacks, generally refused to rent buildings or sell land. There was a tract of land belonging to Nathaniel Harrison, a White man, who took one of his slaves as his wife. At his death, the land came into her possession. Subsequently, Walker Jackson (a Black man) married one of the Harrison daughters, Maria, and the couple deeded an acre of the land to W. T. White and J. S. Murphy to be used exclusively for school and church purposes on behalf of the freedmen. At Amelia and many other places, the freedmen cheerfully supplied the labor to prepare the materials and build the structure to house the churches and the schools (see Appendix II).

Even at some of the well-established educational institutions, students and staff contributed the labor to erect the buildings. In 1895, the committee reported that Biddle Institute, having received a gift of \$10,000 from Laura Carter of Geneva, New York, proceeded to build Carter Hall (a residence hall), now the oldest building on the campus of Johnson C. Smith University. The structure was built entirely by Black workmen under a Black contractor. Biddle students did most of the work and the professor who headed the industrial department supervised the process of construction.

3. For many years, the Presbyterian Freedmen's Committee exercised almost total control over the Presbyterian educational enterprise for Blacks in the South even though the initiative for starting schools often came from Blacks themselves. At the lower levels, practically every church congregation had a parochial school attached. Those schools were usually taught by the church pastor and his wife. Compensation for teaching provided ministers a supplement to a very meager salary. Monetary gain, however, was not a primary motivation for ministers' taking up this work. On the contrary, the reports of the committee expressed concern for overwork at the expense of their health. The report of the Freedmen's Committee to the PCUSA General Assembly in 1872 acknowledges this:

Night schools are not required by our Committee. They are an outgrowth from the wants of the people, their anxiety to learn, and the sympathy of their teachers, and are usually an overtax upon the time and strength of the teacher, which we do not feel at liberty to encourage. (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1872, p. 158)

It was this missionary spirit of the teachers, combined with the eagerness for learning by the students, that gave power to the work and stimulated rapid and sustained growth. These teachers combined with the educational task an evangelization mission: they made prayer, praise, scripture reading, and catechetical instruction a daily accompaniment of routine school exercises.

As the educational enterprise flowered, it produced a network of primary schools that fed the preparatory schools, which, in turn, sent their graduates on to more advanced institutions, such as Scotia, Biddle, Mary Potter, Brainerd, Harbison, Ingleside, Mary Allen, Swift, etc. Biddle was, of course, the capstone of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. structure.

The United Presbyterian Church in North America (UPCNA) also had an educational structure at the top of which was Knoxville College, fed by a network of schools, such as Henderson Institute, Norfolk Mission College, Camden Academy, Wilcox Country Training School, Thyne Institute, Bluestone Academy, Prairie Mission School, Ar-

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lington Institute, and Canton Bend. The largest concentration of institutions was in Wilcox County, Alabama.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) did not have as extensive a network of educational institutions as its northern counterparts for a variety of reasons. At the close of the war, the southern economy was devastated and monetary resources were less than abundant. More importantly, it required a greatly changed mind-set to foster education for a people whom southern state governments, only a few years before, had by legal statute, forbidden to learn to read and write, and who in the period following Reconstruction were depicted in the most despicable terms.

Furthermore, there was apathy and indifference, remarked upon frequently by the Committee on Colored Evangelization. In spite of these drawbacks, southern Presbyterians did establish a few schools. The centerpiece was always the Tuscaloosa Institute (later Stillman Institute) for the training of Black ministers. The work there became almost synonymous with the southern church's program for the evangelization of Blacks. The Committee on Colored Evangelization was headquartered at Tuscaloosa, and frequently the head of the committee and the superintendent of the Tuscaloosa Institute were one and the same person.

There were a few other educational institutions maintained for some time by the southern church. Except for tantalizing brief references, there is little documentation of their existence and accomplishments. Their scattered locations did not provide the kind of network feeding into Stillman as existed for Biddle and Knoxville.

The southern Presbyterian schools began as local individual efforts that were later taken over by the General Assembly. Ferguson-Williams Industrial College at Abbeville, South Carolina, was taken over by the General Assembly in 1903. It was prosperous at one time, but inadequate support and deteriorating equipment brought about its liquidation in 1920.

The North Wilkesboro Industrial Institute in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina, a parochial school under the jurisdiction of the Synod of North Carolina, was transferred to the General Assembly in 1900. Another parochial school, J. H. Alexander Academy at Vicksburg, Mississippi, began to receive aid from the Committee on Colored Evangelization in 1901. Other parochial schools, such as the ones at Texarkana, Texas; Selma, Alabama; Montgomery, North Carolina; Milton, North Carolina; Thomasville, Georgia; and Florence, South Carolina, were maintained at the initiative of local pastors. Six of these were still operating in 1933.

It must be concluded that the southern Presbyterian church did not give preeminence to educating freed Black people. Even support of Stillman languished at times, and, at one time, it barely escaped closure. Eventually, Stillman, having dropped its theological program, developed into a highly respected liberal arts college.

One factor of significance must not be passed over: the overwhelming majority of the teachers in the freedmen schools of the northern Presbyterian church were women. Some of the schools were founded or headed by women. Lucy Laney, a Black woman, founded and presided over Haines Institute before Daniel J. Sanders was elevated to the presidency of Biddle. Samantha Neil, a White Pennsylvania widow started the parochial schools around Amelia, Virginia, as well as Ingleside, a "normal" school for women. Most of those whom she called on to help were women.

Recognizing the importance of educating women, the board and other leaders had the wisdom to establish schools for them. At the time that Alexander, Willis, and Murkland were laying the foundations of Biddle (1867), Luke Dorland began an educational institution for women at Concord, North Carolina, which became Scotia Seminary. Scotia Seminary (later merged with Barber College to become Barber-Scotia College) became recognized as a leader in the field of education for women. Lucy Laney's Haines Institute and Ingleside Seminary were other schools that distinguished themselves in the education of women.

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This leads to another important concern in the education of men and women of color. What kind of education should they be offered? Several concerns and assumptions are intertwined in the answer to this question and, consequently, in the shaping of curriculum. The advanced institutions, as noted previously, were founded with primary emphasis on preparing ministers and teachers. As time passed and the educational aims of these institutions broadened, the overall economic needs of the African American population began to occupy a more important place in educational philosophy. Some in the Freedmen's Committee, and one must assume in the church at large, began to emphasize the importance of industrial and vocational education for African Americans and sought to give it more weight alongside the classical curriculum. Some even suggested that industrial education should have the preeminent place. This is quite apparent from the frequency with which industrial education is mentioned in the committee's reports. The 1889 report speaks of the Board of Missions for Freedmen as having made the industrial curriculum a special feature of education for several years past. The secretary reported that at Biddle, instruction was given in carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing, typesetting, etc. The superintendent was able, with student labor, to complete a plumbing job at Scotia Seminary for less than half of the lowest bid.¹¹⁶ The *Home Mission Monthly*, published in the second decade of the 1900s, featured many pictures of students cooking, gardening, sewing, making furniture, farming, cotton-picking, etc., at the Freedmen's Committee supported institutions.

Obviously, there was a genuine concern for the type of education that would enable graduates to earn a living. In the years immediately following the collapse of Reconstruction, large numbers of Blacks migrated northward and westward to escape the oppressive conditions of labor on southern farms. Some saw industrial education as essential to solving the problem of Black economic emancipation. But there was also a subtle suggestion that African Americans were perhaps not fitted for and ought not to aspire to classical education. This attitude, firmly established among White Southerners seems gradually to have pervaded the

mentality of northern missionaries and Board of Freedmen administrators as well. It certainly was given a fillip by Booker T. Washington's famous address at the Atlanta Exposition in 1895, a speech designed to reassure Whites. It preached to Blacks a sermon of moral righteousness, thrift, and hard work:

Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in the first years of our new life we began at the top instead of at the bottom; that a seat in Congress or the state legislature was more sought than real estate or industrial skill; that the political convention or stump speaking had more attraction than starting a dairy or truck garden. ... Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the production of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labor and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life, ... No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not the top.¹¹⁷

This doctrine of "prove yourself" was made doubly palatable to Whites by Washington's urging that Blacks seek friendly relations with Whites even at the sacrifice of their own human rights.

The wisest among my race understood that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremist folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. ... It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercises of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house.¹¹⁸

This speech won instant acclaim and financial support for Washington, and White America elected him the leader and spokesman for Black America. Dissent was not long in coming, most cogently in the writings and speeches of W. E. B. Dubois, a professor of sociology at Atlanta University. Sarcastically, he wrote: "Earn a living, get rich, and all these things shall be added unto you. Moreover, conciliate your neighbors, because they are more powerful and wealthier, and the price you must pay to earn a living in America is that of humiliation and inferiority."¹¹⁹

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Echoes of the debate about proper education for Blacks were heard in the reports of heads of institutions, notably Lincoln University and Biddle Institute. In 1893, D. J. Sanders, two years into his presidency of Biddle Institute, in making his report of the theological seminary to General Assembly, writes:

The Presbyterian church, through this institution, has advanced beyond the settled question of the capacity of the Afro-American mind to grapple successfully with the intricacies and subtle problems of classical and scientific learning, towards the solution of that other question, namely [the] fitness for controlling the destinies of a great centre of Christian higher education. Thus far only the seal of divine approval is visible, and the results have been such as should encourage the Church in her efforts, under God, to lead this people upward to the plane of highest Christian development.¹²⁰

Sander's tempered language only partially conceals the frustration that Blacks have felt at having repeatedly to prove their intellectual competence.

4. While the schools served as evangelistic centers, drawing members into the Presbyterian church, they also educated many non-Presbyterians who remained members of their own denominations. That is to say, there was recognition that the social condition of Blacks, quite aside from any religious objectives demanded education. Roberta C. Barr, writing on "The Educational Problems," described the inequities Blacks faced in the South around 1912 and protested: "It is not fair, it is not humane, it is not Christian to permit these conditions."¹²¹ It also acknowledged that the civil governments for several decades did not provide for public education for Blacks at all and then not on anything approaching equality with Whites. So for many decades, in many communities, the Presbyterian schools carried the main burden for the education of Blacks. This they did with pride and distinction.

In the depression of the 1890s, the board was forced to cut back on the funding of these schools and in the Great Depression of the 1930s many more succumbed. Today six of the institutions of the three streams of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) survive: Biddle (as Johnson C. Smith), Barber-Scotia College, Mary Holmes College, Knox-

ville College, and Stillman College. Finally, when assessing the development of the young Presbyterian churches and governing bodies during the first fifty years of freedom, it is clear that the strong emphasis on education produced both strengths and weaknesses. The Presbyterian emphasis on education for its ministry and for an “intelligent” faith response by the congregation was important in the preparation of social and civic leadership in the Black community. And while it tended to restrain the emotional content of Black worship, it offered Black people the skills needed for coping with a White-dominated world and operating the governing structures of the Presbyterian system.

The weakness of the strong educational emphasis was its lack of structural relationship to the Black governing bodies. The schools became the showcase of the work of the Freedmen’s Board. While the work of pastors and missionaries and the growth of churches are regularly cited in the board’s report, seldom is there a mention of presbyteries and synods and their role in building the church. The truth is that control of funds was almost entirely in the hands of the Freedmen’s Board, and control of the finances bred a kind of paternalism that would afflict relations between the national church boards and the Black governing bodies in the future.

Nevertheless, these educational institutions served as bulwarks of all-Black presbyteries and synods. They provided training for the leadership of these bodies and initiated students into the worship, theology, hymnology, and style of Presbyterianism. And while some may see the latter as a mixed blessing, others have been attracted by its dignity and order.

Moreover, these educational institutions served as places of meetings for governing bodies, especially presbyteries, as well as locations for governing body training and development experiences, i.e., summer conferences for youth, workers’ conferences, etc. In an era when segregation and poverty closed the doors of public accommodations to Blacks, these institutions offered hospitality and students received firsthand acquaintance with the functioning of church judicatories and programs.

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The ambiguity of the national Presbyterian church bodies is manifested in their noble efforts to facilitate the rise of African Americans from the degraded conditions of slavery to conditions and positions of equality in society, while clinging to ideas which denied that equality. None knew better than Daniel J. Sanders, who had won his way to the top by successfully fulfilling several positions of responsibility only to see his leadership rejected by several Whites on the Biddle faculty.

This momentous change came about at the urging of the Synods of Catawba and Atlantic who felt they should be recognized in the reorganization. The board of trustees, recognizing that Biddle had been founded with the express purpose of raising up such leadership, could hardly ignore their urging. There were already ample precedents for elevating qualified Black persons to leadership. A number of the Black men and women were already giving acceptable leadership to several of the Presbyterian schools.

The dominant role that Black leaders of educational institutions played in the courts of the church should also be noted. It was the yoking of education and evangelism that thrust these leaders, mostly clergymen, to the fore. Daniel J. Sanders, Henry Lawrence McCrorey, George Waldo Long, Herman S. Davis, William Metz, and many others provided leadership in the presbyteries and synods. Several held the position of stated clerk in these bodies for long periods.

Catawba Synod responded to the election of Sanders to the Biddle presidency with enthusiasm:

Therefore be it resolved that the Synod unanimously approves the action of the Board of Trustees and the Freedmen's Board in appointing Dr. Sanders as President and his associates at Biddle University and we pledge to the management and faculty our cordial support. (Minutes, Synod of Catawba, 1891, p. 125)

The boldness of this move may be judged by the fact that Lincoln University, located in the north, did not get its first Black professor until 1932.

Sanders' rise to the presidency of Biddle, which he held for sixteen years, is a familiar story. Born into slavery on February 15, 1847, in Winnsboro, South Carolina, he was taught the cobbler's trade at nine. At the end of a five-year apprenticeship, his master began to collect pay for his services. Sanders taught himself to read and spell, using signs, advertisements, and anything that came into his hands. He began to learn to spell from a little book called *Crown of Thorns*, which came into his possession. Later, Sanders secured a battered copy of the *Blue Back Speller*. By the time of Emancipation, he could spell and read some.

In March 1866, when Sanders was nineteen, in the predawn hours he slipped away from his home in Winnsboro and traveled to Chester, South Carolina, where he found work and a tutor. Later he entered Brainerd Institute, a Presbyterian school in Chester, and while studying practiced his trade and prepared to enter a theological seminary. Licensed by Fairfield Presbytery in 1870, Sanders entered Western Theological Seminary the next year. Graduating with honors in Hebrew and Sanskrit in 1874, he went to pastor the Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, North Carolina. As a pastor in Wilmington, Sanders began publication of a religious newspaper, *Africo-American Presbyterian*, which he took with him to Biddle. The paper, adopted as the official organ of Catawba Synod, continued to be published for fifty-nine years (1879–1938).

It is on the one hand surprising, but on the other hand a wonderful confirmation of the Spirit working through the community of freedmen and freedwomen in the Presbyterian church that the prophets and prophetesses are linked in an unbroken succession of leadership. Henry Lawrence McCrorey also came out of Winnsboro, South Carolina, to succeed to the presidency of Biddle Institute upon the death of Daniel J. Sanders in 1907. It seems that McCrorey had been preparing for that calling all his life. He was described as "tall and erect in appearance, straight as a die in character, active and alert." McCrorey was to take his alma mater to new heights of prominence. Yet his early beginnings gave no hint of promise of his leadership. McCrorey's own account of his early life clearly shows this:

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My stepfather was entirely illiterate; my mother could neither read nor write, but could spell as far as “baker” in Webster’s blue-black speller. She had been taught the child’s catechism and a few hymns, by her owners, who were Presbyterians, and these she taught us. The family library consisted of the blue-back speller, an almanac and a Bible. The Bible, of course, could only be looked at and revered as the mysterious book of God.

I attended school about one month a year from the age of ten to sixteen. The first money I ever possessed was fifty cents which I spent for an arithmetic, and studied during the next six years, mostly at night, after a hard day’s work, without a teacher, with a poor light and scarcely elbow room, for there were twelve of us around one fireside, father, mother and ten children.¹²²

McCrorey was already twenty-three when he entered the Preparatory Department at Biddle. He graduated from the college department in 1892 and the theological seminary in 1895. He was employed at Biddle and served twelve years under his predecessor. As someone remarked: “He has gone through Biddle twice from the bottom up, once as a student and then as a teacher.”

It was under McCrorey’s forty-year administration that the school received generous gifts from the Carnegie Fund, Mrs. Johnson C. Smith (the name of the school was changed to Johnson C. Smith University in 1923 in honor of her husband), and the Duke Endowment. The Carnegie gift of \$12,500 for the erection of a library building was given on condition that a matching amount be raised from other sources. The matching amount plus \$2,500 was raised mostly among Black Presbyterians in the South. Some years later the chime clock in the tower of Biddle Hall was paid for mostly by subscriptions from Black Presbyterians in the South and by money raised through the columns of the *Africo-American Presbyterian*.

H. L. McCrorey met his wife while she was on the faculty of Haines Institute in Augusta, Georgia, where she served as assistant principal to Lucy Laney. Mrs. McCrorey was a leader in her own right. She was prominent in interracial conferences and the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). She was described by some people as a woman of retiring disposition, but strong, cultured, and consecrated. No one would disagree with the strong, cul-

tured, and consecrated, but students and faculty at Johnson C. Smith University who knew Mrs. McCrorey in her later years would hardly have described her as retiring. She was a strong, almost dominating force on the campus until her death in a tragic fire in 1943.

Lucy C. Laney was the daughter of David Laney, one of the three Black founders of Knox Presbytery. Miss Laney was born a slave in Macon, Georgia. Her mother was a maid in the home of the Campbell family, but they permitted her parents to live together in a home of their own. Lucy received some education, including the study of Latin, from members of the Campbell family. She studied at Atlanta University and after her graduation in 1873, taught in schools for African American children in Georgia and South Carolina. Because of ill health, she left her job in Savannah and returned to Augusta. In 1883, she launched her own school in the basement of the Christ Presbyterian Church of Augusta, but later moved it to an old house. Encouraged by R. H. Allen to present her work to the General Assembly, she later gained support for her school.

Lucy Laney was an educational pioneer. She established the first kindergarten in Augusta and the first training course for nurses in the region.¹²³ She was the first Black woman ever appointed by the Freedmen's Board to head a major educational institution. Laney was a successful and innovative administrator and an eloquent spokesperson for her people. Such major institutions as Lincoln University, Atlanta University, South Carolina State College, and Howard University bestowed upon her honorary degrees. Mary McCleod Bethune, a graduate of Scotia Seminary who began her teaching career under Laney, founded her own school and became a national spokesperson for African Americans.

The stories are legion—of Black Presbyterian men and women laboring in the most unlikely circumstances and discovering and sending up young men and women to serve as servant-leaders where need was overwhelming.

In 1887, when Allen A. Jones and his wife Mary went to McConellsville, South Carolina, they could not

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have imagined the extent to which their work would impact the growth and quality of Presbyterian work, which was less than a quarter of a century old.

Allen Jones was born a slave and ran away when General William T. Sherman passed through Macon, Georgia. Later, when Jones returned, he was taken under the care of David Laney, Lucy's father. Allen Jones became known as the "Father of Presbyterianism" in Georgia.¹²⁴

Early on, Mary helped at a school for Black children in Spartanburg. Beginning in 1889, she was employed by the Freedmen's Board and later by the Board of National Missions, where she served until 1929. She helped promote the Bible school movement and was a familiar presence at the Schools of Methods and the Workers Conferences. She is especially remembered for her efforts to persuade Black women's associations to be in mission rather than objects of mission. She encouraged them, in spite of their meager means, to support worldwide mission financially and programmatically. Children of the Joneses (J. T. "Joe" Jones, Minnie Jones George) and grandchildren of the Joneses (Bryant George, Eugene Adair, and Joseph Adair) have continued the family's contribution to the work of the Presbyterian church in the south and nationally.

One of those upon whom the Joneses laid hands was George Waldo Long, whose name is synonymous with the emergence of Coulter Academy as a major Presbyterian educational institution. It was Mary Jones who got Long into school. Son of a Baptist deacon, Long's "heresy" of attending a Presbyterian school caused the demotion of his father from the deaconship. Long, who graduated from Brainerd Institute in Chester, South Carolina, and Johnson C. Smith University (college in 1905 and seminary in 1908) found the school in Cheraw, South Carolina, in a ramshackle condition. When he arrived in 1908, fresh out of seminary, there was hardly a pane in any window. That same year he met and married Lillian Bull, a teacher at Bethune-Cookman College, the school founded by Mary McCleod Bethune.

When John M. Gaston made a visit to the Cheraw field shortly after Long's arrival, his clear intent was to close the school. Long begged for a chance to try to build up the institution. His request was granted and Coulter eventually became one of the outstanding institutions of the region. By the mid-twenties it had achieved high school status and by 1933, it had become a junior college with a teacher training program. The story of the growth of Coulter and its facilities, for which a substantial portion of the funds were raised by local Black citizens, is typical of the effort and industry of Black Presbyterians during that period.

By the late 1920s, Coulter had established two "mission" schools in the county. Both were one-teacher day schools serving communities without any educational facilities. Coulter was crucial in fulfilling the educational needs of African American youth in the Pee Dee area because the state was not adequately fulfilling its educational responsibilities to its African American citizens. Even as late as 1944, when Henry L. Marshall, a layman on the Coulter staff, took over leadership because of the sudden death of Long, Coulter was the only high school and junior college for African American boys and girls in Chesterfield County.¹²⁵

The roll of Black leaders of educational institutions is too long to be written here. What is apparent is the existence of a close-knit fellowship of struggling people willing to sacrifice personal gain for the advancement of the community. Parents brought their daughters and sons to school and were seldom turned away, even when their funds were insufficient to pay the meager fees or even if they had only farm produce to offer.

The educational institutions regularly reported their work to the synods and presbyteries in which they were located. These synods and presbyteries claimed them as their own even though the schools' main financial support and control was with the Freedmen's Committee. The synods and presbyteries recognized the importance of the educational institutions to the church and to the governing struc-

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tures. The Synod of Atlantic observed in 1880: "The Church and School [are] planted side by side. Both are essential to the success of the work" (Minutes, Synod of Atlantic, 1880, p. 11). The Synod of Catawba in 1890 agreed: "... hence the planting of parochial schools was an absolute necessity, and [a] blessed, generous result. ... Nay, we might almost say that the Christian school precedes the church" (Minutes, Synod of Catawba, 1890, 98). And in 1913, the Synod of East Tennessee (later Synod of the Blue Ridge) concurred: "In the Presbyterian Church the school house goes along with the church" (Minutes, Synod of East Tennessee, 1913, p. 40).

Given the historic circumstances, the lack of resources, the hostile climate, and the ambivalent attitude of the government and the Presbyterian church at large, the prospect of a people lifting themselves from poverty and peonage was dim. Were it not for the demonstrated willingness and enormous personal sacrifice of women and men who had achieved some education to help in any and every way toward the advancement of their own people, the story we write today would be very different.

President William Howard Taft, on a visit to Haines Institute in 1910, paid a tribute to Lucy Laney, which could be applied to hundreds of Black Presbyterian pastors, teachers, and missionaries who are less famous. Taft said, in part:

... the construction of a great institute like this is not the work of a day nor accomplished by one act of generosity; it means a continuous life of hard, disinterested work of unselfishness, of tact, of patience, of willingness to submit at times to humiliating failure, and of confidence in the aid of God in the ultimate result; and therefore, I shall go out of this meeting, ... I shall carry in my memory only the figure of that woman who has been able to create all this. She must, even in her moments of trial and tribulation, derive immense joy from looking back over what she has accomplished, and when she meets those whom she has sent forth to do the missionary work that they are taught to do, intense satisfaction.¹²⁶

Church Growth

Despite the Freedman's Committee's almost chronic complaint that funds allocated were insufficient to achieve their ends and the evident frustration at not being able to move vigorously into areas of Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas with their large populations of Blacks, the growth of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America among African Americans, in the fifty years following the establishment of the Committee for Mission for Colored People, was impressive. From 1877 through 1905, the period in which there were only two Black synods, there was a steady and strong growth in ministers, churches, communicant members, and Sunday school scholars. By the end of that period, 220 ministers, 366 churches, and some 22,189 communicant members were on the roll. The Sunday schools enrolled nearly as many scholars as the churches had communicant members, which suggests the important role that institution played in the life of the church and the community. By 1907, the number of Black presbyteries had increased to fifteen and the number of Black synods had increased to four.

Even the periodic economic recessions seemed not to slow significantly the advance of the churches and schools. Not only was there steady growth in the two established synods, but new work was beginning to open as early as 1889 in states to the west, such as Arkansas, Oklahoma, and parts of Texas and Tennessee.

The field secretary for the Board of Missions, H. N. Payne, had decried the fact that for lack of money the board had no ministers engaged in preaching nor any church in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, or Texas. By 1892, however, Mary Holmes Seminary opened in Jackson, Mississippi (later shifting to West Point). By 1940, the high school department of Mary Holmes was one of only four high schools available to Blacks in the entire state of Mississippi that was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

All three branches of Presbyterianism had work in Alabama. Though the educational work is best documented,

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churches were also founded. For as we have seen in the Presbyterian tradition, churches and schools went hand in hand. For the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA), the main project was Barber Memorial College at Anniston, Alabama. The United Presbyterian Church in North America (UPCNA) conducted five day and boarding schools that continued work, with state cooperation, until 1950. The PCUSA congregations were organized into the Presbytery of Birmingham. The UPCNA churches belonged to the Presbytery of Tennessee. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (PCUS) had one of its strongest Black governing bodies in the Central Alabama Presbytery.

The PCUSA work in Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi was organized into Rogersville, Birmingham, and La-Vere Presbyteries. These three presbyteries were formed into the Synod of East Tennessee in 1907. Although the synod territories included a part of the state of Louisiana, no Presbyterian educational institutions were established there. The PCUS Presbytery of Ethel in Mississippi was one of its most populous presbyteries.

The Board of Missions for Freedmen (PCUSA) used the general term “missionaries” to designate its workers sent to serve among the emancipated African Americans in the South. The term included ordained ministers, licentiates, catechists, and teachers, male and female. While the board was generally responsible for making decisions about expansion of the work, fund-raising, and the recruiting and appointing of these missionaries, it employed a field secretary as a kind of on-the-site overseer. H. N. Payne, the first field secretary, notes that there had been opposition to the imposition of such a position on the regular Presbyterian structure of the work:

... it has been very gratifying to find an increasing sympathy with, and appreciation of the work to which I have been appointed, together with a growing consciousness of its necessity. Men who strongly opposed the appointment of a Field Secretary, and who since have sought the abolition of the office, have become convinced of their mistake, and have sought my sympathy and aid in the wearying and wearing work they are called to do.¹²⁷

Who were those opposed to the office? Payne does not give us a clear clue, but from his reference to the “wearying and wearing work they are called to do” it appears that the opposition was coming from those he oversaw.

One of the objections to the position probably was connected to personal antipathy to Payne, who had accepted the southern insistence on the necessary separation of the races and used his influence to convince the North to accept the southern pattern. His attitude was a wearying mixture of racial bigotry on the one hand and condescension on the other.¹²⁸

Perhaps the opposition came from the ministers and workers in the field who saw the field secretaryship as an undercutting of the responsibility and authority of presbyteries and synods. In any case, the arrangement had unpleasant parallels with the plantation slavery system. Possibly, the aforementioned situation was the forerunner of a system to which Catawba objected sixty years later when the Board of National Missions decided to continue the Unit of Work with Colored People in 1952.

The field secretary traveled widely, attended meetings of synods and presbyteries, spoke frequently in local congregations and schools, and visited with missionaries and counseled them. While Payne thought that he contributed to the work and could secure the sympathy and interest of the larger church, it is not hard to see how a kind of paternalism is implied in the position. Normally, these responsibilities devolve upon governing bodies.

Payne admits as much when reporting the organizing of the Presbytery of Southern Virginia the year before with six ministers and eleven churches. Though most of these churches had been in existence for some time, they needed greatly the

... quickening, encouraging, strengthening influence of real Presbyterian association. Already the churches are feeling this helpful influence. Unity of plan, concert of action, pleasant personal association between ministers and elders, and a growing feeling of love and loyalty to the great church of which they are now more consciously a part, are the outgrowth of the wise action of the Assembly.¹²⁹

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Payne is writing just after the division of the Atlantic Synod into Catawba and Atlantic Synods. The organization and oversight of the synods and the shepherding of the presbyteries obviously had a positive effect on church growth and extension.

In the same section of his report, Payne refers to the quickening activity in church extension in eastern North Carolina despite the lack of adequate finances. This is the area of the Cape Fear Presbytery that was organized in 1886. These positive comments about the state of the churches in that area indicate the effectiveness of that presbytery in fulfilling its responsibilities.

Missionaries

The early system of church building was based on the work of missionary ministers and laypersons who frequently served several mission points or congregations. A few notable examples will suffice to show how the system worked. Edisto Island, off the South Carolina coast at Charleston, had been a place where slaves were corralled to await the auction block in Charleston. Here, two pioneers, Paul Campbell and Ishmael S. Moultrie, evangelized Blacks and organized churches on the island. Campbell and Moultrie were men of sharply contrasting appearance and bearing. Campbell had been a house slave in Virginia. Fair complexioned, well-dressed, literate, cultured in speech, and polished in manner, he had been teaching and preaching to his people on the island. Moultrie, who came to the presbytery seeking ordination, was described as “a jet black, full-blooded Negro, broad-shouldered, heavysset and speaking a jargon that was hard to understand.”¹³⁰ He demonstrated his leadership ability, however, by guiding a band of slaves through swampland on a 150-mile journey from where they had been deserted back to their island home. After hearing both men preach, Atlantic Presbytery licensed Campbell and ordained Moultrie. During the first meeting of Atlantic Presbytery, Campbell requested that the churches he had organized be received into the Presbytery of Atlantic; this was done.¹³¹

One of those who followed in their train was William Lee Metz, who took up work on Edisto in 1918. "Uncle Billy," as he came to be affectionately known, was described as "a warm humanitarian, scholarly without sophistication, keen intellectually, wise and witty, courageous and unafraid."¹³² Although his particular assignment was the church and Larimer High School, he and Mrs. Metz ministered to the people of the Edisto Island community in myriad ways. His articles, published in the *Africo-American Presbyterian* under the title of "Blazers and Chips," have preserved for us valuable segments of the history of the period in which he labored (1918–46).

In the history of the Black governing bodies, the position of Sunday school missionary developed into one of some importance. Many of the Black churches were located in rural areas. In fact, in the period between Emancipation and the first World War, the Black population was overwhelmingly rural and poor. Many were small and unable to sustain a pastor full-time. Typically, pastors served several fields, which meant that rural congregations might have preaching services as infrequently as one Sunday in a month. The itinerant Sunday school missionary, in many cases unordained, helped to fill the pastoral gap. He traveled by train, walked long distances, and attempted to teach methods of Christian education as he distributed literature to Sunday school teachers and parents.

In southern Virginia in the 1930s and 40s, S. L. Young labored unheralded. He lived in Petersburg, but covered all of Southern Virginia Presbytery, which included most of the state of Virginia. He was followed in Southern Virginia Presbytery by Rutherford B. West, who operated in much the same fashion. For many years the latter did not own a car, but traveled to outlying areas by train and bus. West also walked many miles carrying his bag of literature to rural points.

In South Carolina, J. T. "Joe" Jones, following in the footsteps of his mother and father, served as Sunday school missionary and later rose to the position of supervisor of Sunday School Missions and Mobile Ministries in the Syn-

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ods of Atlantic and Catawba. Eventually, he served as president and board member of several national organizations and committees. Jones was a familiar and vital presence at youth and adult conferences and meetings. Blessed with a beautiful tenor voice and a broad knowledge of sacred music, he was much in demand as a leader of singing in meetings at all judicatory levels, both in the South and nationally. The foundation of his career was his work as Sunday school missionary.

Abraham Prince served as a pastor and later as an evangelist. A dynamic speaker, he was also in demand as a leader at conferences and other meetings. His work as a missionary very naturally involved him in evangelism. Some estimation of the value that the Black governing bodies placed upon the Sunday school missionaries can be made from the Synod of Atlantic's "unqualified and enthusiastic endorsement" in its 1915 meeting of its Sunday school missionaries: G. T. Pollard, superintendent; A. B. McCoy; E. C. Hames, Hodge Presbytery; W. L. Metz, McClelland Presbytery; and W. T. Frasier, Atlantic Presbytery. Albert B. McCoy had begun his work as district Sabbath school missionary in the Synod of East Tennessee in 1913.

The Sunday school was an important element in the growth of Black Presbyterian churches in the South. In small congregations, especially in rural areas, where preaching services could not be held every week, Sunday school was usually conducted. The weekly Sunday school provided a regular opportunity for Bible study and a degree of worship, which, as much as preaching services, kept the congregations together and prepared younger people for participating roles in the church.

The statistics show that until 1950 Sunday school enrollment generally equaled or surpassed the communicant membership of the church.¹³³ A factor in this numerical strength in some locations was the attendance of non-Presbyterians and large families. In many cases, other denominations did not have the Sunday School tradition and so on Sundays, when regular preaching services were not held in their churches, they were glad to send their children to the Presbyterian Sunday school.

The keen interest of Black presbyteries and synods made the Black Presbyterian Sunday school the acknowledged leader among Black denominational groups.¹³⁴ A part of the reason for this was its use as a tool of evangelism. In the early 1900s, presbyteries and synods avidly promoted Decision Day in the Sunday schools. This was an occasion to awaken youth to commitment to Christ and personal spiritual growth and to encourage Sunday school scholars to make decisions for church membership.

Of course, Sunday school not only enrolled the young. From the early days, adults and elders were also a part of its constituency. As the denomination developed its literature, the Sunday school became a source of Bible study and lay theology.

Mission Strategy and Structure

As early as the second decade of their existence, Black judicatories were apprehensive about being ghettoized, that is being placed in a special category in relation to the structures and operation of the church. Yadkin Presbytery, meeting in April 1885, unanimously overtured the General Assembly for the dissolution of the Board of Freedmen and the distribution of institutions under its care to other boards of the church. Specifically, the presbytery called for the transfer of churches and parochial schools to the Board of Home Mission and the higher grade educational institutions to the Board of Colleges and Academies. The import of the overture was to seek normal and usual avenues of operation and governance.

The presbytery offered six reasons for the requested change: (1) the current plan tended to perpetuate the color line; (2) the two boards were prepared to extend their operations to the southern field without changing the plan of work; (3) the church at large did not support the Board of Freedmen; (4) there had been little progress in the last ten years under the current system; (5) the policy of keeping the higher grade schools dependent on the Board of Freedmen placed a drain on its resources as these institutions' expenses increased and, thereby, decreased support for the lower schools; and (6) the Board of Freedmen had

not carried out the General Assembly's instructions to aid the ministers and open new fields.¹³⁵

The organization of the mission to the freedmen and freedwomen had been a point of contention from the beginning. Although the church had judged that a separate board was needed as a temporary expedient, many recognized that eventually a distribution of the work, such as Yadkin Presbytery proposed, made sense. Such a restructuring eventually came in 1923 when the Board of Freedmen was dissolved as an independent entity and its work was placed under the Board of National Missions. As the Division of Mission for Colored People, it retained its identity as a distinct department of the Board of National Missions under the direction of John Montgomery Gaston. Gaston's title was assistant secretary and assistant treasurer of the board, but he operated the Division of Mission for Colored People with almost total independence. His administrative style was autocratic and he exercised absolute power over appointments and promotions. Gaston possessed a deep, powerful voice, and was often caricatured as "the Great White Father" who was always present to preside over occasions of importance.

An interesting sidelight on the way in which Gaston was perceived comes out of Lincoln University history. When Lincoln's president, John Ballard Rendall, died in September 1924, a search was begun for his successor. The search committee's first nominee was John M. Gaston. There was an instant furious uproar from the Lincoln alumni. In his capacity as assistant secretary of National Missions with direct responsibility for the Division of Missions for Colored People, Gaston had employed a number of Lincoln men and they knew his style. The Lincoln Alumni Association adopted a resolution declaring: "that Dr. Gaston was inclined to the Southern attitude of viewing the Negro question and that he was opposed to raising the educational standard of colored schools under [the] control of the Division of Missions for Colored People."¹³⁶ Gaston subsequently withdrew his name from consideration.

John M. Gaston remained in his position as secretary of the division for twenty-seven years. In 1938, he gave

up this position and became the secretary-treasurer of Johnson C. Smith University, Incorporated, with offices in Pittsburgh. Albert B. McCoy—a native of Cotton Plant, Arkansas, and a graduate of Lincoln Seminary—succeeded Gaston as secretary of the Division of Work with Colored People. The slight word change signified a recognition of a need to move from paternalism to cooperation. McCoy, as the first Black to hold a General Assembly-level position in the church bureaucracy, did not significantly modify the style of operation. While not as ponderous as Gaston, he exercised power in much the same way. The fact that he controlled the budget that provided aid to fields only served to increase the inclination toward absolute power. So, while the title and the race of the administrator changed, the structure remained paternalistic.

McCoy, however, had certain advantages that Gaston did not. He had “paid his dues,” having come up through the ranks. He had served as Sunday school missionary, director of Sunday school missionaries, and manager of the Presbyterian Bookstore of Auburn Avenue, Atlanta. Moreover, when McCoy became director of the unit, he surrounded himself with able persons, that is, representatives in each of the synods: E. J. Gregg in Atlantic, Frank C. Shirley in Catawba, G. E. Cesar in Canadian, and J. B. Barber in Blue Ridge. By the reorganization of the boards of the church and the erection of the Board of National Missions, these representatives now held membership on the national staff. In addition, L. B. West was made the field representative for the four Black synods. As time went on, McCoy brought to the fore promising younger men to serve in these positions: Charles W. Talley in Atlantic and Herman L. Counts in Blue Ridge and Canadian. A veteran and able leader, Frank C. Shirley was named field representative for Catawba Synod.

McCoy's death in 1950 marked a turning point in structural arrangements for the southern fields. The Black governing bodies had long been restive under an arrangement that they experienced as paternalistic, a feeling strengthened by the implication that Blacks in positions of leadership need careful supervision by Whites. Catawba

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Synod, seizing upon the break occasioned by McCoy's death in October 1950, presented to the Board of National Missions a resolution requesting the dissolution of the Division of Work with Colored People and the synod's full integration into the life and work of the church without regard to race. Among other things, the resolution stated "that we must be ready after eighty-five years of more or less patronizing paternalistic nurture, to assume larger responsibilities in the support of the work of our churches and the total program of the Presbyterian Church as a whole."¹³⁷ In issuing its resolution, the synod referred to the 1946 action of the General Assembly declaring for a nonsegregated church in a nonsegregated society and the original intention of that body, in setting up a separate agency for work with freedmen and freedwomen, that it should be temporary in character.

It further declared in its amplifying statement that "a comparison of the policy of administering National Missions work in the average White synod with the policy followed in the four Negro synods shows what a strangle hold paternalism still has on the Negro work."¹³⁸

Notwithstanding the case made by Catawba Synod in its resolution, the Board of National Missions on January 30, 1951, sent a reply addressed to Lionel B. West, stated clerk of Catawba Synod, over the signature of H. N. Morse, general secretary, Board of National Missions, which read in part:

I was directed to report to you that recommendations made to it by the Advisory Committee on Negro Work in the South to the effect that the Department of Work with Colored People be continued as an administrative unit, with an increased emphasis upon the responsibility for administration of the Synod's Committee on National Missions, on the closer integration of all types of work within the bounds of these synods, and on the fuller utilization of the various special resources of the Board's organization. On this basis, the Board elected Dr. Jesse B. Barber as Secretary of the Department who accepted and began work January 1, 1951.

Catawba Synod, in its response to Morse's letter, rejected the board's appeal for its cooperation in a program under Barber's leadership. It pointed out that no constructive

forward-looking program could be worked out without agreement on basic policies. It saw nothing in the board's communication that suggested it was prepared to move away from the discriminatory and segregated policy under which it was then carrying out the work with colored people. Further, while making clear that Barber himself was not an issue (only insofar as he projects himself into the issue), the synod pointed out that there had been no consultation with synod representatives prior to his appointment and that the synod received no official intelligence on the matter of Barber's election. Individual members of the synod learned the news through the November 1950 issue of *Monday Morning*.

It was especially irritating that the board based its decision on the advice and counsel of the Advisory Committee on Negro Work, a group of men and women without ecclesiastical standing, but handpicked from within the bounds of the four Negro synods without the consultation or clearance of the synods in question.

Eventually, Catawba Synod won its point. This was partly due to the sympathetic support of other boards and agencies of the church. On November 21, 1952, a representative of the Board of National Missions sat down with representatives of Catawba Synod to work out the transfer of administrative responsibilities for National Missions into the hands of the synod.

With one of the two strongest of the Black synods in revolt, Jesse B. Barber assumed office on January 1, 1951, under a difficult set of circumstances. He called together a meeting of representatives of all the synods and challenged those who would to get aboard and work toward a successful future.

A factor further complicating the relations between Barber and his constituency was his decision to discontinue the program of evangelism in the division and the consequent dismissal of A. H. Prince, who had served the area for thirty-five years. Both Catawba and Atlantic Synods gave their endorsement to Prince and recommended that a program of evangelism be administered under the Department of Evangelism of the national church.

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None of the other synods followed immediately the example of Catawba in asking to function as a freestanding synod, but the handwriting was clearly on the wall. By 1959, Atlantic was also freed from board control and Blue Ridge and Canadian were merged into one of the existing predominantly White synods.

In 1959, with the integration of work with African Americans into various departments of the Board of National Missions, Barber moved to a position as assistant secretary of evangelism with the Board of National Missions.

In the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Presbytery of Tennessee was technically not segregated, but a geographically based presbytery. However, inasmuch as there were no White churches in the area, the presbytery functioned under a freedmen's board. From written and oral accounts, there were good feelings and relations between Blacks and Whites. When White representatives from the offices of the national church came for meetings or visits, they enjoyed the hospitality and friendship of the homes of Black constituents. The testimony of ministers of that presbytery is they enjoyed a close, warm family relationship.¹³⁹

Tennessee Presbytery encompassed a large area, including parts of Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Virginia. At one point there was a congregation in Atlanta, but in 1912 it requested and received dismissal from the UPCNA.

The structures of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (PCUS) developed differently, accommodating themselves to the mind-set of the southern church. Having rejected a proposal in 1884 that the northern and southern branches of the church jointly pursue efforts at evangelization of freed African Americans, the southern church erected its Executive Committee of Colored Evangelization in 1891. This committee's main endeavor was Stillman Institute, which (with the PCUS presbyteries) produced several outstanding missionaries to Africa, including William Sheppard, Alonzo Edmiston, and A. A. Rochester.

The Committee on Colored Evangelization was discontinued in 1911, and responsibility for the evangelization of Blacks was placed under the care of the Executive Committee of Home Missions. The Snedecor Memorial Synod was organized in 1917 following the failure of the independent Afro-American Presbyterian Church, and continued until 1952. The North and South Carolina Presbytery (later Georgia Carolina Presbytery) had come into existence in 1876 as a result of a petition by Black elders and deacons for an independent presbytery for Negroes.

One of the chief reasons for wanting an independent Presbytery for Negroes was that the Negro ministers could not qualify for membership in the white presbyteries because of insufficient training. The only training that was available [at this time] ... was that provided by the local white ministers.¹⁴⁰

In the first twenty-five years only two ministers received formal theological training.

Two-thirds of the twenty-six existing churches were organized between 1876 and 1900. After 1900, only eight were organized. The churches of these presbyteries were, for the most part, small. For example, in 1911 Ethel Presbytery had a total membership of 482 in twenty-four churches, the largest of which had seventy-nine members.

In 1910, the Executive Committee of Colored Evangelization became a department of the Executive Committee of Home Missions and continued in that relation until 1946. In 1946, work relating to African Americans was placed under the General Assembly's Committee on Negro work. Then from 1949 to 1967, this work was administered by the Board of Extension under which Alex R. Batchelor served for many years as director of Negro work. He was ably assisted by Lawrence W. Bottoms.

Financial Support

Both churches and educational institutions made commendable efforts toward self-support in the early days. Nevertheless, as costs increased and expectations rose, the ability of a group in the lower economic echelons of society became increasingly deficient. A comparison of Black and

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White incomes, then as now, reveals a striking inequality. The weak financial position of the all-Black governing bodies made demands for control of their own affairs weak. Actually, the paternalism of the Board of Freedmen and its successor structures undercut efforts at self-support. Though the early growth and outreach of the churches in the all-Black presbyteries were quite impressive, the demise of the board-supported schools, particularly at the time of the Great Depression, weakened the churches and their evangelistic outreach. Those educational institutions that survived found support among its alumni and friends. Biddle is an outstanding example. Not only did it attract the beneficence of generous donors like Mrs. Johnson C. Smith, Carnegie, and James B. Duke, it was able (through the pages of the *Africo-American Presbyterian*) to solicit funds from the Black constituency in the southeast for special projects such as the library and the chime clock atop Biddle Hall.

Mary Allen Junior College in Crockett, Texas, which was founded in 1886, became and remained for a long time among the outstanding institutions supported by the Board of Freedmen. It was a monument to Mary Esther Allen's commitment to the elevation of Black women. (Allen was first chair of the Women's Executive Committee of the Board of Missions for Freedmen.) Work at Rogersville, Tennessee, centered around another outstanding school, Swift Memorial College. An academy was founded at Cotton Plant, Arkansas, as well as a school at Pine Bluff, Arkansas. By 1890, a number of schools had been established in the Indian Territory. Foremost among these was the Oak Hill Industrial School. Other schools were established at Aloka, Caddo, Wheelock, and other points. These church and school mission points became the nucleus of new presbyteries and eventually new synods. (See discussion of erection of Blue Ridge and Canadian Synods on pp. 54-55 and 88.)

According to the oral account of Mrs. Mallard (mother of Bernice Mallard Riley), the first Presbyterian church (New Hope) and school for Blacks in Kiamichi were planted by a White missionary, John Sweeper, in Frogsville, Okla-

homa (Indian Territory), in 1900. Sweeper was succeeded by a Black minister, W. J. Starks, in 1904.

Eventually, Kiamichi Presbytery included ten small churches. J. W. Mallard, husband of the correspondent, followed a pattern of work that was familiar in the Black presbyteries and synods. He came to Oklahoma in 1914 as a missionary teacher. Mallard's work required him to teach and preach at a number of the churches and mission points: Frogsville, Millenton, Lukefata, Eagletown, and Garvin. Allen S. Meachem was commissioned as principal of the Alice Lee Elliott Memorial School in 1919. He was also the first stated clerk of Kiamichi Presbytery. All the records of this presbytery were destroyed in a fire that wiped out the two largest buildings on the campus.

While records of giving to other institutions is not as well-documented as the giving to Biddle, an examination of the records of governing bodies, especially Atlantic and Catawba Synods, reveals that the matter of general church stewardship was kept constantly to the fore. No meeting passed without directives to presbyteries to urge their churches to give larger support to various programs and causes, such as foreign missions, ministerial relief, etc. As early as 1875, the Synod of Atlantic was already emphasizing the goal of self-support.

This synod also urged the training of the children in stewardship. The seriousness with which stewardship was taken is reflected in a resolution passed by the Synod of Catawba in 1894: "That the Presbyteries be enjoined to recommend no church for help that does not make an annual contribution to the Board of Freedmen."¹⁴¹ Yearly, Catawba Synod gave emphasis to the benefits to be obtained from systematic, worshipful Christian giving.¹⁴² In 1898, Catawba Synod suggested that the weekly offering in the churches be divided proportionately between local needs and the national boards. This was to reduce the sense of being overwhelmed by so many demands, and would aid churches to apportion their resources more systematically.

Programmatic Activities

The minutes of the governing bodies themselves reveal that the all-Black governing bodies adopted the programmatic emphases of the national churches and functioned in a fashion quite similar to their White counterparts. These included the following:

1. Overseeing the proper functioning of sessions through examination of minutes of session in a regular fashion.

2. The examination of candidates for licensure and ordination. It is clear that these were not perfunctory procedures. The Presbytery of Tennessee, for example, required a candidate for ordination to preach three types of sermon: popular, exegetical, and doctrinal. The candidate also was examined in languages of the Bible.

The minutes of the Synod of Atlantic and the Synod of Catawba contain frequent exhortations to presbyteries to exercise due caution and care in assessing the caliber of persons applying as candidates for the ministry in order to maintain a worthy standard.

In 1886, Yadkin Presbytery overtured the General Assembly (PCUSA) to eliminate special rules for colored candidates for the ministry, giving as its reasons that such a practice denied ecclesiastical parity, was based on the color line, and “convey[s] the invidious imputation that [the] entire class of students ... are moral imbeciles, utterly unworthy of the confidence of the church as compared with similar students of other races.”¹⁴³

3. Presbyteries processed calls, installed pastors, and made provision for pulpit supplies where needed. Because of the small size of many congregations and the depressed economic state of much of the Black population, installed pastors were relatively few in the first few decades. In presbyteries like Southern Virginia, the majority of churches were served by stated supplies. In 1896, the Synod of Catawba expressed concern that as many ministers as possible be installed as pastors. It reported in 1897 that

there were twelve installed pastors as compared to sixty-six stated supplies.¹⁴⁴

4. Presbyteries disciplined ministers for impropriety of conduct, dishonesty, theft, drunkenness, or other offenses. They also heard and adjudicated complaints. The synods, likewise, examined presbytery minutes, received overtures, overtured the General Assembly, and served as an appeal court from the disputed rulings of presbyteries. These judicatories functioned with the same decency and order characteristic of their White counterparts. Some of the ministers were recognized as experts in church law and successfully argued cases before the Judicial Committee of the General Assembly. Among them might be mentioned A. A. Hector and Thomas A. Robinson, both of Southern Virginia.

Other programmatic and structural innovations were adopted to meet the peculiar need of the churches and presbyteries of the four all-Black synods.

1. Sharing in the national enthusiasm for the Sunday school convention movement, these presbyteries and synods placed a strong emphasis on the Sunday school. Rudolph Obey has shown in his study that from 1865 to 1950 Sunday school membership equaled or exceeded church membership. General Assembly statistics support this conclusion. Undoubtedly, the Sunday schools were an important doorway to church membership for many.

2. The Sunday school missionary, functioning particularly in rural areas, not only assisted small congregations in building up the spiritual life of their members, they also stimulated new and improved methods of Christian education.

Out of the work of Sunday school missionaries developed the School of Methods. These were training conferences to help teachers and other lay workers to improve their skills. The School of Methods eventually developed into summer conferences that gathered both adults and youth for training at presbytery and synod levels.

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The School of Methods idea gained tremendous popularity in all the synods and presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the other two branches of the Presbyterian church. The concept later developed into synodical and presbyterial summer conferences, which became popular items on the agendas of the youth. The *Africo-American Presbyterian* reported in its August 1927 edition that forty-five persons were coming in a motorcade from Catawba Presbytery to the Synod of Catawba's School of Methods. The announcement of this news was treated as a challenge to the other three presbyteries to match Catawba's effort.

In August of that same year, the paper announced four big Sunday school conventions, one in each of the four synod areas: Elliot Academy, Valiant, Oklahoma (Canadian); Knoxville College, Knoxville, Tennessee (East Tennessee); Haines Institute, Augusta, Georgia (Atlantic); and Mary Potter School, Oxford, North Carolina (Catawba).

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S. held two- and three-day training sessions in methods at Prairie View College, and later weeklong youth conferences at Grambling College and Stillman College.

3. The larger parish idea did not originate with Black governing bodies, but it was admirably suited to the conditions of their churches. Because many Black Presbyterian congregations were small and unable to afford a full-time minister, the larger parish concept was well-received and employed in Black presbyteries.

The concept brought together several congregations in the sharing of personnel resources, which none of them could have afforded separately. Typically, there were two or more ministers and a parish worker who was a specialist in Christian education. Together the team served the worship, pastoral, and Christian education needs of the several member churches of the parish.

During the McCoy era, Cecelia Jamison (daughter of A. B. McCoy and later married to William Mercer) gave direction to the larger parish program. Several notably suc-

cessful larger parishes were operated. One of the earliest was in Cheraw, South Carolina, where Rachel Swann (later Rachel Adams) labored in close cooperation with Coulter Academy during the regime of George Waldo Long. Later, Rachel Swann and Cecelia Jamison developed a parish operating in Charlotte County and Mecklenburg County, both located in North Carolina. The Amelia-Nottaway Parish linked small congregations in these counties of Virginia: Russell Grove, Big Oak, Burkeville, and Bethesda. This parish was under the ministerial leadership of Robert Johnson, Herman Counts, and H. W. McNair; Rachel Swann provided Christian education assistance. Later, the Goodwill Larger Parish in Fairfield Presbytery, South Carolina, was developed. Ruby Houston worked with James Herbert Nelson and William Mercer in that program. Other parish workers who gave valuable service were Marci Marion, Gladyce Cole, Mae Fortune Barber, and Mildred Artis. The value of the larger parish program is suggested by development of a program in recent years linking four churches in New Harmony Presbytery served by Diane Wright.

4. The Workers' conference had its beginnings during the era of John M. Gaston, who called together a workers' conference of one hundred Black men at Barber-Scotia Seminary to consider practical subjects connected with various features of church and school work. John M. Gaston presided over this conference, but it was under A. B. McCoy that this annual meeting came to full flower. It came to have such importance in the life of the Black Presbyterian churches of the South that some referred to it as the "Black General Assembly." Under McCoy, five hundred to eight hundred pastors, missionaries, schoolteachers and administrators, and students gathered. Choirs from the Presbyterian schools and colleges were featured in worship and evening programs. In its latter years, this conference was hosted on the campus of Johnson C. Smith University. The logistics were difficult because there were no hotel accommodations to house the delegates. Room accommodations had to be made in private homes and the dormitories of the host institution. Over it all, A. B. McCoy presided with great poise and ready wit.

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The Worker's Conference was a time of assessing the situation of Blacks in the Presbyterian church in the South, of disseminating new ideas and methods, of experiencing inspiring worship and great music, and of enjoying reunion and fellowship. This conference was discontinued in 1952 as structures affecting the Black judicatories changed.

5. Last, but not least, Black Presbyterian women were making a significant contribution to the church and their communities. There is a picture in the *Home Mission Monthly* of eight Black women, two of whom were Presbyterians, who had recently been selected to serve on the Women's General Committee of the Interracial Commission: Mrs. Booker T. Washington, Mary McLeod Bethune, Lucy C. Laney, Mrs. H. L. McCrorey, Janie Barrett, Mrs. S. W. Crosthwait, Charlotte H. Brown, and Mrs. John Hope.¹⁴⁵ What a powerful group!

Early within the Presbyterian churches, women were organized in presbyterials and synodicals. In the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS), there were sometimes joint sessions of the presbytery and the presbyterial. Four presbyterials (North and South Carolina, Central Alabama, Central Louisiana, and Ethel) were organized between 1925 and 1938. The presidents of these presbyterials were able to attend the Women's Auxiliary Training School at Montreat, North Carolina, for the first time in 1943. The Snedecor Synodical was organized in 1948.

In the southern church, the first Conference for Colored Women took place at Stillman Institute, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in 1916. "The original purpose of these conferences was to bring help in practical living to colored women who were past school age, yet who wanted to help their race and especially their neighbors to build up a better community life. ... [Courses] included Bible Study, home nursing, sewing, sanitation, community betterment, ... etc."¹⁴⁶

Both the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America very early organized women's missionary societies

that related to the ongoing, vigorous women's organizations in their denominations.

In Yadkin Presbytery, for example, the presbyterial society was organized in 1885 and the presbytery appointed its first officers that year. Women's presbyterial missionary societies appear to have functioned in all the Black presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA). As early as 1893, Catawba Synod (at its annual meeting) began to set aside an evening for a popular meeting in the interest of women's work. This became a regular feature of synod and presbytery meetings. In 1920, Fairfield Presbytery referred to this as a "time-honored custom," indicating that it had been in practice for quite a while.

6. In contrast with women's work, the program of men's work was less vigorous. In this respect, the Black governing bodies were not unlike their White counterparts. The lack of access of women to all the offices of the church may account for the difference in strength between the women's organization and the men's organization. For a long time, the women's missionary societies were the women's only route of access to positions of leadership and a means of expressing their vision of the church.

At the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, the minutes of the Black synods of the PCUSA began to make mention of the Presbyterian Brotherhoods that, at the time, were noted to be relatively few and weak. The function of the brotherhoods was "to promote and stimulate men's loyalty to the church and to every organized activity in and through the church."¹⁴⁷ Obviously, there was a push to strengthen the church's work among men. At the annual meeting of the Synod of Catawba in 1912, an evening's popular meeting was devoted to the subject "Masculine Efficiency."¹⁴⁸

Once the men's organizations were established in Atlantic and Catawba Synods, they continued to function strongly in some presbyteries, even after their strength had waned in the church at large.

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7. Early formalized work with young people was centered around the Christian Endeavor Societies. In 1905, there were one hundred such groups within the bounds of Catawba Synod. This means that these groups were almost universal at the congregational level. They commonly met on Sunday evenings at the church. The synod urged presbyteries to organize and conduct Christian endeavor conventions. This organization was important for it represented one of the few extracurricular activities available, especially to rural youth. The movement at the presbytery and synod levels fed into Schools of Methods, which have already been discussed (see pp. 105-106).

8. One of the unexpected and indeed surprising emphases of the synods and presbyteries was foreign missions. The monetary support given to foreign missions by the Black synods surpassed their giving to ministerial relief, for example. In the 1880s, both Atlantic Synod and Catawba Synod had committees on foreign missions. In addition, each had a special committee on African missions, even though the Freedmen's Committee complained often about the uneven emphasis given to foreign missions in comparison to support for work among the freedmen and freedwomen.

The support of foreign missions among the Black constituency continued even after the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA withdrew support from the Liberian Mission, staffed completely by African Americans. While it is obvious from reading records and correspondence that international politics and racism played a major part in the decision, Robert E. Speer, secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, placed the blame on the character failings of African Americans. Said Speer:

The Negroes from America have not shown the qualities of enterprise, stability and solidity of work ... the hope that the American Negro would evangelize the continent of his fathers has been abandoned, at least until he shall have been brought by education and long discipline to a tenacity and directness of character he does not yet possess.¹⁴⁹

The attitude of the northern Presbyterian church is even more astonishing in light of the fact that the southern

Presbyterian church began at about this time to appoint African Americans to their Congo Mission, several of whom served with great distinction: Rev. and Mrs. William Sheppard, Alonzo and Althea Edmiston, and Maria Fearing. Both Sheppard and Edmiston came out of the presbyteries of the PCUS.

After considerable agitation, especially by Lincoln University students, and a request by Catawba Synod to be assigned a parish in Africa to be supported by Catawba, the Board of Foreign Missions (PCUSA) indicated in 1927 its readiness to receive Black candidates for foreign mission service. In 1928, Irvin Underhill and his fiancée, Susan Theresa Reynolds, were appointed to serve in the Cameroons. When Underhill left the field in 1936, no other Blacks were appointed until 1948 when Darius L. Swann, a member of the Southern Virginia Presbytery, was sent to China, becoming the first African American to serve as a Presbyterian missionary in a non-African field.

Throughout this discouraging scenario, Black Presbyterians in the South continued to support financially the overseas mission program of their churches.

CHAPTER V

Toward a Nonsegregated Church in a Nonsegregated Society

The years between the two world wars were not auspicious ones for African Americans. While many had migrated to the North and West to escape the virulent racism of the deep South, the majority remained to endure the lynchings, Ku Klux Klan terrorism, and economic oppression. It was in this period, however, that Black leaders began to launch an increasingly effective fight against the evils of Jim Crow and other expressions of unequal treatment. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), through its legal arm, challenged the discrimination in public school teachers' pay and won. It challenged the right of states to segregate interstate passengers on public accommodations and won. The NAACP eventually persuaded the courts to enforce the principle of equal facilities even though they might be separate.

The end of World War II brought a rising tide of expectations and an irrepressible demand for equity before the law. African Americans, who had once again shed their blood in defense of their country and the cause of democracy, returned home to find their own lot essentially unchanged.

While it might be expected that the churches would have provided ethical leadership for the nation in responding to African Americans' yearning and struggling for justice and equality, such was not the case. The Presbyterian church bodies as a whole did little beyond issuing platitudinous statements. Black clergy, laity, and churches, however, continued their historical role of providing to their

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communities educated and sophisticated leadership, often through close cooperation with secular organizations like the NAACP. Black Presbyterians were keenly aware that it was government, through the courts, and secular organizations that took the lead in calling the nation to social reform in race matters. In the South, the subject of race relations and racial justice was seldom raised from the pulpit. And as long as the problem was so much identified with southern mores, northern church people could pretend that it was a southern problem, not one with which they must grapple.

In the years between the two world wars, none of the three Presbyterian bodies that now are melded into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) achieved vigorous growth among their African American constituencies. The southern Presbyterian church (the Presbyterian Church in the United States) hardly grew at all until Lawrence Bottoms was brought into the picture as the assistant secretary of the Board of Negro Work, which came into being in 1946.

The Committee on Colored Evangelization of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) was established in 1892 and went out of existence in 1910. At the time of its establishment, there were fifty-six Black congregations with a total of about sixteen hundred members. When the committee was discontinued, congregations numbered fifty-nine and the membership totaled 2,355.¹⁵⁰

Evangelizing and teaching Black people was not a popular preoccupation. "Someone remarked facetiously and yet with much truth that when one went to Africa as a missionary to evangelize the Negro he was canonized; when he stayed home to teach the Negro he was ostracized."¹⁵¹

When the Committee on Colored Evangelization was discontinued in 1910, its work was transferred to the Executive Committee on Home Missions as a Department of Colored Work. Snedecor continued as superintendent of

this work until he resigned due to failing health. This coincided with the failure of the independent Afro-American Presbyterian Synod. In that same year, the independent synod was restructured as a synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS). It was renamed the Snedecor Memorial Synod in honor of Snedecor, who had given so much of his life to work among African Americans.

After Snedecor's death, several persons were chosen to give leadership to the work among Blacks. Although this succession of men worked hard to move the church to shoulder its evangelistic responsibility, they could not overcome the apathy now grown to aversion. As the Snedecor Synod, and thus an integral part of the General Assembly, the Black constituency still experienced anemic growth. In 1918, there were 1,492 members; by 1933 that number had only increased to 1,847.

The place at which Black church growth did occur was the cities. In the period following World War II, successful PCUS mission centers were established in Louisville, Richmond, Atlanta, and New Orleans. A feature common to these locations was the development of strong Sunday schools and attention to the social, economic, and educational needs as a part of the evangelistic thrust.

Work for and among African Americans in the southern Presbyterian church continued under the Board of Home Missions until 1946 when the Board of Negro Work was formed. The creation of this board represented not only a change in structure, but a change in attitude. Lawrence Bottoms, who played a key role in this development, describes the changes this way:

[The Home Mission Board] governed and functioned like a plantation system. The executive secretary of the Board of Home Missions worked through certain key ministers who carried out the instructions given by the Board and endeavored to develop the work within the synod and presbytery without the body knowing exactly what they were doing and where they were trying to go; and the body was governed by these key ministers who operated and functioned under the

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instruction of the Board of Home Missions. The members of the Synod (Snedecor) and the presbytery did not learn to use the tool of government, social organization, economic process and social process, or political process. ... Neither did they learn about Presbyterian belief. ... The work was carried on in a paternalistic fashion in the hope that the people being led by these ministers would become good people who would adjust to the systems of segregation and be comfortable in those systems without causing any difficulty.¹⁵²

Substantial growth of Black membership in the PCUS began under the leadership of Alex R. Batchelor, who was appointed secretary of the Division of Negro Work in 1947. Lawrence W. Bottoms, serving first as part-time regional director of Christian Education, succeeded in getting Blacks and Whites to plan together for new urban churches, such as All Souls Church in Richmond, Virginia, rather than have Whites plan for Blacks as had been the practice before.

Bottoms later became full-time regional director of Christian Education, then associate in the Division of Negro Work and, at the death of Alex Batchelor, director of the Division of Negro Work. Bottoms' unusual background had prepared him well for an unenviable task. A deeply spiritual man, he had grown up in the Church of the Covenanters, earned his A.B. degree from Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and completed his theological course at the Reformed Theological Seminary of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Before coming to the national staff, Bottoms had served PCUS pastorates in Selma, Alabama; Louisville, Kentucky; and Miami, Florida. In 1974, he was elected the first and only African American moderator of the PCUS General Assembly.

In 1949, this work among African Americans was placed under the Board of Church Extension as the Division of Negro Work, along with the Divisions of Home Missions, Christian Relations, Radio and Television, and Evangelism. This placement of the work in the church's structure overcame some of the sense of isolation that the Division of Negro Work had experienced and was strategic in achieving a more integrated relationship with other aspects of the church's work.

Batchelor writes of that period: "In 1946 something happened in our church. It seemed that God spoke and commanded us to go forward in Negro Work. This was a voice to the whole church."¹⁵³ It happened to coincide with the post-World War II period when many new nations in Asia and Africa were gaining independence. Change was in the air and African Americans were pressing the case for democracy in the United States with unprecedented vigor. Batchelor, appealing to the best instincts in the White constituency of his church, observed that the usual procedure in a Christian fellowship is not for the minority to have to make demands, but for the majority to take the initiative. In other words, the majority ought to care so much about the minority that it anticipates the latter's needs and addresses them. "If it fails to do so, it opens to question the extent to which it has appropriated the Spirit of Christ."¹⁵⁴

A piece of hard evidence that a new day was on the horizon in the PCUS was the appointment of Black staff persons at the national level to guide and administer the work among African American churches. Batchelor seemed of a different spirit than most of his predecessors, and an important clue to his effectiveness was his employment of capable Black men and women to share responsibility for the work. In addition to the appointment of Lawrence Bottoms, Leon Anderson succeeded to the position of regional director of Christian Education and Mrs. A. L. DeVariest, staff member of the Board of Women's Work, conducted training workshops for church leaders and youth.

During the post-World War II era, the Black constituency of the PCUS experienced substantial growth under Bottoms' and Batchelor's leadership. Some forty new churches were started and, during a five-year period, the Black membership increased from three thousand to about seven thousand.¹⁵⁵

Bottoms, like McCoy in the northern church, laid the groundwork for the integration of many African American Presbyterians into the General Assembly,

synod, and presbytery levels of the administrative structures of the present day Presbyterian church.

The Supreme Court's 1954 epoch-making decision (*Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*) that declared segregated schools to be inherently unequal and, therefore, unconstitutional, brought southern institutions, including the churches, to a confrontation with laws that they had for decades desperately and unconscionably sought to avoid. In the late forties and fifties, it had become clear in what direction the legal attacks by Black civil rights organizations were tending: a direct challenge to the segregated society that southern Whites, Christian and otherwise, had hotly defended as the last bulwark of their "way of life."

Legal challenges in the thirties and forties, which mainly targeted graduate school education, began to crack the facade of "separate but equal." Some southern states, which had originally met this requirement by giving scholarship aid to Blacks so that they could attend graduate school outside the South, now hastily created separate Black graduate and professional schools alongside existing White schools. These were successfully attacked as unequal. Somewhat later, Black public school facilities were improved in an attempt to make them "equal." The legal argument that such schools could never be equal because of their lack of a certain tradition, lack of influential graduates, and lack of opportunity for exposure to successful and prominent scholars, signaled the doom of legal segregation in education. The 1954 Supreme Court order that desegregation of public school education should proceed "at all deliberate speed" set in motion a turbulence not seen since the American Civil War and in which the church, though not a leader, played a significant part.

The civil rights movement, beginning with the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, projected the essentially conservative Black churches into an unaccustomed activist struggle. It brought to the fore and thrust into leadership the Black ministers who had always served in

the past as community leaders and who more often than not could be appealed to by the power structure to dampen down Black anger and violence. Presbyterian clergy were ironically in a better position than many of their counterparts in other denominations because of their historical involvement in the struggle for self-expression both within and without their own church structures.

While a reading of the history of the sixties and seventies may turn up other persons who received more public attention, Presbyterian ministers were providing quiet leadership behind the scenes and sometimes in public view. Names such as Elo Henderson, Bob Shirley, Raymond Worsley, James Reese, Metz Rollins, Cecil Ivory, James Herbert Nelson, Ezekiel Bell, Reginald Hawkins, and many others come to mind. Their effectiveness can be attributed in large measure to the moral support they received from their judicatories and their financial independence—at least those connected with the United Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian principle of supporting those who pastored in a manner that allowed them to devote full time to their calling shielded them from local economic pressures to which pastors of some other denominations were vulnerable. In the South, for example, a large proportion of Baptist ministers partially supported themselves by holding full-time secular jobs. In such cases, pressure could be brought through their employers to moderate or cease political activity.

The merger of the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA) and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA) came in 1958 as the civil rights movement was gathering steam. The decade of the sixties saw legislation, government action, and urban riots that brought momentous changes in the status and privileges of African Americans: the Civil Rights Law of 1964; the Voting Rights Law of 1965; major riots in Watts, Detroit, Washington, D.C., and other cities. Many of these rights were won by direct nonviolent protest, such as the lunch counter sit-ins, the Freedom Riders, and the demonstration marches led by Martin Luther King Jr. and others across the South from Montgom-

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ery to Memphis. It must also be said that the urban riots frightened the nation into doing some things that appeal to conscience and reason had failed to achieve.

In a great many cases, the nonviolent protests called forth violent responses from local southern governments and law enforcement officials: dogs, clubs, and water cannons at Pettis Bridge in Selma, Alabama; police assault weapon bullets that pierced the walls of a dormitory at Jackson State College, killing some student residents; and stones and brickbats on the heads of peaceful marchers. Above the bloody tumult rose the strains of the civil rights hymn, "We Shall Overcome."

In this struggle that dominated the sixties and seventies, ministers (Black and White) were challenged as never before to take a stand for or against a just system of society. Not a small number became casualties because of speaking or acting too boldly. J. Metz Rollins Jr., who came out of Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church in Newport News (Southern Virginia Presbytery) where his father pastored, was serving Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCUS) in Tallahassee, Florida, when students at Florida A. and M. College began demonstrations. Following a PCUS pattern of funding for newly established congregations, Trinity Presbyterian Church was receiving financial support through the First Presbyterian Church of Tallahassee, which pressured Rollins to refrain from supporting the student demonstrations. After some anguished soul-searching, Rollins declined to accede to the First Presbyterian Church's demand. Financial support was withdrawn. Trinity Presbyterian Church and Rollins were dismissed to the Knox-Hodge Presbytery of Atlantic Synod (PCUSA). Rollins joined the staff of the Board of Christian Education (UPCUSA) and eventually served with Gayraud Wilmore as staff of the Council on Church and Race (COCAR), which took an active role in bringing desegregation and other social justice concerns to the forefront of Presbyterian consciousness.¹⁵⁶

Although in 1946 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had declared for a nonsegregated church in a nonsegregated society, little concrete action was taken to realize that objective before 1954. Almost yearly the General Assembly issued statements reiterating that goal, but it was due to the societal crises following the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Topeka* in 1954 that the PCUSA began to take concrete steps to abolish racially segregated presbyteries and synods.

In 1954, the PCUSA General Assembly appointed a special committee to study the matter of segregated judicatories, and the committee reported the following year that Black and White governing bodies had overlapping boundaries in Oklahoma, Texas, and Missouri (the area covered by the Synod of Canadian), and in Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi (the area covered by the Synod of the Blue Ridge). This should have come as news to no one since these two synods had been erected in 1906 specifically to meet the Cumberland Presbyterian Church's demand for segregated judicatories as a condition for consummating its union with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Now, a half century later, the PCUSA moved to undo its act of expediency.

A number of possibilities were broached: merger of the Synod of the Blue Ridge and the Synod of the Mid-South; a three-way merger of the Synod of the Blue Ridge, Synod of Atlantic, and the Synod of the Mid-South; merger of the Synod of Atlantic and Synod of Catawba; the transfer of Atlantic Synod churches in Florida to the Synod of Florida; merger of the Synod of Canadian and the Synod of Oklahoma.

Arriving at a solution acceptable to all parties was not easy. There were several difficulties:

- Blue Ridge Synod was reluctant to merge with the Mid-South Synod (formed in 1942 through the merger of the Synods of Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama) because of the great disparity in size. Mid-South

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had 31,574 members compared to 2,306 members in Blue Ridge.

- Atlantic Synod and Catawba Synod were not inclined to merge as this would do nothing to solve the main objective of desegregating these bodies.

- Atlantic Synod was disinclined to enter a merger with the Mid-South Synod and the Blue Ridge Synod without a settlement that would encompass the realignment of all boundaries in the southeast. This would include four Black churches in Florida, as well as the four White congregations in north Georgia.

- There was stiff resistance on the part of some White congregations to any integration of the governing bodies even though it was clear that in every possible merger plan Whites would be in the majority.

In 1957, the Canadian Synod (Black) was merged into the Synod of Oklahoma (White). The following year (1958) the Synods of Blue Ridge and Mid-South were united and retained the Mid-South name.

The presbyteries in these synods were not integrated at that time, but General Assembly set a deadline of January 1, 1967, for this step to take place. This, too, was strongly resisted in some White congregations. In some presbyteries, churches refused to send commissioners to the synod because Blacks would be in attendance. The following excerpt from a letter of the stated clerk of a church in the Presbytery of West Tennessee to the chairman of the General Assembly's Committee on Segregated Synods and Presbyteries gives some sense of the emotional intensity aroused by this issue:

So, Reverend Mr. Lamar, why don't you people up there let us handle the situation down here. I spent nearly thirty years of my ministry in Ohio and in Illinois and you people up there have many more problems with the negroes than we do down here. We have some of the finest negro ministers in the Synod of the Mid-South that you can find anywhere in all the world. There are not any more cultured and Christian gentlemen to be found in any race or color than those ministers. I love them and I treat them like brothers. But the rank and

file of negroes, as many white people I know, are not ready for what many are trying to force on the South. ... we cannot force people into the pattern of which they are not yet prepared. Progress is being made down here and I believe the time will come when the ideal will happen.¹⁵⁷

If the ideal was coming into being, it was hard to find evidence of it. The experience of a White visiting professor at Miles College (a Black, church-related institution located in Birmingham, Alabama) gives a feeling of the intractable climate of that time. Robert Frank Fulton, B.A., B.D., Ph.D., had previously spent six years as a missionary educator in Puerto Rico and was shocked on arriving in Birmingham to discover that segregation still existed at the presbytery level in spite of the General Assembly pronouncements. This was represented graphically by the existence of Presbytery of Birmingham (Black) and Presbytery of Birmingham "A" (White). The president of Miles College and two local pastors steered Fulton to the Presbytery of Birmingham "A." He was duly received into that presbytery and granted permission to labor outside the bounds of presbytery.

When Fulton inquired about the nearest United Presbyterian Church (the Fultons resided on the Miles College campus), he was directed to the Ensley Highland Church where he and his family were cordially received on September 9. He recalls:

It was with surprise and sadness, therefore, that we received word—formally, through the pastor, on October 24, after earlier information accompanied by the request that we worship elsewhere during a period of discussion ... that the Session had officially voted to request that we not take part in any activities of the Ensley Highland Presbyterian Church (worship, church-school or any other). The only reason given was that our participation is disturbing "the unity and peace of the church," presumably because of our relationship to Miles.¹⁵⁸

Fulton, after describing his experience to presbytery in a written statement, ended with this question: "Is there any church within the Presbytery where my family and I would be welcome to participate in worship and church-school and similar activities within sufficient

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proximity to our home to make such participation on a regular basis feasible?"¹⁵⁹ The question was referred to a committee of five ministers and five elders appointed by the moderator. At the following meeting of presbytery, the committee reported:

Not knowing the prevailing attitudes of the Sessions of the churches of Presbytery, (we) cannot answer Dr. Fulton's question. The Committee recommends, therefore, that the question posed by Dr. Fulton is a personal matter between the Fulton family and any church they may select.¹⁶⁰

Eventually the Fultons were welcomed into the Bush Hills Presbyterian Church. The experience of the Fultons discloses that not only were Blacks not welcome in some churches, but anyone who closely associated with them was also not welcome.

The most hopeful steps in integration in that period were being taken in women's and youth work. In 1962, the United Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Mississippi accepted an invitation from Mary Holmes Junior College (a Black Presbyterian institution) of West Point, Mississippi, to hold its officer training institute on the campus of the college. Although the invitation was accepted, "normally devoted women, pressured by husbands and may be fearful of repercussions on their own, phoned and wrote and communicated their unwillingness to attend—'at this time' the meeting." Six or eight did turn up to boost the morale of Mrs. Bruce and Mr. Horn (Black president of Mary Holmes Junior College).¹⁶¹

In youth work there were also glimmers of hope that change might come. In 1949, the Westminster Fellowship of the Synod of the Mid-South voted to request synod's permission to hold joint meetings with the Westminster Fellowships of Blue Ridge and Catawba Synods. Permission was granted and thereafter the youth met on an integrated basis until the merger of Blue Ridge and Mid-South Synods in 1958.

The Black governing bodies were not passive reactors to events, but took an active role in determining the direction in which integration would develop. In 1962,

Birmingham Presbytery addressed an overture to General Assembly expressing its willingness to be dissolved as a presbytery if and when the Presbyteries of Mississippi, Birmingham “A,” West Tennessee, and Nashville accepted into their membership all the Black churches lying within their respective geographic bounds. This overture was adopted.

In 1966, Atlantic Synod overtured the General Assembly of the UPCUSA on the realignment of boundaries of presbyteries in South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. Under the provisions of this overture, the following changes were made:

- Parts of the Presbyteries of St. Andrew (White) and Knox-Hodge (Black) were combined into the Presbytery of Georgia. The boundaries of the Presbytery of Georgia were made coterminous with the boundaries of the state of Georgia.

- The name of the Synod of Atlantic was changed to the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, with the boundaries being coterminous with the boundaries of those states. The synod consisted of three presbyteries: Atlantic, Fairfield-McClelland, and Georgia. New boundaries were established for Atlantic Presbytery and Fairfield-McClelland Presbytery, which were in the state of South Carolina.

Public school desegregation, which was the focus of the most volatile issue between the races in the South, inspired many schemes to meet the letter of the law without producing its intended substance. Tokenism, freedom of choice, tracking, and other devices were used to circumvent the Supreme Court’s order. In spite of the Supreme Court’s clear directive, recalcitrant school boards and state officials tried one subterfuge after another to evade it. In a number of places, clergy and lay members of the Presbyterian churches carried out the trench warfare required to bring the change that the Supreme Court had decreed.

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In Charlotte, North Carolina, a strong center of Black Presbyterianism, a significant legal and public battle was fought over the schools. In that struggle, it became clear that all the other issues which were important to the life of Black people were intertwined with the school issue. Presbyterians played a crucial role in the leadership of that struggle. It was there that Dorothy Counts (daughter of Herman Counts, Presbyterian minister and faculty member of Johnson C. Smith Seminary) integrated Harding High School. Reginald Hawkins, a dentist and ordained Presbyterian minister, was the most visible and feared symbol of the struggle in Charlotte. (Hawkins later ran for governor of North Carolina.)

The educational issue was joined when Vera and Darius Swann, an ordained Presbyterian minister, returned from ten years of missionary service in India. The Swanns filed suit on behalf of their children, James and Edith, to go beyond token desegregation to effective integration of the schools. Some seventeen parents representing ten families were signatories to the suit, *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board*, filed by Attorney Julius Chambers (later chief counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and now president of North Carolina Central University). Among the signatories were the following Presbyterians: Dr. and Mrs. Reginald A. Hawkins, Rev. Elo Henderson, Rev. and Mrs. Calvin Hood, Rev. and Mrs. Ezra Moore, Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Neal, James K. Polk, and Rev. and Mrs. Darius Swann.

The long battle with the city over the schools and other matters affecting the life of Black citizens was given distinguished leadership by Elo Henderson, executive of Catawba Synod, and Robert Shirley, associate executive. Henderson, Shirley, and pastors like Ray Worsley kept the synod sensitive to and involved in the struggle for a free and just society in North Carolina and Virginia.

Another battle in which Catawba Synod took leadership was over the threat to close Johnson C. Smith Seminary, then a part of Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. Catawba Synod

was supported by the entire southeastern Black constituency in this matter. This threat culminated in 1968. Since Lincoln Seminary was closed in 1959, and since Knoxville College and Stillman College got out of the business of theological education, Johnson C. Smith Seminary was the single predominantly Black Presbyterian institution of theological education remaining.

The proponents for closing Johnson C. Smith Seminary advanced several arguments: the time was past for a segregated seminary, the costs were too great, the enrollment was too small. The supporters of continuing the seminary stressed the need for a continuing institution of theological education in the southeast that could address the needs of the Presbyterian constituency (majority Black) of that area (significantly, this was one of the original arguments advanced in 1867 by the founders); that Johnson C. Smith Seminary was no more segregated than any of the other Presbyterian seminaries since it had been for some time open to White and other race students and had in fact enrolled a few, and that its faculty was probably more integrated (two Whites, one Indian, four Blacks) than any of the other seminaries; that, in terms of financial support, Johnson C. Smith Seminary had never been treated equally; and that with a reoriented program (specifics of which were proposed) the seminary would attract more students of all races.

When it was learned that the president and the Board of Trustees of Johnson C. Smith University had secretly agreed to the closure of the seminary, direct action was initiated. Busloads of supporters went from the southeast to the 1968 General Assembly of the UPCUSA and floor time was gained to make a direct appeal to the assembly. Robert Shirley made a brilliant, persuasive speech to the assembly, which responded by voting for the continuance of the seminary as an entity in the southeast. While a majority of the Johnson C. Smith Seminary alumni doubtless wished to see the seminary remain in Charlotte, the temporary commission entrusted with the matter (chaired by James A. Colston) recommended that the seminary move to Atlanta to become a

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constituent seminary of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC). This compromise solution was accepted and James H. Costen, pastor and founder of the Church of the Master in Atlanta, was chosen as dean of Johnson C. Smith Seminary (Costen is presently president of the ITC).

The activism of Catawba Synod and its leaders continued in other ways. The synod sent up a significant overture to the 182nd General Assembly (1970) of the UPCUSA entitled "A Design to Liberate the Oppressed." The overture was accompanied by a detailed thirty-five page plan for an economic development program in Catawba Synod that carried a price tag of \$21,461,015. This was divided into \$9,298,938 in low-interest loans, \$7,312,077 in grants, and \$4,850,000 in grants to Barber-Scotia College and Johnson C. Smith University. The program was comprehensive and inclusive of all aspects of the economic, educational, and developmental life of the communities included in the area. Though the overture was not adopted by the General Assembly, the proposal is widely recognized as both a model and the forerunner of the Self-Development of People program, initiated in 1970.

The Catawba Synod overture and program were endorsed and approved by Black Presbyterians United in its second annual meeting at Charlotte, April 5, 1970. It tied the "design" to the 181st General Assembly of the UPCUSA (1969)'s list of priorities set forth in the document "The More Urgent Concerns and Related Objectives." It is significant that this period marked the emergence of Black caucuses in a number of denominations.

In the years between the demise of the Unit of Work with Colored People and the organization of the enlarged regional synods, Atlantic Synod (under the leadership of Charles Winslow Talley) and Catawba Synod (under the leadership of Elo Henderson) attended to the business of enabling the presbyteries and churches to confront the challenges to their ministries. An examination of the minutes of the Atlantic Synod, for example,

shows that through its committees, this synod carried out a solid, well-orchestrated plan of action addressed to the concerns of stewardship, foreign missions, theological and Christian education, youth work, and social education and action. In the 1955 annual meeting of Atlantic Synod, its Social Education and Action Committee, chaired by James Herbert Nelson, took note of the 1954 Supreme Court decision concerning school desegregation and urged the church to be active in this issue:

We cannot afford to allow the church to "Become the last stronghold of segregation." "If I, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw ALL MEN unto me?" Now, there is no doubt of Christ being lifted up. The emphasis was upon ALL. It becomes our Christian duty to preach it from our pulpits and to express it as our belief.¹⁶²

Among the recommendations were the following:

That the Synod of Atlantic at this meeting affirm its support of the May 17, 1954, decision of the United States Supreme Court, and register its approval of the decision of the United States Supreme Court of May 30, 1955, and record its willingness to help locally with ways and means of implementing this decision. We further recommend that a statement of action be released to the Associated Press and the National Negro Press.

That the Synod of Atlantic considers the practice of economic pressures as un-Christian and its practice unjustifiable.¹⁶³

The negotiations that preceded the merger of the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had included the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., but in the end the latter did not enter the union. While the plan was approved by the PCUS General Assembly, it failed to win ratification by a sufficient number of presbyteries. The congregations of the UPCNA in North Carolina and Virginia were merged into the Presbytery of Cape Fear and the Presbytery of Southern Virginia respectively. The UPCNA congregations in Alabama and Tennessee were merged into the Presbytery of Union in Tennessee.

In these intermediate years, Atlantic Synod and Catawba Synod (anticipating the coming of enlarged re-

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gional synods following the union of UPCNA and the PCUSA) sought to achieve closer cooperation in their work. In June 1958, Catawba Synod overtured Atlantic Synod “for closer cooperation and fellowship, by setting up an organization to be designated as: The Inter-Synod Commission on Program and Activities; said commission to be made up of seven persons from each of the synods.”¹⁶⁴

Joint planning was most evident in the program of Christian education of the two synods. A bi-synod training school became a regular feature of their work, in many ways recreating the work of the old Workers Conference. This enterprise, carried on for a number of years, drew on personnel from the whole southeastern area and the national staff of the Board of Christian Education to fill the more than two dozen slots for faculty. It also attracted a gathering in excess of 160 laypersons and ordained persons.

The first Atlantic-Catawba Leadership Training School was held on the campus of Johnson C. Smith University June 12–18, 1960. Its declared purpose was “to develop leaders for every phase of the Christian Education program of the local church and to provide an opportunity for these leaders to grow in an understanding of the United Presbyterian Church, in spiritual insight, in knowledge of Christian beliefs, and in leadership.”¹⁶⁵ Many similar conferences on a smaller scale were held throughout the synods and presbyteries.

In 1972, the United Presbyterian Church underwent one of its periodic restructurings. National agencies underwent some radical conceptual reshaping. The old Board of National Missions, Board of Christian Education, and the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations were terminated and their functions redistributed to the Program Agency, Vocation Agency, and the Support Agency. The Board of Pensions remained.

At the synod level, larger regional synods were erected. In this process, Atlantic Synod became a part of

the Synod of the Mid-South, covering South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Catawba Synod was joined with National Capital Union, Baltimore and New Castle Presbyteries to form the Synod of the Piedmont covering the states of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia. Both enlarged synods spanned areas characterized by large urban centers, small towns, and rural communities. Piedmont Synod included territory on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line.

The presbyteries of the old Catawba Synod—Cape Fear, Catawba, Southern Virginia, and Yadkin—opted to maintain a relationship by forming the Catawba Inter-presbytery Unit (commonly referred to simply as “The Unit”).

The enlarged regional synods masked an uneasy alliance. In Piedmont, in particular, the three northern presbyteries, affluent and largely White, seemed not to feel the need of a synod in the first place. Their outlook and objectives did not fit well with those of the Catawba Unit; hence the years between 1972 and 1988 were often stormy ones.

In 1983, after several prior unsuccessful attempts, the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the United States voted to reunite. It was a decision attended by some skepticism on both sides. Previous votes by the General Assembly for reunion had been nullified when sent down to the presbyteries for ratification. If the White presbyteries of the South had reservations, there were deep reservations among the Black constituency as well. More than a century of sharing the same area with White churches of the PCUS had not resulted in deepened understanding or trust. The most positive gain from reunion for Black Presbyterians seemed to be the forging of common objectives between the Black constituencies of the two streams. Certain safeguards were written into the Plan of Union to assure minority participation. For example, a committee on representation was included in the struc-

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tures to ensure minority representation within organizational structures at all levels.

It is certainly too early to draw any definitive conclusions about the era of reunion into which the new church has entered. Barely a decade has passed since reunion was voted and only a few years have gone by since the church integrated its structures and began to operate as one. We have also to figure into the equation that a new restructuring is going on as this is being written.

Two facts of critical significance have emerged. First, the last of the all-Black governing bodies has disappeared. The Black presbyteries of both denominations have lost their identity as new presbytery boundaries have been drawn. In a few places, such as the Presbytery of New Harmony or the Presbytery of Charlotte, Blacks constitute the critical mass necessary to influence decisions and help determine policy. This is not true for most other areas. The Presbytery of Southern Virginia, for example, already small, had its constituent congregations split among three presbyteries. The requirement, therefore, is eternal vigilance. Secondly, in view of the disestablishment of the all-Black governing bodies, the regional and national Black caucuses have taken on added significance as an important instrument by which African Americans can make their voices heard. In this regard, Lawrence Bottoms has raised a timely warning signal. There is, he says, a tendency to get caught up in social action because of the resistance of White leaders to integration. What he finds missing is the nuts and bolts work that was being done by the old structures in which he worked.

It seems to me that we still need to help the Black constituency within the Presbyterian church understand how to use economic tools, political tools, social tools, and spiritual tools. The inward journey is important in helping Black people to come to personhood capable of governing themselves in the outward journey and coming to corporate discipline through confession and worship and governance under the power of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God in the celebration of what God does in people through our role model,

Jesus Christ, who is the role model for all of the races and groups in the world.¹⁶⁶

A brief reference to the history of the origins of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus provides a useful perspective. The old Black Presbyterians United (BPU) handbook asserts on page 5, “Black Presbyterian ministers have a history of caucusing that reaches back to 1859. That was the year that an organization called Presbyterian and Congregational Clergy of Color was formed.” These church-based organizations have maintained a continuing prophetic witness for freedom, justice, and human rights.¹⁶⁷ There has not been a time when such a caucus was presented with larger challenges than in the present.

While it must be said at the outset that there have been important gains for the Black constituency as a result of the reunion of the churches, many Black Presbyterians, nevertheless, feel some sense of loss. By identifying what those losses are, we may define the task ahead and the means by which they may be accomplished. The special committee assigned to prepare this history interviewed a cross section of Black Presbyterians. In brief, the important questions were the following:

What were your years in _____ Presbytery/Synod?

What do you feel were the outstanding contributions of _____ Presbytery/Synod?

What are some outstanding memories?

What were the elements from _____ Presbytery/Synod carried into the new governing body?

What was irrevocably lost?

What other things do you still appreciate about _____ Presbytery/Synod?

This section of the book is based on our respondents' replies. The things that people valued may be summarized under ten headings. The ten headings represent a compilation and summary of the things that a substantial number of our correspondents articulated.

1. Fellowship

One person spoke of the real joy that she experienced in the fellowship of the church. There was a closeness, a family feeling that many spoke of as lost since the all-Black governing bodies went out of existence. It seemed that everybody knew everybody else and "when we came together there was always a lot of hugging and kissing and good laughter." There are two factors that probably help to account for this. First, most of the older Black Presbyterians came through a network of educational institutions, which gave them a shared body of traditions and memories that most non-Black Presbyterians simply do not have. Second, the period of segregation forced Blacks to depend upon one another in ways not experienced by the rest of the population. The fact that public accommodations were not open to Black travelers forced them to depend upon the hospitality of friends as they made their way from one place to another. Alex R. Batchelor records his awakening to this fact when he traveled with two Black colleagues by car to a meeting. When they arrived at the home of a friend, the friend came out to greet them and announced that their rooms and their dinner were waiting.

When the Black governing bodies met, the commissioners were accommodated in the homes of parishioners and friends. In rural areas, this often meant that the host could only offer an outdoor toilet, a wash-bowl in the bedroom, and a tin heater. But the hospitality was genuine; people became known to each other, and the fellowship was close and warm.

2. Role of the Schools

Practically everyone referred to the role that the schools played, both in their personal lives and in the life

of the church as a whole. The point has been made repeatedly of the interconnectedness of the church and the school, both in the evangelistic thrust and the teaching of Presbyterian belief, polity, and program. Some prominent Presbyterians who had been born into A.M.E. or Baptist homes became Presbyterians when they attended Presbyterian schools. These schools, particularly in the UPCNA and PCUSA streams, formed an informal feeder system, sending their students from the lower schools on to the Presbyterian school at the next level. So a student might go from a parochial school in Sumter County, to high school and junior college at Coulter Academy, and complete his or her baccalaureate at Johnson C. Smith; or from parochial school in Amelia to Ingleside to Barber-Scotia; or from Wilcox County Training School to Knoxville College. There was continuity and tradition. These schools became the seedbed for candidates for the ministry. Others went out with the stamp of their school upon them to become teachers and community leaders. The church school was the central unifying organization in the community and it trained the latter's leaders as well.

In recent years, alumni of several schools that have been closed for three decades or more have held reunions, organized the alumni association, and embarked on programs to assist young people. The alumni of Coulter Memorial Academy in Cheraw, South Carolina, have a biennial reunion and have established a scholarship fund for children of graduates of the school. Other such reunions have occurred among the alumni of Swift Memorial College in Rogersville, Tennessee; Mary Potter School in Oxford, North Carolina; Camden Academy in Camden, Alabama; Cotton Plant Academy in Arkansas; and Wilcox County Training School in Wilcox County, Alabama. What these events signify is a tremendously deep appreciation for what these schools meant in the lives of many who are now approaching the end of their careers.

3. Training in Leadership

The all-Black judicatories provided valuable opportunities for training in leadership. In these bodies

where the numbers were comparatively small, one actually got to serve as an elder, chair a committee, organize and chair a workshop, handle funds. One minister, now nearing retirement, recalls that he was elected to serve as moderator of his presbytery before he had reached the age of thirty. What is implicit here is that there was sensitivity to persons' potential and faith in their ability to rise to challenges.

Equally important was the opportunity to serve at some time as a commissioner to a higher governing body, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly. There one experienced the wider church in its operation and the reality of a connectional church and one's role in it. Since restructuring, such opportunities have been drastically reduced. One respondent stated that since reunion, there has not been a Black commissioner from her presbytery to General Assembly in three years.

4. Models of Leadership in Judicatory Meetings

Many people, even when not commissioners, attended presbytery meetings. They admitted to an excitement and fascination that, given the character of today's presbytery meetings, is hard to imagine. What was that fascination? Here they saw men and women who modeled leadership, persons who knew the polity of the church. The present writer remembers sitting on the back benches watching A. A. Hector skillfully defending a point of Presbyterian law, and J. Metz Rollins Sr., in shirtsleeves and with his fingers at several places in the *Book of Order*, waiting for a chance to make his point. Monumental debates between A. A. Hector and Thomas A. Robinson enlivened the proceedings. The stated clerks, recalled one respondent, were scholarly men, and she stood in awe of them.

One male respondent made clear that this modeling of leadership did not apply only to men. The presbyterials and synodicals often met at the same time as the presbyteries and synods. "The women," he said, "outshone the men."

One of the things that gave a distinctive character to the all-Black governing bodies was the longevity of its members. In a former period, Black pastors, more often than not, remained for long periods in the same pastorate. One factor was certainly the scarcity of opportunities to move. But there were also pastors, in the mold of “Uncle Billy” Metz, who turned down opportunities to advance because they felt committed to a certain community or parish. Whatever the reasons, long pastorates were the rule rather than the exception. Perry Metz observed, “I’m not sure short pastorates have a tendency to grow preachers.”

5. Training Opportunities

In spite of paucity of financial resources, these presbyteries and synods regularly organized training and learning opportunities for workers in the Sunday school, church officers, and the youth of the church. Beginning with the School of Methods, they moved to summer presbyterial and synodical conferences at which intensive training in new and better methods were offered. These conferences were always held on the campus of one of the Presbyterian schools, such as Gillespie-Selden, Mary Potter, Ingleside, etc. At the pinnacle of the training structure was the Workers Conference that, in the McCoy years, met for about a week in the spring of each year on the campus of Johnson C. Smith University. In its heyday, from 800 to 1000 persons attended from all over the southeast. One respondent described it as “a love-in.” Another called it the “Black General Assembly.” As already noted, when the Workers Conference was discontinued, Atlantic Synod and Catawba Synod established and carried on the bi-synod Leadership Training School.

6. Youth Ministry

An important element in all the training conferences was ministry to the young people of the churches. The training opportunities mentioned in the prior section included courses relevant to young people and their

place in the church. As one person remarked, the youth learned what it meant to be Presbyterian. Here color was no bar to being moderator, teacher, counselor, or advisor.

An added attraction for young people was the recreation and social life that they enjoyed at these training conferences. Team games were popular and fun. In addition, the young men and the young women, especially those out of small-town or rural areas, formed friendships that lasted beyond the time of the conference.

7. Identity and Personhood

In the peculiar racial configuration of the South, the message coming out of the wider society, including the White churches, was calculated to undermine the confidence of Black children and youth in themselves and in their culture. Through positive messages and examples, governing bodies and congregations instilled a sense of identity and personhood in their youth. They were encouraged to strive for excellence and were given recognition when they achieved it.

8. Supportive Climate

While the all-Black governing bodies were relatively weak financially, ministers found an atmosphere of support and respect. In turn there was generally respect on the part of the minister for the presbytery and synod.

9. Strong Women's and Men's Organizations

From the era of the Ladies Missionary Society down to that of Presbyterian Women there have always been alert and active women's organizations in most congregations, presbyteries, and synods. In these organizations, as in the church at large, there was good leadership training. There was focus on Bible study and the polity and program of the church. Some women report that they found their White counterparts much less well-versed in polity and program than themselves when merger came. Further, in Black congregations women were

not denied the eldership as was true in a considerable number of White congregations.

In the Presbyterian church as a whole, there were periods when the men's organization languished. In the two strongest Black synods, men's organizations maintained a strong continuity. The recent moderator of the national organization, Charles Easley, comes out of a congregation that has maintained a strong men's organization through the years.

10. Commitment to the Mission of the Whole Church

Even when Blacks have been denied full access to service in the church, the presbytery and synod minutes reveal a commitment to the whole program of the church. Black involvement in overseas mission is a good example of this.

Black Presbyterians sense some serious losses since the elimination of the all-Black governing bodies. There are fewer opportunities to exercise leadership above the congregational level; they are troubled by their perception of a lack of a genuine desire for inclusiveness; they wish that the committee on representation were not necessary since they do not wish to encourage a quota system. They deplore the small church/big church dichotomy that makes small churches give way to the wishes of the big churches; they are unhappy with efforts to diminish or eliminate the role of the synod; they feel frustrated at the lack of attention to developing Black congregations, especially in the inner city, and the preoccupation with suburban development. Considering the size of new presbyteries, there is less opportunity for Black congregations to host presbytery meetings; they feel a loss of an inclusion of the distinct African American spirituality; and said one minister, "We are tired of having to prove ourselves time and time again."

If there are losses, there must also be gains. The list is short. There are still opportunities for training even though the atmosphere is not the same. The appreciation for Presbyterian polity finds many opportunities for ex-

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pression. Blacks have been called to fill administrative staff roles at all levels. Most notably are James Foster Reese who, until his retirement, directed the Racial Ethnic Ministry Unit, and Edgar Ward headed the Church Vocational Ministry Unit until his death. Oscar McCloud served as executive director of the Program Agency (UPCUSA) for eleven of its thirteen years. Recently, Curtis Andre Kearns was appointed to head the National Ministries Division, one of the three divisions of the new structure. It is significant that all of these men had strong ties to the former Black governing bodies. Reese came out of the Presbytery of Tennessee, pastored in the South, and was a part of the Catawba Unit staff for a period. Oscar McCloud grew up in Knox-Hodge Presbytery and was educated at Boggs Academy. Ward's father began his ministry in Southern Virginia Presbytery and Edgar himself received his education in the South and began his ministry there. C. Andre Kearns, the father, came out of and served in Catawba Presbytery; and Curtis A. Kearns received his education through college in the South.

One wise and experienced church woman who has served in the highest and lowest councils of this church offered a word of advice concerning those things about the PCUSA that are discouraging to African Americans. She said: "This is a part of the human condition, and we have to accept that. We are going to have to push our way with prayer; force our way with grace. We have to see that the gifts we bear are exposed."¹⁶⁸

CHAPTER VI

Facing Forward

Having taken this historical journey, we must finally respond to the question that gnaws at all who recall or recount their history: What is the use of this storytelling, this exercise in remembering? Certainly the first thing to keep in mind is that some of the past is useful and some is not. That which keeps us looking backward and concentrating on what has been lost is not useful. Unless we can create its equivalent in the present, it will only delay our addressing the present and the future with faith, courage, and determination. “New occasions teach new duties; time makes ancient good uncouth.” One of our respondents summed it up this way:

I am excited about the possibilities for Christ’s mission in Coastal Carolina Presbytery. While I look back with some nostalgia, and replay a few of my memory tapes, I have no desire to wallow in the past. Rather I seek to discover what God is doing now and how I might help him.¹⁶⁹

If there is a tendency to feel frustrated or discouraged by the present situation, African American Presbyterians may, by reading this history and others, be reminded that what we now recognize as a rich and goodly heritage was mined from the bitter experiences of slavery, intense discrimination, unbridled terror, and a persistent racism. Let us use the present experience, as we did the past, to test our wills, to toughen our courage, and to purify whatever gifts of heart, spirit, and understanding we have received. Can we find a better theology for this time than that of the old Black spiritual:

Nobody knows the trouble I see,
Nobody knows but Jesus;
Nobody knows the trouble I see,
Glory Hallelujah!

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It is the hope of the committee and the writer that the study of this history will help Black Presbyterians to identify and analyze the challenges that face them today. How can we affirm the distinctive heritage that is ours and yet confess that we are a part of a larger beloved community that gives allegiance to Jesus Christ? How do we function with personal and communal integrity in a predominantly White environment? These questions pose several challenges.

- If one is to function with integrity and effectiveness, one's voice must be heard. With the disappearance of the Black governing bodies, there is no guaranteed direct access to the higher courts of the church. There is no assurance that an overture on a matter of great importance to the Black constituency could ever get beyond the presbytery, which in the past has often tended to reflect provincial concerns.

- Black congregations need urgently to strengthen their stewardship. The history involving the Freedmen's Board, the Board of National Missions, and the Afro-American Presbyterian Synod illustrates that whoever holds the purse strings also determines the policy. Financial dependence leads to paternalism. Black Presbyterian churches that have adequate or potential resources exist in sufficient numbers to pioneer projects of mission and evangelism. Self-support, valued in the past, is the key to self-direction. The result of systematic stewardship would be the enlarging of the fellowship and the deepening of their own spiritual life. There is in the history of the Black Presbyterian constituency a proud record of sacrificial giving. (See statistics on p. 64.)

- Another difficult but crucial challenge is to find and train more clergy leadership. Too many Black Presbyterian congregations are without pastoral leadership (at this time about 25 percent). On the other hand, there is an abundance of well-educated, dedicated laypersons. Our history suggests the need for new thinking and new patterns of ministry designed to meet the peculiar needs of our parishes. In the past, Sunday school missionaries,

evangelists, and larger parish arrangements helped to address this problem. Perhaps some forms tried in the past—such as lay preachers, evangelists, tent-making ministries, etc.—are worth reexamining. Also, Black congregations must make special efforts to recruit and support young men and women who will make the ministry their vocation. New Life Presbyterian Church, pastored by Lonnie Oliver, is an example of a congregation doing an outstanding job in this regard. Five persons from that one congregation are studying in Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary.

- Finally, there is the challenge of being Presbyterian without the lifestyle which that ordinarily conjures up. Gayraud Wilmore put it succinctly as early as 1983 and his words have recently been amplified by the “Is This New Wine?” paper. Wilmore writes:

Life-style has to do with the gods one chooses to serve. Black Presbyterians must choose this day whom they will serve: the gods of bourgeois materialism and complacency, the reigning demons of suburban Shangri-las, the middle-management swivel chair in some corporate empire that imposes its own life-style, the make-believe world of Saturday night partying and Sunday morning golf, the Jack and Jill merry-go-round for children who don't know what enduring values have been sacrificed for their momentary pleasure, and the interminable round of cocktail parties with their predictable small talk about new houses, cars, fur coats, and vacations in Europe. Will it be these gods of the Black middle class, or the God of Biblical faith?¹⁷⁰

In view of these challenges, what are the tasks before Black Presbyterians? Briefly, there are at least four:

- The first is to “inform” our constituency. The process of informing will include the insights of the best minds concerning the Black church's calling to ministry, how we relate the calling of the church to our communities, and especially the history of the successful ways we have come. This history will suggest dozens of persons whose lives should be written up and whose careers will serve as models for our youth as well as adults.

- There is the task of “analysis.” What is the significance of the events of our time both in our church

and society? The analysis must address the everyday distresses of our people and the need for justice in society. Black Presbyterians, as they have in the past, need to continue to fill a prophetic role within the church and society. This will not make us popular and indeed may bring upon us some suffering. The community famishes for prophets who can discern in the welter of contemporary events the signs that point us to the will of God and who can say "Thus saith the Lord."

- There is a task of "organization or reorganization." Those special needs will most likely have to be addressed outside normal church structures where the agenda will largely be determined by White objectives. Congregational-level work and extrajudiciary activity become more important than ever before. An effective organization on the model of the Black Presbyterian Caucus will need to carry a heavy responsibility in this regard. Skills in political, social, and ecclesiastical process must be taught. The present organization may serve if muscle and bone are added, which allow execution as well as discussion and planning. The employment of an executive officer by the National Black Presbyterian Caucus within the last two years is a step in the right direction.

- Lay "a spiritual foundation that draws upon the African American historic experience," which resists any dichotomy of body and mind or spirit and mind. In the day-to-day struggle to maintain one's human dignity and sense of personhood, it is easy to resort to the tactics of those who try to deny one her or his personhood. Lawrence Bottoms' reminder is a timely one: that we are to live by the ethics of Jerusalem while existing in a society that lives by the ethics of Babylon.

Finally, we have continually to be asking what God is about in this time and what God wants to do with and through us as we function in the Presbyterian church.

Historically, Black Presbyterians have been an important factor in every major crisis involving the denominations that now form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). They have been the foreign body in what would otherwise have been a fairly homogeneous mixture. Like the grain of sand in the oyster's shell, we have caused a measure of discomfort to the church. Past history and present developments strongly suggest that Black Presbyterians are called to be a divinely placed irritant that insistently reminds the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of its true prophetic mission.

ENDNOTES

¹*Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Edition, gives two definitions of ambiguity: "1 a: the quality or state of being ambiguous esp. in meaning b: an ambiguous word or expression 2: uncertainty."

Webster's, Tenth Edition, gives other definitions of ambiguous: "1 a: doubtful or uncertain esp. from obscurity or indistinctness b: inexplicable 2: capable of being understood in two or more possible senses or ways."

Each of these meanings expresses an aspect of the attitude with which Presbyterian denominations have dealt with their Black constituencies from time to time.

Webster's, Tenth Edition, defines ambivalence as: "1: simultaneous and contradictory attitudes or feelings (as attraction and repulsion) toward an object, person, or action 2 a: continual fluctuation (as between one thing and its opposite) b: uncertainty as to which approach to follow."

²Gayraud Wilmore, "Identity and Integration: Black Presbyterians and Their Allies in the Twentieth Century," *The Presbyterian Predicament*, edited by Milton J Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), p. 109f.

³Gayraud Wilmore, "Identity and Integration: Black Presbyterians and Their Allies in the Twentieth Century," p. 109f.

⁴John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York, 1969), Chapter 3.

⁵Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps, eds., *The Poetry of the Negro 1746-1949* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1949), p. 108.

⁶Henry Woods, *The History of Presbyterian Controversy* (Louisville, 1843), p. 40.

⁷Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Pantheon Books, A Division of Random House), p. 1.

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⁸Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, p. 4.

⁹Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, p. 11.

¹⁰Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, p. 11.

¹¹Carl Deglers, "Slavery and the Genesis of American Race Prejudice," in *Black History: A Reappraisal*, Melvin Drimmer, ed. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 75–96.

¹²Melvin Drimmer, "Was Slavery Dying Before the Cotton Gin?," *Black History: A Reappraisal*, p. 102.

¹³Staughton Lynd, "Slavery and the Founding Fathers," *Black History: A Reappraisal*, p. 123–31.

¹⁴Staughton Lynd, "Slavery and the Founding Fathers," p. 129.

¹⁵Staughton Lynd, "Slavery and the Founding Fathers," p. 131.

¹⁶Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), p. 300f.

¹⁷Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black*, p. 300f.

¹⁸James H. Smylie, ed., "Presbyterians and the American Revolution," *Journal of Presbyterian History*, Vol. 52, No. 4, Winter 1974 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Presbyterian Historical Society), p. 453.

¹⁹Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1966), p. 11.

²⁰Lefferts A. Loetscher, *A Brief History of the Presbyterians*, 4th ed., with a new chapter by George Laird Hunt (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), p. 68f.

²¹Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black*, p. 214.

²²Eric L. McKittrick, *Slavery Defended* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 20.

²³John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*, 3rd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), p. 141.

²⁴"Presbyterians and the American Revolution," *Journal of Presbyterian History*, Vol. 52, No. 4, Winter 1974, pp. 449–54.

²⁵"Presbyterians and the American Revolution," p. 477f.

²⁶W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, IV, p. 137f., quoted in Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro*, p. 19.

Whereupon, Synod, after deliberation upon the matter, do concur with Presbytery in advising Mr. Gilliland to content himself with using his utmost endeavors in private to open the way for emancipation, so as to secure our happiness as a people, preserve the peace of the Church, and *render them capable of enjoying the blessings of liberty* [italics added]. Synod is of the opinion, to preach publicly against slavery, in present circumstances, and to lay down as a duty of everyone to liberate those who are under their care, is that which would lead to disorder and open the way to great confusion.

²⁷Extracts from the *Minutes of Transylvania Presbytery*, October 5, 1797, quoted in Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 19.

²⁸A notable exception was Chillicothe Presbytery, located in southern Ohio. Chillicothe Presbytery sent regular antislavery overtures to the General Assembly, which always declined to take action on them. Southern commissioners were joined by Samuel Miller of Princeton Seminary in opposing even the reading of this overture in 1835.

²⁹John W. Christie and Dwight L. Dumond, *George Bourne and the Book and Slavery Irreconcilable* (Wilmington, Delaware: Historical Society of Delaware and Philadelphia, Presbyterian Historical Society, 1969), pp. 21–23.

³⁰John W. Christie and Dwight L. Dumond, *George Bourne and the Book and Slavery Irreconcilable*, p. 25.

³¹From the minutes of the Lexington Presbytery, New Providence, September 29–30, 1815. Quoted in John W. Christie and Dwight L. Dumond, *George Bourne and the Book and Slavery Irreconcilable*, p. 35.

³²John W. Christie and Dwight L. Dumond, *George Bourne and the Book and Slavery Irreconcilable*, p. 60.

³³Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., *Minutes of the General Assembly*, 1818, pp. 60–63.

³⁴G. J. Slosser, *They Seek a Country: The American Presbyterians, Some Aspects*, p. 94, quoted in Andrew Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 128f., especially p. 129.

³⁵Edmund Arthur Moore, “Robert J. Breckinridge and Slavery Aspect of the Presbyterian Schism of 1837,” *Church History*, Vol. 4, December 1935, Matthew Spinka, Robert Hastings Nichols, and John Thomas McNeill, eds. (The American Society of Church History), pp. 282–94, especially p. 286.

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³⁶Charles Colcock Jones, *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, n.d.), pp. 6–7.

³⁷Charles Colcock Jones, *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States*, p. 39.

³⁸Charles Colcock Jones, *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States*, p. 39.

³⁹That year the statistical tables of membership included a column labeled “Coloured Communicants.” Most congregations had only a smattering of Black members while a few had more Black members than White members.

⁴⁰Charles Colcock Jones, *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States*, pp. 197–201.

In suggesting such passages, Jones was seeking to counter the objection of some Whites that “the religious instruction of the Negroes will lead to neglect of duty and insubordination,” p. 197.

⁴¹Charles Colcock Jones, *Suggestions on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States*, p. 14.

⁴²Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, pp. 30–39.

⁴³Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Board of National Missions, Unit of Word with Colored People, Card File on Negro Schools. The current location of the file is not known. Quoted in Inez Moore Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1977), p. 15.

⁴⁴Jesse B. Barber, *A History of the Work of the Presbyterian Church Among Negroes in the United States of America*, (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Board of National Missions, 1936), p. 16.

⁴⁵Leon Robert Anderson, “A History of Mission Work Among Negroes in the Charlotte, North Carolina Area of the Mecklenburg Presbytery,” B.D. thesis, (Johnson C. Smith University Seminary, June 1950), p. 4.

⁴⁶Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 167.

⁴⁷Ironically, the northern and southern branches did move to cooperate in this work after the “separate but equal” pattern of race relations was accepted by both North and South. As early as 1885, the southern church turned over its work among the Choctaw freedmen in

the Indian Territory to the northern church. This became the nucleus of the latter's work in Oklahoma (Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 168).

⁴⁸Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 178.

⁴⁹James Daniel Martin, "A Brief History of the Seventh Street Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina," 1932, p. 2ff.

⁵⁰From a letter of Nannie R. Alexander, wife of S. S. Alexander, dated December 4, 1910, in a thesis by James W. Smith Jr. entitled "A History of the Seventh Street Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, North Carolina," B.D. thesis, (Johnson C. Smith University Seminary, June 1948.), p. 10.

⁵¹James W. Smith Jr., "A History of the Seventh Street Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, North Carolina," p. 11.

⁵²James W. Smith Jr., "A History of the Seventh Street Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, North Carolina," p. 10f.

⁵³Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., *Minutes*, 1906, p. 87.

⁵⁴R. W. McGranahan, D.D., "History of the Presbytery of Tennessee of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, 1866–1933," unpublished manuscript, p. 22.

⁵⁵See also Inez Moore Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970*, pp. 135–38.

⁵⁶Alex R. Batchelor, *Jacob's Ladder: Negro Work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (Atlanta, Georgia: Board of Church Extension, Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1953), p. 34. See also Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 60.

⁵⁷Quoted in Alex R. Batchelor, *Jacob's Ladder*, p. 62f

⁵⁸Quoted in Alex R. Batchelor, *Jacob's Ladder*, p. 58–59.

⁵⁹Alex R. Batchelor, *Jacob's Ladder*, p. 63.

⁶⁰Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 60.

⁶¹Inez M. Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970*, p. 180.

⁶²Souvenir program of the dedicational service of the new sanctuary of the Saint James Church, June 19, 1977.

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⁶³Vera P. Swann, *Bread Upon the Waters: The Lives of Caroline Coulter and Samantha Neil* (Cheraw, South Carolina: Coulter Memorial Academy National Alumni Association, Inc., May 1991), p. 22.

⁶⁴Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 158f.

⁶⁵Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 207.

⁶⁶*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S., 1918, p. 107.

⁶⁷Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, pp. 126–29.

⁶⁸*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1864, p. 322f.

⁶⁹*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1865, pp. 544–45.

⁷⁰*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Report of the Freedmen's Committee, 1870, p. 185.

⁷¹*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1866, p. 30.

⁷²For a detailed account of the PCUSA and UPCNA ventures in education, see Inez Moore Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970*.

⁷³*Home Mission Monthly*, April 1915, p. 145.

⁷⁴"Blazers and Chips," *Africo-American Presbyterian*, (Charlotte, North Carolina, September 22, 1927.

⁷⁵See "A Southerner's Attitude Toward the Negro," *The Presbyterian Examiner*, February 27, 1913, p. 17.

⁷⁶D. G. Burke, "Some Conflicting Views on Churches of the Presbytery," in *The Catawba Story, 1866–1980* (sponsored by the Historical Committee of the Catawba Presbytery, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1981), n.p.

⁷⁷D. G. Burke, "Some Conflicting Views on Churches of the Presbytery," n.p.

⁷⁸*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1868, pp. 734–35.

⁷⁹D. G. Burke, "Some Conflicting Views on Churches of the Presbytery," n.p.

⁸⁰*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1868, p. 735.

⁸¹*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1868, p. 650.

⁸²*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1869, p. 895.

⁸³"History of Cape Fear Presbytery, 1886–1986," *Cape Fear Presbytery Centennial*, 1886–1986, p. 6.

⁸⁴Robert Elliot Flickinger, *The Choctaw Freedmen and the Story of Oak Hill Industrial Academy*, (Pittsburgh: Presbyterian Board of Missions for Freedmen, 1914), p. 103.

⁸⁵Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 196.

⁸⁶*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1904, p. 143.

⁸⁷Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, pp. 196–202.

⁸⁸R. W. McGrahanan, "History of the Presbytery of Tennessee of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, 1866–1933," unpublished manuscript, pp. 2–3.

⁸⁹R. W. McGrahanan, "History of the Presbytery of Tennessee of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, 1866–1933," pp. 1–4.

⁹⁰Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, Vol. 2, 1861–1890 (Richmond, Kentucky: John Knox Press), p. 209.

⁹¹R. C. Reed, "The Southern Presbyterian Church and the Freedmen," *Southern Presbyterian Review*, Vol. XXXVI, 1885, pp. 83–107.

⁹²James Stacy, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia* (Elberton, Georgia: Press of the Star, 1912), pp. 267–68.

⁹³Minutes of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Synod of the Afro-American Presbyterian Church (Abbeville, South Carolina: Press and Banner Print, 1905), pp. 3–4.

⁹⁴Speech of E. W. Williams, Minutes of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Synod of the Afro-American Presbyterian Church (Abbeville, South Carolina: Press and Banner Print, 1905), p. 13.

⁹⁵*Minutes*, PCUS, 1900, p. 665; Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, Vol. 2, pp. 323–25, and Vol. 3, pp. 83, 88–89; James Stacy, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in Georgia*, p. 267.

⁹⁶Moses Edward James, "A History of the Snedecor Memorial Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," B.D. Thesis, (Johnson C. Smith University Seminary, June 1952), p. 20.

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⁹⁷Moses Edward James, "A History of the Snedecor Memorial Synod ...," p. 21.

⁹⁸Moses Edward James, "A History of the Snedecor Memorial Synod ...," p. 22.

⁹⁹*Minutes*, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1875, pp. 625–26 (Freedmen's Committee Report).

¹⁰⁰Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*, p. 309.

¹⁰¹William S. McFeely, "The Freedmen's Bureau and Federal Action in Race Relations," *Key Issues in the Afro-American Experience*, Vol. II, Nathan I. Higgins, Martin Kilson, and Daniel M. Fox, eds. (New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971), p. 13.

¹⁰²McFeely, "The Freedmen's Bureau and Federal Action in Race Relations," *Key Issues in the Afro-American Experience*, p. 18f.

¹⁰³Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 132f.

¹⁰⁴Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, p. 133.

¹⁰⁵Carter G. Woodson and Charles H. Wesley, *The Negro in Our History*, 10th ed. (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1962), p. 424. See also Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*, p. 253.

¹⁰⁶Woodson, *The Negro in Our History*, p. 416.

In Hayes' response he said:

In my opinion there does not now exist in that state such domestic violence as is contemplated by the Constitution as the ground upon which the military power of the National Government may be invoked for the defense of the state, but these are settled by such orderly and peaceable methods as may be provided by the Constitution and laws of the State. I feel assured that no resort to violence is contemplated in any quarter, but that, on the contrary, the disputes in question are to be settled by such peaceable remedies as the Constitution and laws of the State provide (*The Negro in Our History*, p. 417f.).

¹⁰⁷James G. Snedecor, from the manuscript of an unpublished address in the Presbyterian Historical Society archives at Montreat, North Carolina, n.p.

¹⁰⁸W. E. B. Dubois, "Reconstruction and Its Benefits," *American Historical Review*, XV, July 1910, pp. 781–99; reprinted in *Black History: A Reappraisal*, Melvin Drimmer, ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Co., Inc., 1969), pp. 273–92.

- ¹⁰⁹*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1864, p. 322.
- ¹¹⁰*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1868, p. 447.
- ¹¹¹A. A. George, *One Hundred Years, 1867–1967* (Charlotte, N.C.: Johnson C. Smith University), p. 1.
- ¹¹²Susan L. Storer, “Department of Freedmen’s Mission During Fifty Years,” *Home Mission Monthly*, Vol. 29, 1915, p. 144.
- ¹¹³Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., *Report of the Board of Missions for Freedmen*, 1890, p. 16.
- ¹¹⁴*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1889, Report of the Freedmen’s Committee, p. 1.
- ¹¹⁵*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1895, Report of Board of Home Missions for Freedmen, p. ix.
- ¹¹⁶*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1889, Report of the Board of Missions for Freedmen, p. 10f.
- ¹¹⁷Francis L. Broderick, “The Growing Dilemma: Separation and Integration, 1865–1925,” *Key Issues in the Afro-American Experience*, Vol. II, Nathan I. Higgins, Martin Kilson, and Daniel M. Fox, eds. (New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971), p. 97f.
- ¹¹⁸Broderick, “The Growing Dilemma: Separation and Integration, 1865–1925,” *Key Issues in the Afro-American Experience*, p. 98f.
- ¹¹⁹Broderick, “The Growing Dilemma: Separation and Integration, 1865–1925,” *Key Issues in the Afro-American Experience*, p. 100.
- ¹²⁰*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1893, p. 291.
- ¹²¹Roberta C. Barr, “The Educational Problems,” *Home Mission Monthly*, Vol. 26, No. 6, 1912, p. 142.
- ¹²²*Home Mission Monthly*, Vol. 24, No. 6, 1910, p. 130f.
- ¹²³Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro—A History*, pp. 186–88.
- ¹²⁴Joseph Thomas Jones, “The Life and Works of Allen A. and Mary M. Jones,” B.D. thesis, (Johnson C. Smith University Seminary, 1953), p. 9f.
- ¹²⁵Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970*, pp. 161–67. Also see Grover Dwight Nelson, “The Life and Works of George Waldo Long,” B.D. thesis, (Johnson C. Smith University Seminary, 1949); and Vera P. Swann, *Bread Upon the Waters* (Cheraw:

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Coulter Memorial Academy National Alumni Association, Inc., 1991), pp. 16–21.

¹²⁶*Home Mission Monthly*, Vol. 23, No. 6, 1909, p. 131.

¹²⁷*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1889, Fourth Annual Report of the Field Secretary of the Board of Freedmen, p. 19.

¹²⁸*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1889, pp. 19–23.

¹²⁹*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1889, p. 20.

¹³⁰Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970*, pp. 139–40.

¹³¹Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970*, pp. 139–40.

¹³²Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1865–1970*, pp. 139–40.

¹³³Rudolph Obey, “A Graphic Interpretation of the Negro Membership in the Church and Sunday School of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. from 1865 Through 1950,” B.D. thesis, (Johnson C. Smith University Theological Seminary, 1951), *passim*.

¹³⁴Jesse Belmont Barber, *A History of the Work of the Presbyterian Church Among Negroes in the United States of America* (New York: Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1936), p. 47.

¹³⁵*Minutes of the Presbytery of Yadkin*, April 1885, n.p.

¹³⁶Horace Mann Bond, *Education for Freedom: A History of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania*, (Lincoln University, 1976), p. 372f.

¹³⁷Synod of Catawba, “Position on the Total Integration of Negroes ...,” 1950, p. 13.

¹³⁸Synod of Catawba, “Position on the Total Integration of Negroes ...,” 1950, p. 3.

¹³⁹James J. Davis, Irvin Elligan, St. Paul Epps, Clinton Marsh, James Foster Reese, and Clarence Thomas, telephone interview by James Foster Reese and Darius L. Swann, May 5, 1992.

¹⁴⁰Harvey L. Gladney, “A History of the Georgia Carolina Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the United States,” B.D. thesis, (Johnson C. Smith University Theological Seminary, 1955), p. 3.

¹⁴¹Minutes of the Synod of Catawba, 1894, p. 205.

¹⁴²Minutes of the Synod of Catawba, 1892, 1896, 1897, n.p.

¹⁴³Minutes of the Presbytery of Yadkin, 1886, p. 140.

¹⁴⁴Minutes of the Synod of Catawba, 1897, n.p.

¹⁴⁵*Home Mission Monthly*, Vol. 37, No. 6, 1923, p. 129. The Presbyterians are Mary McCrorey and Lucy Laney; Mary McLeod Bethune was educated at Scotia Seminary, a Presbyterian school.

¹⁴⁶Hallie Paxon Winsborough, *Yesteryears* (Atlanta: Assembly's Committee on Women's Work, 1937), p. 143.

¹⁴⁷Minutes of the Synod of Atlantic, 1913, p. 6.

¹⁴⁸Minutes of the Synod of Catawba, September 1912.

¹⁴⁹From the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions Report. Quoted in *Periscope* (New York: Office of Black Mission Development, Program Agency, United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., March 1982), p. 31.

¹⁵⁰Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, Vol. III, 1890–1972 (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1973), p. 84.

¹⁵¹Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, Vol. II, 1869–1890 (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1973), p. 78.

¹⁵²Comments by Lawrence W. Bottoms to the Special Committee to Document the History and Contributions of All-Black Governing Bodies, April 18, 1991.

¹⁵³Alex R. Batchelor, *Jacob's Ladder* (Atlanta: Board of Church Extension, Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1953), p. 2.

¹⁵⁴Batchelor, *Jacob's Ladder*, p. 19.

¹⁵⁵Comments by Lawrence W. Bottoms to the Special Committee to Document the History and Contributions of All-Black Governing Bodies, April 18, 1991.

¹⁵⁶See Rollins' sermon to his congregation in the *Catawba Synod Argus*, July 1957, Vol. 2, No. 3, n.p. See also Appendix V.

¹⁵⁷A letter, dated 6 October 1962, to Robert C. Lamar, chairman, General Assembly Committee on Segregated Synods and Presbyteries, from E. Frank Cody, stated clerk and treasurer, Presbytery of West Tennessee.

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¹⁵⁸From a written statement of Robert Brank Fulton, addressed to “Fellow Members of Presbytery” (Birmingham Presbytery “A”), dated 25 October 1962.

¹⁵⁹From a written statement of Robert Brank Fulton, addressed to “Fellow Members of Presbytery” (Birmingham Presbytery “A”), dated 25 October 1962.

¹⁶⁰From a letter of Robert Brank Fulton, dated 30 April 1963, to Robert C. Lamar, chairman, Special Committee on Segregated Synods and Presbyteries, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

¹⁶¹From a letter of James R. Beard, stated clerk of the Presbytery of Mississippi, dated 2 November 1962, to Robert C. Lamar.

¹⁶²Minutes of the Synod of Atlantic (PCUSA), October 26–28, 1955, p. 22.

¹⁶³Minutes of the Synod of Atlantic (PCUSA), October 26–28, 1955, p. 22.

¹⁶⁴Minutes of the Synod of Atlantic (PCUSA), June 25–26, 1958, p. 13.

¹⁶⁵Lois Averetta Simms, *Growing Up Presbyterian: Life in Presbyterian Colleges and Churches* (New York: Vantage Press, 1991), p. 61f.

¹⁶⁶Comments by Lawrence W. Bottoms to the Special Committee to Document the History and Contributions of All-Black Governing Bodies, April 18, 1991.

¹⁶⁷Lois Averetta Simms, *Growing Up Presbyterian*, p. 106.

¹⁶⁸An interview with Agnes Wilson-Burgess, January 24, 1992.

¹⁶⁹Written interview with Doris Dees, by Darius Swann, July 1, 1992.

¹⁷⁰Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black and Presbyterian: The Heritage and the Hope* (Philadelphia: Geneva Press, 1983), p. 129.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I

[The deposition of the Reverend George Bourne from the ministry by the Presbytery of Lexington (Virginia) because of his introduction of an overture at General Assembly, inquiring whether members of the church who retained people of color in slavery could be Christians. Bourne appealed, but the General Assembly upheld his deposition in 1818 while issuing the following pronouncement.]

We consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human by another as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ, which enjoin that “all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system; it exhibits rational, accountable, and immoral beings in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action. It exhibits them dependent on the will of others, whether they shall receive religious instruction; whether they shall know and worship the true God; whether they shall enjoy the ordinances of the gospel; whether they shall perform the duties and cherish the endearments of husbands and wives, parents, and children, neighbors and friends; whether they shall preserve their chastity and purity, or regard the dictates of justice and humanity. Such are some of the consequences of slavery—consequences not imaginary, but which connect themselves with its very existence. The evils to which the slave is always exposed often take place in fact, and in their very worst degree and form; and where all of them do not take place, as we rejoice to say in many instances, through the influence of the principles of humanity and religion on the mind of masters, they do not—still the slave is deprived of his natural right, degraded as a human being, and exposed to the danger of passing into the hands of a master who may inflict upon him all the hardships and injuries that inhumanity and avarice may suggest.

From this view of the consequences resulting from the practice into which Christian people have most inconsistently fallen, of enslaving a portion of their brethren of mankind—for “God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth”—it is manifestly the duty of all Christians who enjoy the light of the present day, when the inconsistency of slavery, both with the dictates of humanity and religion, has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors, to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to

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deface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world.

We rejoice that the church to which we belong commenced as early as any other in the country, the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery, and that in the same work many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, vigorous, and efficient laborers. We do, indeed, tenderly sympathize with those portions of our church and our country where a great and the most virtuous part of the community abhor slavery, and wish its extermination as sincerely as any others—but where the number of slaves, their ignorance, and their vicious habits generally render an immediate and universal emancipation inconsistent alike with the safety and happiness of the master and the slave. With those who are thus circumstanced, we repeat that we tenderly sympathize. We exhort that to suffer no greater delay to take place in this most interesting concern, than a regard to the public welfare truly and indispensably demands.

As our country has inflicted a most grievous injury on the unhappy Africans by bringing them into slavery, we cannot indeed urge that we should add a second injury to the first by emancipating them in such manner as that they will be likely to destroy themselves or others. But we do think that our country ought to be governed in this matter by no other consideration than an honest and impartial regard to the happiness of the injured party, uninfluenced by the expense or inconvenience that such a regard may involve. We, therefore, warn all who belong to our denomination of Christians against unduly extending this plea of necessity; against making it cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretense for not using efforts that are lawful and practicable, to extinguish this evil.

And we, at the same time, exhort others to forbear harsh censures and uncharitable reflections on their brethren who unhappily live among slaves whom they cannot immediately set free; but who, at the same time, are really using all their influence and all their endeavors to bring them into a state of freedom as soon as a door for it can be safely opened.

Having thus expressed our views of slavery, and of the duty indispensably incumbent on all Christians to labor for its complete extinction, we proceed to recommend, and we do it with all the earnestness and solemnity which the momentous subject demands, a particular attention to the following points.

We recommend to all our people to patronize and encourage the Society lately formed, for colonizing Africa, the land of their ancestors, the free people of color in our country. We hope that much good may result from the plans and efforts of this Society. And while we exceedingly rejoice to have witnessed its origin and organization among the holders of slaves, as giving an unequivocal pledge of their desires to deliver themselves and their country from the calamity of slavery; we hope that those

portions of the American union whose inhabitants are by a gracious providence more favourably circumstanced, will cordially, and liberally, and earnestly cooperate with their brethren, in bringing about the great end contemplated.

We recommend to all the members of our religious denomination, not only to permit, but to facilitate and encourage the instruction of their slaves in the principles and duties of the Christian religion by granting them liberty to attend on the preaching of the gospel, when they have opportunity; by favoring the instruction of them in the Sabbath schools, wherever those schools can be formed; and by giving them all other proper advantages for acquiring the knowledge of their duty both to God and to man. We are perfectly satisfied that it is incumbent on all Christians to communicate religious instruction to those who are under their authority, so that the doing of this in the cause before us, so far from operating as some have apprehended that it might, as an incitement to insubordination and insurrection would, on the contrary, operate as the most powerful means for the prevention of those evils.

We enjoin it on all church sessions and presbyteries, under the care of the assembly, to discountenance, and so far as possible to prevent all cruelty of whatever kind in the treatment of slaves; especially the cruelty of separating husband and wife, parents and children, and that which consists in selling slaves to those who will either themselves deprive these unhappy people of the blessings of the gospel, or who will transport them to places where the gospel is not proclaimed, or where it is forbidden to slaves to attend upon its institutions. And if it shall ever happen that a Christian professor in our communion shall sell a slave who is also in communion and good standing with our church, contrary to his or her will, and inclination, it ought immediately to claim the particular attention of the proper judicature; and unless there be such peculiar circumstances attending the case as can but seldom happen, it ought to be followed without delay by a suspension of the offender from all the privileges of the church, till he repent, and make all the reparation in his power to the injured party.

APPENDIX II

[The following historical account of the beginnings of Presbyterian work in Amelia, Virginia, was written barely ten years after the inception of that work by a participant. It offers a fresh and vivid picture of how churches and schools were established immediately following emancipation, and the obstacles with which the early missionaries were confronted in a period prior to the establishment of Black governing bodies.]

A hundred years hence, this brief historical sketch—if it should be in existence so long—may be of more interest than now. It is written of the past and present for the future.

ALL-BLACK GOVERNING BODIES

We should not despise the day of small things, for we know not whereunto small beginnings may grow. In February 1866, I arrived at Amelia Courthouse, Amelia County, Virginia, having been commissioned a missionary to the freedmen in Virginia by the Presbyterian Committee of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Rev. S. C. Logan, secretary. My duties were to preach and organize and superintend schools for the colored people, having the promise that two lady teachers should be sent as soon as suitable locations and buildings could be found.

The war of the great rebellion had been over ten months. Yet, up to this time, the freedmen had no churches or schoolhouses in the county. Captain White, an officer of the Freedmen's Bureau, was on duty here & had his office in the "Old Tavern," which having been a confederate hospital, was in possession of the United States government. He was a consistent member of the Presbyterian church and greatly interested in the education and evangelisation of the freedmen & their children and gave permission to open a school for colored children in the Old Tavern. The Presb. Board of Publication in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, supplied primers and other books for beginners and then & there I organized the first school for colored children in the County.

The school having been organized, the Presbyterian Committee of Missions for Freedmen sent Miss N. C. Russell of Danville, Pennsylvania, who arrived at the courthouse in March & took charge of the school. In the same month (March 1866), *Mrs. Samantha J. Neil, of Limestone, Clarion County, Pennsylvania, arrived and found a hospitable boarding place in the family of John J. Van Deusen, Esq., a native of Massachusetts, though he had been a resident of Virginia for thirty-five years. She commenced her school in an old wheelwright shop, about six miles from the courthouse at the "Big Oak" on the road leading to Dennisville. Mrs. Neil's husband was a Union soldier during the rebellion and was killed in the battle of Chancellersville, Virginia, on the 3d of May 1863.

Before the Rebellion, and up to the close of the war, it had been unlawful in Virginia to teach the colored people to read and when that restraint was removed there was great eagerness on the part of the freedmen to have their children learn to read and the schools were largely attended. There were not, probably, six of the emancipated slaves who could read in the county. The White people, generally, being unfavorable to the education of the freedmen, were unwilling to rent houses or sell land on which to build schoolhouses for them; but there was a tract of land of about three thousand acres that had belonged to one Nathaniel Harrison, a wealthy White man who had one of his slaves as a wife and at his death the land came into possession of his wife and children. A colored man—Walker Jackson—who was free before the war had one of the daughters, Maria Jackson, for a wife, and they—Walker & Maria Jackson—deeded, during their lifetime, one acre of their land to Capt. W. F. White & Rev. J. S. Murphy, in trust, to be used exclusively for school and church purposes in behalf of the freedmen.

A deed for the land having been obtained & recorded, the freedmen, with great alacrity & cheerfulness, went into the woods with their whipsaws and axes and soon sawed the plank & hewed the logs for a building that was to answer the double purpose of a schoolhouse & church.

This building when completed, they called "The Freedmen's Chapel"—the first of the kind in the county. It is situated on the public road leading from "The Five Forks" to Grubb-Hill Episcopal Church at the corner of the land of Walker Jackson where it joins the land of Dr. Anderson.

In this "chapel," a school was opened during the summer of 1866, and was under the charge of two colored students, Fitzgerald & Brown, from Lincoln University—then called Ashmun Institute—in Chester County, Pennsylvania. During the summer they had one hundred and seventy scholars enrolled & one hundred in daily attendance.

On the 26th of August 1866, I organized a Presbyterian church in the old wheelwright shop where Mrs. Neil taught, and this church was called "The Big Oak" church on account of its being shaded by a noble, old white oak tree. There were sixteen members in the organization. Of this number, Robt. Claybone, Henry Mays, & Stephen Beasley were duly elected, ordained, & installed ruling elders and subsequently—May 8, 1870—Crawley Dennis was in like manner installed elder in the place of Stephen Beasley who, having become demented, was removed to the insane asylum in Richmond. The following named persons were duly installed deacons: Osham Granger, Clayborn Dennis, Patrick Venable, John Jackson & Geo. Johnson.

In the summer of 1868, the school & congregation having greatly increased, and we having bought two acres of land of Jack Marshal adjoining the land of Mr. Van Deusen, a commodious church building of hewn logs was erected in the form of a cross. The funds for building this church were furnished chiefly by the Presbyterian Committee of Church Erection. The freedmen, however, furnished some free labour & some funds, according to their ability. It ought here to be stated, that when the slaves were emancipated, as a result of the rebellion against the United States government, they were poor, having neither houses nor lands—a "shovel or a hoe." Liberty was their only boon, liberty to work and live for themselves. Having collected & gathered their children into separate family circles, they commenced the struggle for life. A hard time they have had & are having. Without capital or credit, they bravely and thankfully undertook to provide for themselves & their families for whom, when slaves, they had taken no thought "what they should eat, nor what they should drink, nor where withal they should be clothed." After that their masters had hither to looked, they being like "dumb driven cattle." Now they are gradually accumulating property around them, and some are buying homes. In the neighborhood of the schools & churches, their condition is gradually improving.

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After a few weeks the "Old Tavern" was "turned over" by the U.S. government to the owner—Mr. Cance—and Miss Russell & her school was shut out of the building. In anticipation of such an event, I had rented, of Mrs. W. H. Bowler, a tobacco barn about one mile from the courthouse and there the school was taught under the shade of the trees for two months. When that was refused and, it being impossible to get another building for a schoolhouse, Miss Russell returned to her friends.

While Miss Russell was teaching at the tobacco barn, her friend Miss Kate Best of Danville, Pennsylvania, sent her fifty dollars, which were placed in my hands for the benefit of the schools and I invested it in a wooded lot of three acres a half mile from the courthouse and bounded on the north by the Richmond & Danville Rail Road, on the east by the land of the late Mr. Masters, and on the south and west by the pub-county roads leading from Five Forks to Grub-Hill Church. In honor of the first teacher, this lot was called Russell Grove. Other friends of the cause having furnished me with funds, I provided a log schoolhouse on the lot in which during the summer 1867 a colored man—J. M. Davis, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—taught for about two months and was partly supported by colored people.

In April 1868, having obtained a boarding place for her in the family of an Englishman, Mr. Caner, Mrs. Elvira J. Craig, of Limestone, Clarion County, Penn., took charge of the school & taught six months without remuneration. Mrs. Craig is the widow of Col. C. A. Craig of Clarion County, Pennsylvania, who was mortally wounded in battle on the [?] day of August 1864, at Deep bottom, near the James River below Richmond, Virginia.

After Mrs. Craig left, Mrs. Neil, having obtained boarding in the family of Lieut. G. B. Clinton, an officer of the Freedmen's Bureau, took charge of the school at the R. Grove for three months, at the expiration of which time she returned to her own Big Oak School where she remained until the fall of the same year when she visited her friend in Clarion County, Pennsylvania. In December, Mrs. Craig returned with Mrs. Neil and they commenced housekeeping in the house vacated by the removal of Lt. Clinton to Washington D.C. and which I had rented for them of Mr. Knight. Before they arrived, great excitement arose and violent opposition, on the part of a few White people, was made to the renting of the house, by Mr. Knight, for the accommodation of the teachers—it being supposed that as a boarding place could not be gotten for them they would be obliged to leave and the school would be broken up, but for his renting the house for their use. The reason of this opposition was the feeling of hostility to the education of the emancipated slaves whom, before the war, it was unlawful to teach to read even the Holy Scriptures. The *ostensible* reason was that I was giving the colored people mischievous instruction & creating strife between the races, though there was no strife or bad feeling on the part of the freedmen towards the Whites, and I offered if a congregation of both races should be assembled, to make an address to them, and, having done so, would ask the Whites if they objected to that kind of instruction and advice and there I would appeal to

the colored people to say whether what I said was not what I had uniformly taught them. Such an opportunity was never given.

Mr. Knight finally, in a few days, told me that I might keep the house as long as I wanted it for the teachers. His fear of having his house burned down over their heads had subsided.

In view of this effort to break up the school & churches, I wrote to a gentleman, Mr. James Lenox of New York, and told him the circumstances and he immediately sent me a check for \$250—or wrote me that I should have that amount as soon as enough more was pledged to put up a “teacher’s home.” The requisite amount was soon raised and Russell Grove Church & “teacher’s home” arose to testify God overruled the wrath of man for his own praise & the remainder of his wrath he restrained (Psalm 76:10).

My own life had been threatened and I was warned, for my own safety, to leave the county. But the Lord was my shield and defense & I was delivered not only from the wrath of man, but from the fear of him.

Two incidents, personal to myself, occurred, which, in part, illustrated the state of feeling at that time existing. I had been here a few months only and was acquainted with but few except those to whom my duties particularly pertained. One (court-) day, having been off on horse-back looking for a location for a school, on my return to the courthouse, I hitched the horse and was going to the office of the Freedmen’s Bureau when I heard someone call and looking round saw three men, strangers to me, walking together in the street not far off and one of them beckoned to me. We approached each other & met at the fence. He offered me his hand & we shook hands. He said to me, “Where are you going?” I replied, “to the office.” “What,” said he, “is going on there?” “Nothing special,” I said. He asked, “what right have you in this county? Have you any business here except to preach to niggers.” “What right have you,” I replied, “to call me to account?” He immediately struck me a violent blow in the face. I began to climb the fence, saying, “I will show you what right I have.” Astonished at the unexpected assault & the insolence of a rebel in asking me what right I had to be anywhere, where the flag of the union floats, I stepped back beyond his reach and called the attention of bystanders to the assault, intending to put myself in the right whatever might happen. I felt for my pistol but recollected that I had it not with me, or it might have been different otherwise with him today than it is.

The two men who were walking with him followed him over the fence calling on him to resist, but did not come up until he had dealt me another blow. He was bound over to keep the peace, and twenty months afterward—the reconstruction laws having been passed by congress and a military governor for Virginia appointed in the mean time—a jury of twelve men imposed a nominal fine upon him.

The other incident referred to in this occurred when I called, with a letter of introduction, upon a gentleman. In having told him where I was from —Delaware—and stated my object in calling, which was to get some books for our schools, he said he would give me some, that the

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northern people being interested in educating the freedmen they (his soc.) were obliged to do it, for most of their friends came from the north. "But," said he, "I hope you don't preach politics to the niggers on Sundays, for if you do we could not encourage you." "No," I replied, "I can find enough else to preach about of more importance." "I hope," he continued, "you don't teach them to hate their former masters." "No," I replied, "that would be wrong." "And I hope," he said, "that you don't tell him how to vote." "Why shouldn't I?" I said when asked. "Because they are ignorant," said he. "So much the more reason why they should be told," I replied. "Well I hope you don't tell them to vote the radical ticket for," said he, "if you do we could not encourage you." I asked in reply "suppose I advise them to vote the conservative, then you don't object to my teaching politics only the kind of ticket." "Oh, that would be radically right," he said. I said, "Now sir, I withdraw my application for the books." "No, No," he said, "I was speaking as an individual, not officially. You should have the books." I said, "I will take them if I be allowed to exercise my own judgement and act according to the conviction of my own conscience in such matters."

We afterwards had a long & friendly talk, and in a few days I received the books.

In May 1870, Mrs. Craig returned to her home and was succeeded, in the fall of the same year, by Miss Ella L. Travis, a sister of Mrs. Neil, who was associated with her until the summer of 1873, They were on a visit to their friends. At the close of their vacation, on their return to Virginia, they stopped at Pittsburgh overnight. The next morning they were startled and called back by the receipt of a telegram informing them of the death of their mother whom they had left in usual health only the day before. In consequence of this affliction, Miss Ella remained with her bereaved father to take charge of his family. Her younger sister, Miss Lillie N. Travis, returned with Mrs. Neil as her associate & assistant and remained once school opened until she returned to her home & Miss Ella resumed her place in the school to the present time, 1876.

On the 16th of September 1866, I organized a church at Freedmen's Chapel. In the organization there were 57 members. The following were duly elected, ordained, & installed ruling elders: Randal Booker, John Lawson, Peter Gray, Berg Reaves, Alfred Magee, and subsequently, on August 9, 1868, Allen Town, Hampton Booker, & Harrod Scott. The following were duly elected, ordained, & installed deacons, vis.: Grandison Harris, Julius Eggleston, Stokes Scott, Branch Grimmel, & Henry Harrison, July 14, '67, '68. Joe Brooks, Berry Yokes, & Wm. Gacers, June 25, '71. Two appointments were made for this church before it was effected. The freedmen were, generally, Baptists or inclined that way, and some of them, who had been hindering the organization, came to me and asked, if in case of my leaving, they could choose a Baptist pastor.

I replied that if that was what they wanted, to say so, then & there, before we went any farther, and I would go elsewhere & we would spend no more money or time among them, for there were other places

asking for schools & churches and their Baptist friends might come and serve them if they would. But having been sent & sustained by the Presbyterians of the north, we should work according to their doctrines and rules of that church. We did not intend to shake the tree and let others gather the fruit. (Tho that is what they have since done.)

I explained to the people wherein Baptist & Presbyterian agree & differ. That upon the doctrines of the gospel essential to salvation we were agreed and differed mainly as to the subjects and mode of baptism: That Presbyterians invite to the communion all members who are in good standing in other evangelical churches & exclude none on account of the mode of their introduction into the visible church; that though we regard baptism by sprinkling or pouring water upon the person in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost by an ordained minister as both valid & scriptural, yet as the mode of administering the ordinance in nonessential, we would immerse those who preferred that mode, provided they would not exclude from communion or church fellowship others who preferred to be baptized by our "more excellent way."

To this all readily assented and the ordinance was administered to some in one way, to others by the other mode. On one occasion, I went *into* the water and immersed forty-one. But not being prepared with a change of clothes—as the eunuch was probably not when Philip baptized him—came down to the water and baptized him by pouring water upon him. Others were baptized the same day by sprinkling at the place of preaching.

Peace & prosperity continued in the congregation and church until there had been enrolled 275 members: 199 of whom I baptized, some in one way and some in the other, according to the desire of each.

At length there came among them those who told them that they must be Baptists. In vain I preached to them that there is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved but the name of Christ:—That other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, Jesus Christ and that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything but a new creature. The delusion clung to them that to be saved they must be baptized—baptized by a Baptist who had been baptized by a Baptist—clear back to John in the wilderness of Judea, and a large number of those whom I had immersed were re-immersed by a colored Baptist preacher. But to this day, no one can tell whether he was baptized by someone who had been baptized by someone who was baptized in the wilderness, by John clothed in camel's hair and with a leather girdle about his loins & living on locusts and wild honey. Who can say that in the long chain of baptismal succession, there is not an open or a broken link?

It has been related of Roger Williams—the father of the Baptist church in this country—that having no one who had been immersed to immerse him, he immersed one of his elders & then his elder immersed him that he might go out to baptize by immersion.

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Having no title to the land on which the “Chapel” was built except during the lifetime of Walker Jackson & his wife, and the former being dead and the latter aged, it was deemed desirable to secure a church with a perpetual title. Such a church, Mount Zion, near the “Chapel” on an acre of ground which formerly belonged to & was given by Nathaniel Harrison for the use of the Presbyterians, and though it might be used by other denominations or Christians by permission, it could not be alienated from the Presbyterians.

During the war, the congregation that worshiped in Mt. Zion declined and finally it became entirely extinct. The trustees of the Presbyterian church of the courthouse who were also trustees of Mount Zion sold the building to the trustees of Freedmen’s Chapel. It was built about 1833 of the best material and was well-furnished with pulpit, desk, gallery [sic], & stove. The funds for the purchase of the church were furnished by the Presbyterian Board of Church Erection in New York. It, being of no use to the former owners, was sold to the freedmen very much below its real value to them. The freedmen contributed \$32.74 toward newly roofing the building and, this being done, the congregation moved from the “Chapel” to Mount Zion as the place of worship and the name of the church was changed to “Mount Zion.” Large congregations of masters & slaves worshiped there before the war & some of the most distinguished ministers of the church (among others Dr. W. S. Plumer) preached in it.

Before emancipation, the slaves (when they attended) occupied the gallery [sic] of the church. Now they occupy the floor of the house & sit in their master’s places—and there is no exultation and ought to be none on the part of the freedmen. On the contrary, though they may well deplore the dissolution [sic] of the country & the altered pecuniary condition of their former owners, they should gratefully acknowledge the good hand of God who, in his mysterious providence, has at length responded to the yearning desires of their hearts and set them free, dissolving the fetters of slavery and giving them liberty.

They can never too highly praise their liberty though they may greatly abuse it. Hear what the apostle Paul says, Gal. 5:13–26 as if speaking on this occasion and in my place today. Tho [sic] writing them of their emancipation from the Jewish yoke, political & religious, his words are peculiarly appropriate in this connection:

Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty: only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite & devour one another take heed that ye be not condemned one of another. This I say then, walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary one to the other: so that ye cannot do the thing that ye would. But if ye be led by the spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest which are these. Adultry [sic], fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance [sic], emulation, wrath, strife, sedi-

tions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revillings [sic], and such like: of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory—provoking one another envying one another.

Hear also what the apostle Peter says, I Peter 2:15–17: “For so is the will of God that with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God honor the King.”

The lasting gratitude of the freedmen is due to liberty loving soldiers of the Union army who offered their lives to their country, and to whom, under God, they owe the freedom they now enjoy. To turn from or against them now is base in gratitude—worthy of execration. What might have been their condition in this country today, had not the Presbyterians given them teachers & preached gospel? Until we had laboured among them for years, there was no one else who raised a finger or spoke a word about their enlightenment and evangelisation. Indifference and even opposition to their education was almost, if not quite, universal. To the Presbyterians, they owe, under God, whatever of light they now have. The dog that bites the hand that feeds it, deserves to die. All the elders of Mount Zion, except John Lawson having withdrawn to form a Baptist society, John Tabb and Pem. Brooks Bowles were duly elected, ordained, & installed ruling elders.

The teachers at the “Chapel” were first Fitzgerald Brown, then Fitzgerald and brother. The next was Jenjins and after him another young man by the name of Brown, from Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, who was preparing for the ministry, but having contracted a cold here, he returned home where he died of consumption. His death was peaceful & happy.

The next teacher was E. H. Butler from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Anna Clayborn, who was one of the first scholars at Big Oak, taught two terms at the chapel, however, under the pay of the county board of free schools. Thus it appears that the Presbyterians furnished at the “Chapel” nearly all the teachers, at an expense, to the northern church, of about \$2,125, exclusive of ministerial support.

The Russell Grove church was organized on the 15th of March 1868. Ruling elders, Peter Gray & Benj. Reeve were transferred from the chapel and installed at the Grove and Henry Reed was subsequently ordained and installed. Doctor Booker & Phil. Botes were ordained & installed deacons.

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Number in organization	10
Whole number enrolled	53
Adults baptized	35
Infants baptized	8

The Albright Church was organized Jan 22, '71. Number in organization was six. Daniel Mays was duly elected, ordained, and installed ruling elder, and subsequently Jos. Nicholson & Rich. Clayborn were likewise inducted in the eldership.

The whole number enrolled	53
Adults baptized	36

The acre on which the church is built was bought of Mr. Albright of New Jersey—hence the name Albright Church.

The Presbyterian Board of Church Erection in New York contributed most of the funds for its erection. The members and friends furnished a good part of the work gratuitously.

This congregation has less expended on it for teachers than any of the other schools—Miss A. L. Etheridge, of Montrose, Pennsylvania, having been the only teacher & she for only six months. She did, however, good work while she was there and she is gratefully remembered by her scholars and the people. On the removal of Mrs. Neil from Big Oak to Russell Grove, Miss M. M. Miller of Goshen, Indiana, succeeded her for one school year, and on Miss Miller leaving to go south—Miss Etheridge from Albright school succeeded her at the Big Oak.

One of the chief difficulties we have had in keeping up the schools was want of boarding places or homes for the teachers. This difficulty at Russell Grove was overcome by the erection of the “home” for the teachers. If there had been a house or “home” on each of the church lots, there might have been more schools in the past than there has [sic] been.

The school has continued now, 1876, at the Grove without interruption for seven years, during which time Mrs. Neil has had control, assisted alternately by Mrs. Craig, Miss Ella L. and Miss Tillie N. Travis.

There have been connected with the school altogether, probably about 500 or 600 scholars, most of whom have become readers and many of them have a tolerably good common school education and are scattered about in different parts of the country exerting, we hope, a good influence upon the race in exemplifying the good effects of a little learning.

For those who have been regular attendants upon the Sabbath schools, which have received the devoted attention of the teachers, we have higher hopes than for others. For what is the knowledge of the ru-

diments of education acquired from books compared with an acquaintance with the Book of Books—the Bible, God’s best gift to man. On comparison it is but as chaff to wheat.

I have no hesitation in saying that the ability to read and understand the Holy Scriptures is more important than acquaintance with any or all other books—without a knowledge of the Bible, if that were possible.

In estimating the influence of a good school kept up for a number of years, we are not only to consider the number of scholars who have been in attendance, but their influence upon others—e.g. children upon their parents and companions. Many of our scholars have become teachers, in an informal way, and some have become teachers in the public schools. Thus, the light that we struck, and the fire we kindled here, has extended and spread, and it will continue to extend and spread like a ripple in the water, not only to the next centennial year, but through all time and on, & on, through the cycles of eternity.

How responsible, then, the position & duties of a teacher! His influence, like a vibration in the air, never ceases. If he sows the good seeds of moral, religious, divine truth, it will produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness and eternal life and in eternity there will be many to arise and call him *blessed*. On the other hand, if he sows error, falsehood, and sin, lost souls may curse him for their everlasting undoing.

Instead, then, of anyone seeking the position of a teacher merely for paltry pelf, he should consider the high and solemn responsibility of such a calling, not only to the pupil, the parent, and superintendent, but to God to whom he must render his last report and from whom he will receive his chief reward.

Recapitulation

Big Oak Church organized August 26, 1866

Number in organization	16
Whole number enrolled	140
Adults baptized	104
Children baptized	79

Mount Zion Church organized September 16, 1866

Number in organization	51
Whole number enrolled	275
Adults baptized	199
Children baptized	4

Russell Grove Church organized March 15, 1868

Number in organization	10
Whole number enrolled	53
Adults baptized	35
Children baptized	8

ALL-BLACK GOVERNING BODIES

Albright Church organized January 22, 1871

Number in organization	6
Whole number enrolled	53
Adults baptized	36
Children baptized	2

Final Total Statement

	Enrolled	Baptized Adults	Baptized Children	Value Church Property
Big Oak	140	104	70	600.00
Mt. Zion	275	199	4	1,000.00
Russell Grove	53	34	8	1,200.00
Albright	56	36	2	400.00
	524	373	84	\$3,200.00

On reviewing the work done by the Presbyterian church, by their Committee of Missions to the Freedmen: Through the teachers and missionaries in the country of America and the state of Virginia, there is abundant reason for thankfulness to the Great Head of the Church Universal on account of success which attended their labours.

When we look back at the beginning—the many discouragements, the persecutions of unreasonable men, and the privations and obloquy we have *passed through*, and then, considering the removal, to a good degree, of prejudice against the education of the colored people and their teachers, the good will and respect we have won in our work, the peace and comparative comfort in which we now prosecute it, and the success that has attended it—we may thankfully and joyfully say: “Behold what God hath wrought,” and we offer our humble and devout thanksgiving to God, seeing that he hath been pleased to think us worthy to labour for him and to give us success, and now permits us—when all shall be over and we have nothing more to do, or to suffer for him, the anticipation of our ever blessed Saviour’s salvation, “well done good and faithful servants, ye have been faithful in a few things—enter ye into the joy of your Lord” (*The History of the Presbyterian Churches and Schools for Freedmen in Amelia County, Virginia* by Rev. Thomas Murphy).

APPENDIX III

[The following address, made by the Reverend Robert L. Shirley to the General Assembly in 1968, was a part of the effort that Catawba Synod and others in the southeast made to prevent the closure of Johnson C. Smith Seminary. Backed by a large delegation, Shirley presented Catawba's appeal to the General Assembly to maintain Johnson C. Smith Seminary as a revitalized institution of theological education in the southeast.]

Mr. Moderator, Fathers and Brethren, Ladies and Gentlemen: Today, at this very moment, America stands at the crossroad of destiny. And, as never before, Abraham Lincoln's question to the American citizenry seems ominously relevant:

[Let me paraphrase] "... shall this nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal ... [shall] government, of the people, by the people, and for the people perish from the earth?"

Three million Americans, who incidently happen to be United Presbyterians, must also give answer soon because time is no longer our coveted luxury or friend. I recognize how difficult, if not impossible, it is for Americans to conceive or even think in terms of our beloved country tottering on the brink of destruction, but neither could the Roman Empire. Yet, you and I know what happened, and historians, writing about that epic period of history, say that the cause of the decline and the fall of Rome was not due to forces from without, but Rome fell because of forces from within; forces that Rome had neither the inclination nor the will to do something about.

And now, through the provision of God, another nation has experienced a meteoric rise to the pinnacle of success and power. America is the Roman Empire of 1968. And she, like her predecessor, can also boast of opulence and plenty, prestige and power, arrogance and aristocracy.

But, something is wrong in America; something is sick in America. In a country as rich as ours, thirty-five million citizens should not be continually poor. In a country as prosperous as ours, ten million of its citizens should not suffer from severe malnutrition. In a country as democratic as ours says it is, twenty million of its citizens should not be debilitated and emasculated by the fortuitous incident of black skin color. But, there is poverty in America; there is hunger and malnutrition in America; there is racism in America. And whether we wish to admit it or not, the future of the American dream—its fruition, its realization—now

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weighs on the balance of human opinion. And it shall survive or crumble in proportion to the inclination, the will, the commitment of us its citizens, that it not perish from the earth.

What has this to do with the closing of Johnson C. Smith Seminary? I suggest it has much to do with the problem, for intertwined and interwoven in the seminary problem at Johnson C. Smith University are all elements of the larger problem we Americans must face and solve.

The Council on Theological Education is asking you, the General Assembly, to withdraw recognition and support of the Johnson C. Smith Seminary as of this year. What are we talking about in dollars and cents? We're talking about \$35,000 to \$40,000. A church that has millions of dollars in assets, a church that in one major fund-raising drive can raise \$69,352,738, a church that boasts of its commitment and concern for the development of Negro leadership; that church spends \$40,000 as evidence of its great interest in Negro Theological Education—\$40,000.

But pages 32 and 22 of the Blue Book tells another story. It tells of our church helping Louisville Seminary build a brand new campus; of our church helping McCormick build an administration building; of our church helping Pittsburgh build thirty-one apartments for married students; of our church helping Princeton to the tune of \$383,000, to build forty-six apartments and \$1,000,000 for a heating plant. And on page 36, it urges Johnson C. Smith University to have conversation with the women's department of the Board of Christian Education to ascertain the possibilities of assistance with certain capital funds need of the seminary.

In other words, the United Presbyterian Church is saying to Johnson C. Smith University, "pull yourself up by your own bootstraps, get accredited, get a big library, get a sufficient number of PH.D's on your faculty, get students, carry yourself like other seminaries are doing—and here's \$40,000 to do it with."

Can you not see a correlation between what we in the church and what we in the nation are doing? We spend eighty billion dollars a year in Vietnam. We spend billions to put a man on the moon. We spend only 2.9 billion dollars to help poor people of this nation—who, in many instances, are being deprived daily of every legal, medical, and social advance our nation has made in this century.

We in the southeast, we in Catawba Synod plead with you the General Assembly to continue a theological training center in the southeast. We do this not in fond reminiscence or passionate sentiment for the "good ol' days" or maintaining the status quo. For if Johnson C. Smith Seminary were to remain as it is and operate as it has these last one hundred years, we of Catawba Synod would be the first to concur with the council's recommendation that the seminary be closed. Rather we plead for the continuance of the theological training center in the southeast for more important reasons.

Masses of people are on the move in America. Deep rumblings of discontent, frustration, and utter hopelessness are pulsating throughout our land. Last year sixty-seven cities erupted in volcanic violence. And with the death of Martin Luther King Jr. the southland erupted with violence heretofore unseen.

What we are witnessing in America is not communist conspiracy, no planned revolution, no organized guerrilla war. What we are seeing is the grapes of wrath; the reaping of the whirlwind, the visiting of sins of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generation because of greed, injustice, inhumanity, bigotry, discrimination, and segregation.

In this struggle between the have nots and the haves, the most visible, the most outspoken is the Black poor, but he speaks for the White poor. His cry is not overcoming some day, but rather his demand is for "freedom now." But, for some reason the haves do not listen or if they listen, they determine the number of crumbs from the loaf of plenty they shall magnanimously give.

The Black man sees the longshoremen go on strike and let food and valuable merchandise rot in the holes of fifty ships and no one says a word. The dairymen go on strike and threaten to cut off the milk from babies' mouths and no one says a word about it. Steelworkers and telephone operators strike and threaten to cripple the operations of this nation and no one says a word about it. Newsmen go on strike and bankrupt two aged and outstanding newspaper companies and no one says a word about it.

But let the Black man strike or march on Washington—not seeking something extravagant, not seeking something extraordinary—but seeking only that which is his by birthright and American citizenship and all of a sudden the nation is astonished. "Don't do that, wait, be patient, what you're doing is wrong and will create ill will, not goodwill. Let us study your situation."

The Black man is tired of being scrutinized, analyzed, and hypnotized. He's tired of being the last hired and the first fired. He's tired of roaches with his dinner and rats in his bed. And he's saying that if this is all that America can do for him, with all its riches, resources, then to hell with it.

And that is why at this particular juncture in history, with this type attitude developing faster and faced with this boiling cauldron and social cataclysm, we in Catawba Synod consider it totally fantastic and utterly impractical that our church would even consider the closing of the one seminary that we have that has the built-in potential to develop leadership that knows the ghetto and can relate to the ghetto.

Can you not see a correlation between what we in the church and we in the nation are doing? We who live in the South; we who deal with the problems of racial, economic, and social injustice everyday—we say keep a theological training center alive in the South. We say re-

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create, restructure, redesign, reprogram the total concept of theological education and make it relevant, make it relate to life as it is.

But, what does the church say through its Council on Theological Education? No, this isn't what you people want, this isn't what you people need. What you need is a center for continuing theological studies. And, if you'll agree, we'll even find \$400,000 to operate it. Perhaps you have seen a paper floating around the General Assembly. Perhaps you've heard that the men of Catawba Synod wrote the proposal and approved of this center. Well, this is not true. The paper was devised and written by someone and somewhere other than in the southeast. Once again a few people are telling a whole lot of people what's good for them.

We in Catawba Synod are not against continuing education. In fact, if you read "Catawba Synod's Proposal for a Revitalized Seminary" printed in the Catawba Synod *Argus*, you will see that the proposal includes a place for continuing education. A center without a seminary based operation is superfluous. How can one continue that which has not been developed?

A further "contention" of our synod is that here we are recommending the closing of a seminary for lack of funds and ready to find \$400,000 to start something that has no justifiable reason for existence without basic seminary foundation. It's like the tail wagging the dog instead of the dog wagging the tail.

If the General Assembly truly had the will to keep theological training in the southeast, we in Catawba Synod believe it would release \$400,000 and we believe that with the proper educational consultants, a revitalized and relevant design of theological training could be devised that included both ministerial training and continuing education; would in a short period of time make the seminary accredited and would attract more and more students. For example:

Our national church supports financially over two hundred different projects that have nothing to do with the pulpit ministry per se. We support colleges, secondary schools, homes for the aged, hospitals, neighborhood houses, child-care centers, camps, radio stations, and a host of other enterprises. There are many men who could be motivated to engage in these type Christian professions but are in no way interested in pulpit ministry. Johnson C. Smith Seminary offers no training in such fields.

The southeast is still a predominantly rural culture and rural poverty is just as acute as urban poverty. But, no courses whatsoever are taught at Johnson C. Smith Seminary that would train students for community organization, urban and rural planning, farmer's cooperatives, and credit unions. Were such courses offered as a part of the BD curricula, why wouldn't students be attracted to Johnson C. Smith University?

May I suggest that the southeast offers the last authentic social laboratory in America. With industrialization just beginning, with desegregation slowly becoming a reality, what greater practical laboratory could White students ask for than that which the southeast offers? For too long, integration has been a one-way street and Negroes have always been the ones integrated and absorbed into our White institutions. But, the game isn't being played that way anymore and Black people are saying there's something the Black church might teach the White church; that is not necessarily true that all that is black is inferior.

It is interesting to me that up until 1954, White people (including our own church) said that Negro schools were equals, that Black students were getting the same education as White students. But, all of a sudden with the 1954 Supreme Court decision decreeing that integration had to be, Black principals were no longer qualified to be principals over White students; a Black Ph.D. was not acceptable for employment at White colleges or seminaries; a Black doctor from a Negro medical school was not worthy of staff privileges at White hospitals; not yet is a Black Presbyterian preacher able to hold the pastorship of a White church. Events of the last few years lead me to say to you that this will not be the case anymore. Our young people are bucking the traces and chains of bigotry that for too long have imprisoned them and they are forming new alliances and friends. And that is why I say that with sufficient funds and a relevant curricula, there is no doubt whatever that White students would matriculate to Johnson C. Smith Seminary. And let us not forget that not even you would be attracted by a horse and buggy product in a jet-age world. Not even you could recruit students to come to a school that taught 1900 theology in 1968.

Ladies and gentlemen, time does not permit to point out the many ways Johnson C. Smith Seminary can be streamlined to be an economically sound and efficiently operated institution, but there are ways. Instead, let me close with these final statements.

First, let there be no doubt in your minds that we are here fighting to save a seminary in the southeast. But, recognize too that there is universality inherent in this issue before you today. Shall theological training continue to be "ivory-towered" in its approach to human suffering and need? Or shall theological training be restructured and redesigned and made relevant to the times and the issues in which and with which we live, not only at Johnson C. Smith, but at every Presbyterian seminary.

Secondly, the whole story about Johnson C. Smith Seminary is not recorded in the Blue Book. Some intense, behind the scenes interplay has taken place between the Theological Council and the Johnson C. Smith University Board of Trustees to bring this sad point to the General Assembly's agenda.

Thirdly, the time has not come yet when the Black church and the Black preacher have outlived their usefulness in our society and as

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you prepare to vote, ask yourself this question: From whence shall come the leaders for our predominantly Negro Presbyterian churches in America? In May 1968, only nine U.P.B.D. candidates who are Negroes will graduate. Five of these seniors are enrolled at Johnson C. Smith University Seminary. In the seven seminaries of our church, with an undergraduate student body of 1,000, there are only twenty Negro United Presbyterian students enrolled—ten of these are at Johnson C. Smith University Seminary.

For these reasons, we of Catawba Synod hope that you the people representing the wisdom and the strength and the faith of all we believe and cherish, we hope you will vote favorably for the amendment we shall ask be added to the Theological Council's recommendations. We ask your support because we believe that once the lock is closed at Johnson C. Smith Seminary, it shall never open again in the southeast and the other recommendations of the council will be nothing more than activity in futility—full of sound and fury signifying nothing.

Our hope is that this assembly will approve an allocation of up to \$200,000 to keep the doors of Johnson C. Smith open for the year 1968–69. Of course this depends upon the trustees of Johnson C. Smith rescinding their previous action. But, if the trustees of the university are too shortsighted to see the need for the continuance of the school, then we ask that the \$200,000 you approve be available to transfer the seminary at Johnson C. Smith to the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia, for the year 1968–69.

May God guide you in the decision you now must make! Thank You. [Address by the Reverend Robert L. Shirley, to the General Assembly, United Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., 1968.]

APPENDIX IV

A Proposal for a Revitalized Seminary at
Johnson C. Smith University

By Robert L. Shirley

[The Catawba Synod delegation not only appealed to the 1968 General Assembly to retain Johnson C. Smith Seminary, but presented the following concrete proposal for its revitalization.]

There is no justifiable reason why the seminary at Johnson C. Smith University cannot be kept open and continue to be a dynamic

force in providing ably prepared, committed ministerial leadership for the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Contrary to the opinion of the Johnson C. Smith University Trustee Board, we in Catawba Synod believe that with aggressive, creative programming and recruitment, the seminary can be totally revitalized and, to this end, we submit the following proposal.

I. Administration

A. To pursue and achieve scholastic excellence, the seminary must have a wide degree of autonomy, independence, and flexibility, which heretofore it has not had. Our strong recommendation is that the seminary be granted independent administrative control, with as minimal ties (administrative) as possible to the university.

B. An independent advisory or trustee board should be established whose sole responsibility will be the governing of the affairs of the seminary. A majority of members on that board should be knowledgeable of and sympathetic to the contemporary focus, thrust, and needs of theological training in today's society. For purposes of coordination, representatives from this board should sit on the university board of trustees to support and coordinate the policies and practices of the seminary in the total university complex.

II. Staff

A. The dean of the seminary must be a man of high qualifications as an educator, creator, initiator, and, above all, communicator with the masses of people from whence must come seminary support, money, and students.

B. Other members of the seminary staff should be eminently qualified in their particular fields and special efforts should be made to provide on staff such men as are trained in the new dimensions and extensions of Christian mission, notably social work, community organization, political sciences, etc.

III. Facilities

A. A cooperative, contractual agreement should be made with the university that adequate facilities shall be permanently provided to meet the needs of the seminary. This pertains to office space, library space, student living quarters, eating facilities, etc.

B. To facilitate training opportunities, it may be necessary to lease, rent, or otherwise provide off-campus facilities. Such possibilities should be explored.

IV. Library

As a cost economizer, the seminary and college libraries may be consolidated under one roof. The cost of full-time library staff could be

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shared. A section of the library could be set aside for those books and aids as would meet the qualifications for accreditation of the seminary.

V. Program and Curriculum

A. A thorough study of curricula offerings of the seminary should be made towards the goal of completely revamping and retooling to meet the crucial needs and demands of ministers in today's rural, suburban, and inner-city world.

B. It is questionable that such courses as Greek, Hebrew, and theology should continue to have the heavy emphasis and priority that they now have.

C. As a means of attracting more students, as well as attracting an additional "type" student, a series of new "degree programs" should be initiated:

1. Christian education degree,
2. Master's degree in Christian education,
3. Combination B.D. and C.E. degree, or
4. Combination C.E. Master's and B.D. degree.

D. In conjunction with the college and other neighboring universities, a master's degree program could be initiated whereby social work, social work administration, community organization, or urban planning could be combined with a divinity degree.

E. A department of continuing education, providing pastors, church officers, and lay leaders with up-to-date training in a variety of subjects pertaining to contemporary social and community problems should be initiated.

F. The field work opportunities for divinity students in the seminary should be revamped and expanded to give future pastors the broadest of practical experience.

Such new types of field work might include:

1. Hospital chaplaincy;
2. Prison chaplaincy, including rehabilitation services;
3. Migrant ministries;
4. Radio, television, and other audiovisual ministries;
5. Drama and repertoire theatre ministries;
6. Experimental Christian education literature development;
7. Urban inner-city work through antipoverty agencies, social work agencies, police and human relations commissions, urban renewal and city planning agencies, neighborhood centers, YMCA's, coffee houses, new school programs such as preschool, kindergarten, tutorial programs, etc.

VI. Student Recruitment

- A. A full-time recruiting program, utilizing a staff recruiter, should be employed to encourage the matriculation of students at the seminary.
- B. Every mode of publicity and public relations should be utilized in the recruitment process.
- C. Ecumenical contacts should be encouraged for cooperative support and recruitment purposes.
- D. A revamping of the student financial assistance program should be done to ensure that every potential student interested in a ministerial or Christian education career knows of and has access to every source of scholarship aid available. Local pastors, school guidance counselors, and parents should be adequately informed.

VII. Finances

- A. The boards and agencies of our church should be encouraged to invest substantial sums of money into the seminary on a continuing basis so that the seminary can attain accreditation and status, regardless of whether or not the seminary becomes self-sustaining in the next five years. The concern of the church in developing strong Negro leadership should be such as to make this one of its top priorities.
- B. A separate treasury and realistic budget should be maintained by the seminary apart from the university and a new process of record-keeping be devised.
- C. The services of a full-time consultant should be employed whose sole responsibility would be the finding of sources of financial support for the seminary and the writing of appropriate proposals and forms of eligibility to qualify for the same.
- D. That Catawba Synod judicatories and local churches concern themselves more tangibly with the concerns and needs of the seminary and that, as a part of the synod causes, a substantial contribution of money be given the seminary on a yearly basis.

The immediate implementation of the proposal above presented could reflect a tangible revitalization of Johnson C. Smith University Seminary. We in Catawba Synod are committed to work with the trustees of Johnson C. Smith University, the Council on Theological Education, the boards and agencies of our church in making this proposal a reality. We challenge your cooperation. (Printed in the *Catawba Synod Argus*, Vol. 12, No. 2, April 1968.)

APPENDIX V

[A sermon by J. Metz Rollins Jr., preached in Trinity Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee, Florida, November 11, 1956.]

Editor's Note

In the editorial of a recent issue, attention was called to the leadership of the ministers in Tallahassee, Florida, and Montgomery, Alabama.

The leadership of the Negro ministers in Tallahassee has been unusually effective. Some of them have been victims of reprisals on the part of those who are afraid of integration. Rev. Metz Rollins, a young, intelligent, and brilliant minister, has been one of the ministers whom the pro-segregationists have tried to destroy.

The church that he now serves is a mission of the First Presbyterian Church in Tallahassee. Because of his effectiveness as a leader in civic affairs among the Negro citizens of Tallahassee, those persons of the First Presbyterian Church in charge of the mission that Rev. Rollins is serving have given to the members of his mission an ultimatum to the effect that if the congregation does not drop Rev. Rollins as their minister, the church will withdraw the aid that it now gives to the mission.

Rev. Rollins delivered this sermon (part of which is printed in this issue of *Catawba Argus*) before his congregation after the ultimatum had been issued.

Theme: "Being Faithful to Christ's Command"

Text: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it" (St. Mark 8:34, 35).

Churches, like people, cannot escape the hour of crisis when it discovers itself in a predicament that calls for choices of far-reaching import. This is so because the church is made up of people, and their actions within or from circumstances without bring a particular church to an hour of momentous decision. Crisis can be a painful experience for an individual or for a whole church. So much depends on the choice made; consequences are often more than we had anticipated. Churches, like individuals, could wish to avoid coming to the crossroads in their journey. Choices made under the stress of crisis can be painful experiences.

Significantly enough, in the history of the Church and in the record of the lives of those who have contributed most to its life, it has been these hours of crisis with their momentous decisions that have been the highwater marks, the turning point in the life of the church or the person. Such was the case with Martin Luther, a personal crisis led him to become critical of the teaching of the church and some of the customs that were part and parcel of its life. Believing that only God could justify and forgive, Luther was moved to attack the sale of indulgences and the easy purchase of forgiveness. This brought him, naturally enough, into conflict with the leaders of the church who profited from the sale of indulgences. Also, some of Luther's teachings, stemming from the doctrine of "justification by faith," seemed to threaten some of the cherished traditions built up by the Church through the years. At last he was called before the Imperial Council at Worms; there he was confronted with some of his books and asked whether he would recant them or not. Luther requested time for reflection. A day was given him to think over his decision. On the next afternoon, he stood before the assembly and stated that he could not retract unless convinced of its wrongfulness by Scripture or adequate argument. The Emperor could hardly believe his ears and he terminated the discussion. The words "I cannot do otherwise. Here I stand. God help me. Amen." express the substance of his unshaken determination and gave proof to his dauntless courage.

Luther's decision jeopardized his very life, put him outside the pale of the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformation was then in full swing. Thus, in an hour of crisis and because Luther stood firm by his convictions, a new spiritual wind blew through the life of the Church, causing even those who opposed him to examine their position and make some changes in the light of his criticism. So great spiritual progress in the life of the church follows the pattern of crisis, opposition, a decision to be made, and the consequences thereof.

Events in the life of this congregation have been slowly building up to the point where pastor and people find themselves in the position where they must come to a decision. The decision that we must make will have consequences far beyond the bounds of Tallahassee, but will influence the course of the general church, especially in her work among Negroes.

Let us examine our situation, try to place it in a sort of historical setting, for we are making history, you know. Here in this part of Florida we find ourselves and the church of which we are a part confronted with an involved racial situation. There has been no relief forthcoming from the church because the very church that we belong to has, until a few years ago, been silent on the racial question. Even after pronouncements on the assembly level, the Florida Presbytery within whose bounds we find ourselves has refused to receive the ministers and elders of this church into its membership. Therefore, we had to seek membership elsewhere, in an all-Negro Presbytery far removed geographically from Tallahassee. Church policy in this case was set aside rather than come to grips with the deep spiritual and moral implications of the practice of the brotherhood within the bounds of Florida Presbytery.

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Because of this peculiar set of circumstances, First Presbyterian Church undertook the sponsorship of the Negro work in Tallahassee, which came to be known as Trinity Presbyterian Church, organized January 31, 1954. From the beginning, it has never been a satisfactory relationship because everyone with any spiritual and moral sensitivity knew the bigger issue had not been faced with any degree of courage or candor. Further, it was not satisfactory because again it was not in accord with the government of the church to have one church with its own minister, elders, and deacons being responsible to another church. Local Presbyterian churches and their ministers are responsible only to the fathers and brethren of the presbytery in which they hold membership.

The awkwardness of this situation has finally brought us to the point of crisis, of strained relationship. Why so? Because the minister of Trinity Church, acting according to dictates of his convictions, became involved in the local protest against segregated seating on the buses and the subsequent movement that evolved from the events of the arrest of the "A. & M." coeds.

Because of his leadership in the organization that spearheaded the protest, because he dared speak out publicly against the evils of the unjust system and against the men who were determined to uphold that system, your minister now finds himself out of favor, a controversial figure. A goodly number of the sponsoring church now feel that they can no longer sponsor, encourage, and work with the Trinity Church in its building program as long as the present minister remains as leader of the congregation. It is one man's conviction "That the church will become nothing but a headquarters for integration." This feeling has led the session of the First Presbyterian Church to confront the minister and officers of Trinity Church with a decision. "Either Mr. Rollins as minister must give up his active participation in the protest movement or else the First Presbyterian Church can no longer continue to sponsor this church."

What it amounts to is this—nothing more than a threat not worthy of Christians. These are your circumstances: Since you are not members of Florida Presbytery, and will never be in the foreseeable future, and you belong to an impoverished Negro Presbytery, through which Negro Work Campaign funds are not administered, you will not be able to get the sizeable grant of money so necessary to build the fine church plant we had envisioned for you and your congregation to work and worship in. This they can do, and if we fail to accede to their ultimatum, we have no recourse for we do not belong to Florida Presbytery. Further, the Division of Negro Work considers this a racial squabble in which they cannot get involved. A representative of the unit did, on Wednesday night past, a masterful job of fence-sitting.

Now Trinity and its minister find themselves in the hour of crisis, a crisis that cries desperately for a decision, and a wise one, on the part of pastor and people. This sermon, profoundly personal, is a part of your minister's own soul-searching as he wrestles with a problem that is peculiarly his own and yet does and will affect the future of Trinity Presby-

terian Church. I've asked myself, "in the face of the small membership and its financial resources, will we on our own be able to build a physical plant that will enable us to carry on an adequate ministry to the community?"

Should I submit to their demand and withdraw from this movement that has meant so much to our people in Tallahassee? After all, perhaps I was wrong in joining such a movement without thinking about the consequences of my action upon my church. If I withdraw, then the building we dreamed about, planned for, will become a reality and we will be able to do the things that a church is supposed to do. Again, I probably acted irrationally and emotionally and said some things in the course of this protest that would have been better unsaid. Perhaps I had no right to offend the powers that be in First Presbyterian Church. Let's face it, you came here primarily to organize a congregation and help them get a building, not to fight against segregation, and if this movement is going to keep you from attaining your primary goal you ought to be willing to bow out graciously regardless of what some people will think or say. After all, that will take courage of sorts. This reveals to you in part the turmoil of my thoughts as I have sought to make a choice at the crossroads of my ministry at Trinity Church and to our people at large in the city of Tallahassee.

I not only thought of my own personal responsibility, but I tried to put myself into the place of those whom I serve, you the members of my flock. After all, what Rev. Rollins has done is good, but if he sticks by his guns he will put us into a difficult situation. We don't have the resources to build this church without outside aid. He ought to be able to see that it's going to mean too much hard work, too much sacrificial efforts, and take too long to build a nice church. Perhaps it would be better for him and us to compromise at this point that we might see this building that we planned become a reality and then later we can afford to be militant and assert ourselves. He should know that mission churches can't throw their weight around.

Of course you know that I thought of the other side of this question too, for I know you too well to think that such thoughts, though lurking in the minds of some, would be the general sentiment of this congregation when it came to a vote. And I could not be true to this high and holy office of pastor and preacher if I did not consider the other side of our decision in the light of our relationship to the Head of the Church, Christ Himself. For beloved, this crisis cannot be met, this dilemma resolved purely in terms of church membership alone, that is, this relationship to Trinity as an organization. There is more than meets the eye in this institution. For if it were just along practical considerations alone we would have—your officers and I—answered "yes" without too much concern. But someone else is involved in the matter. It is the question of our faithfulness and fidelity to Christ. Church membership doesn't automatically guarantee that we will be good disciples.

So, I believe that we must take Christ into consideration. It is one of the advantages of good things that come from crisis—we are dri-

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ven to reexamine our relationship to Jesus Christ. It is in these desperate hours when we wrestle with a great problem such as ours that we really come to know Him as the Living Lord who desires of those who would be disciples of his unswerving obedience. For we are not just making a decision about the physical plant, we are deciding whether we shall really witness for Him in this particular situation. We are putting to the acid test our faith in Him in a time when our souls are sorely tried.

To me, the challenge of discipleship and Christian witness is brought home to us best in one of the greatest declarations that Jesus ever made—"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." The key words in this text as they affect us and the decision we must make are "deny" and "cross." "Deny," as used here by Jesus, is not a vague, foggy word, easy to evade. Its stark demand is appallingly clear. Denying ourselves means more than refusing to give things to ourselves, little luxuries and delights. In so doing, we come to the point where we make a virtue of our self-control and generosity, applauding ourselves, spiritual Little Jack Homers, saying "what a good boy am I!" The denial of self goes deeper than that, and it is profoundly relevant to our present circumstance.

Ask yourself why the church's witness in the world is so weak and a part of the answer lies in the fact that her members are not willing to give obedience to this basic command of the Master. Those people downtown have not thought of advancing the Kingdom of God, they've thought of themselves and their pride in being of a dominant group and so they can, because they have the power, thrust such a demand upon us. They have not denied self enough to the point where they can give their aid and support to us without the traditional string attached.

It is two-edged. We cannot think too much about self in this situation. We must forego and deny the personal disappointment that will surely come with more delay because we refused to accede. We must be willing to deny self and our inclinations toward an easier pathway for no other Christ's sake. We must be willing to deny self by putting self at the disposal of His Cause.

This is not easy. When the call comes for a church to deny itself and take up the cross it is more difficult. It is difficult for us as a church to put a larger good, the freedom of speech and the right of self-determination, above financial help and the prestige and pride that comes from having a beautiful building to work and worship in. But this we must do, for in so doing we will save our life as individuals and the church. I've seen mission pastors and churches literally sell their souls to sponsoring churches because the ministers looked for financial security and the people rationalized themselves into believing that the only way they could build a church was with the financial aid of White Christians who gave of their substance in such a way as to want their pride and ego fed by poor Negro Christians who had not yet arrived to help themselves. It's a terrible price to pay.

[The concluding segment of this sermon has not been found.]

APPENDIX VI

**All-Black Governing Bodies in the Predecessor
Denominations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**
I. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES
Presbyteries

Abbeville	1897-1916
Chester	1897-1907
N.E. Georgia	1904-1916
Texas	1888-1916
Zion	1891-1901

Snedecor Memorial Synod 1917-1957

Presbyteries

Central Alabama	1890-1966
Central Louisiana	1916-1952
Ethel (Mississippi)	1891-1952
North and South Carolina	1876-1952
Georgia-Carolina	1952-1967
Louisiana-Mississippi	1952-1968
Carolina	1967-1968

**II. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**
Synod of Atlantic 1868-1965 (changed to South
Carolina-Georgia in 1966)

Presbyteries

Atlantic	1868-1957
Catawba	1867-1887 (dismissed to Catawba Synod)
Knox	1868-1957
East Florida	1872-1905
Fairfield	1872-1957
Yadkin	1886-1887 (dismissed to Catawba Synod)
McClelland	1885-1957
Cape Fear	1886-1887 (dismissed to Catawba Synod)

ALL-BLACK GOVERNING BODIES

South Florida	1886–1905
East Florida	1887–1905
Hodge	1902–1957
Fairfield-McClelland	1959–
Knox Hodge	1959–1965
Catawba Synod	1887–1972
Presbyteries	
Cape Fear	1887–1988
Catawba	1887–1988
Yadkin	1877–1988
Southern Virginia	1889–1988
East Tennessee Synod	1905–1935
Presbyteries	
Birmingham	1907–1935
LaVere	1907–1935
Rogersville	1907–1935
Blue Ridge Synod	1935–1958 (successor to East Tennessee Synod)
Presbyteries	
Birmingham	1936–1958 (dismissed to Synod of Mid-South)
LaVere	1936–1958
Rogersville	1936–1958
Canadian Synod	1907–1955
Presbyteries	
Kiamichi	1907–1955
Rendall	1907–1955
White River	1907–1955
Presbytery of Lincoln	1909–1934
All-Black presbytery in Synod of Kentucky	

III. UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

Tennessee Presbytery	1866–1958
All-Black presbytery in Second Synod	

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ORAL INTERVIEWS

The following persons were interviewed by members of the committee or the researcher/writer.

Adair, Thelma Davidson
Allen, Ruvine
Allison, Frances
Alston, Nannie M.
Bligen Jr., R. E.
*Bottoms, Lawrence W.
Broughton, Ida L. M.
Burke, DeGrandval
Campbell, Cornelius
Campbell, Ethel F.
Carpenter, Roland
Chisolm, Florence
Colclough, Franklin D.
Cole, Gladys R.
Costen, James H.
Cartwright, Johnnie S.
Davis, Barbara Campbell
Davis, R. C.
*Dees, Doris
Dozier, Richard F.
Feaster, Laverne
Foster, Larrie J.
Gaston, Joseph
Gaston, Josie G.
Gordon, Frank
Harrison, Thelma
Hawkins, Ethel

Hudson, James H.
Henderson, Frank
Johnson, Esther S.
Johnson, Leonard
Johnson, Olivia S.
Lafayette, Barbara W.
Linton, John
Marsh, Clinton
Mercer, William
Metz, Perry
Miller, E. McKay
Nelson, Jennie
Nelson, Lilly
Nesbitt, Alma
Newberry, Ed
Powell, Wilma
Rowland, Sharon
Singleton, Frances
Shirley, Robert
Simms, Lois
Stewart, Darthula A.
Washington Jr., McKinley
Washington, Robert
Williams, Melvin
Wilson-Burgess, Agnes
Woods, Allene
Youngblood, Bernice

*Written Interview



Mary Holmes Junior College,
1940.



Mary Holmes Junior College graduating class of 1943.



John Gloucester, pastor, First African Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1811-21



Elo Henderson



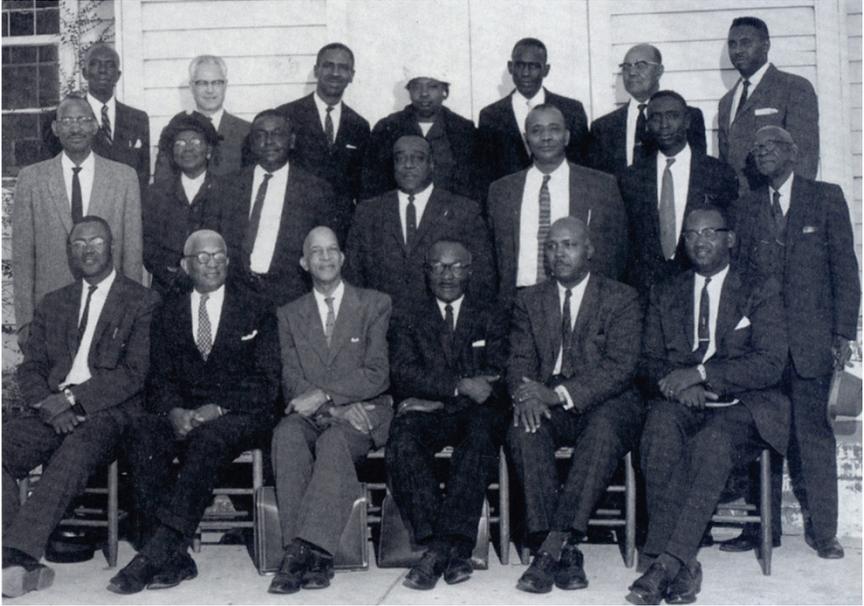
Atlantic Synodical Convention/School of Methods



Catawba Synod Leadership Training School.



Women from Atlantic and Catawba synods attending National Presbyterian Women Conference at Purdue University (1958). First row from left to right are Bessie Anthony McCloud, Agnes Wilson, and Eunice Simmons, Second row from left to right are Marcia Marion, Constance Stinson, Eunice Washington, and Nan Davis.



Atlantic Synod Council. First row from left to right are Charles W. Talley, executive; T.B. Jones, president, Harbison College; (first name unknown) Henderson, stated clerk, Atlantic Presbytery; Milton E. Cox; F. Perry Metz, synod stated clerk; and John M. Ellis. Second row from left to right are James Herbert Nelson Sr.; (subject unknown); Elliott L. McAdams; William Mercer; Pickins A. Patterson; James H. Hudson; and Hampton T. McFadden. Third row from left to right are Abraham H. Price; (subject unknown); E. McKay Miller, Mrs. Moses; John B. Moses; J.T. Jones; and Ferdinand Pharr.



Workers' Conference.



School of Methods.



Westminster Summer Conference Group, Florida N&I School, Saint Augustine, Florida.



From left to right are five moderators: Robert T. Newbold Jr., Hodge Presbytery; Marvin Flack, Rogersville Presbytery; Hardy Liston Sr., Catawba Presbytery; Frank R. Gordon, White River Presbytery; and John D. (Pete) Peterson, Yadkin Presbytery.



From left to right are John T. Peters, Frank Shirley, and Charles Winslow Talley (1952).



George Waldo Long, president of Coulter Academy.



The student council in session at Coulter Academy.



Graduation at Barber-Scotia College.



The Reverend Dr. William H. Sheppard (missionary to the Congolese) and family.



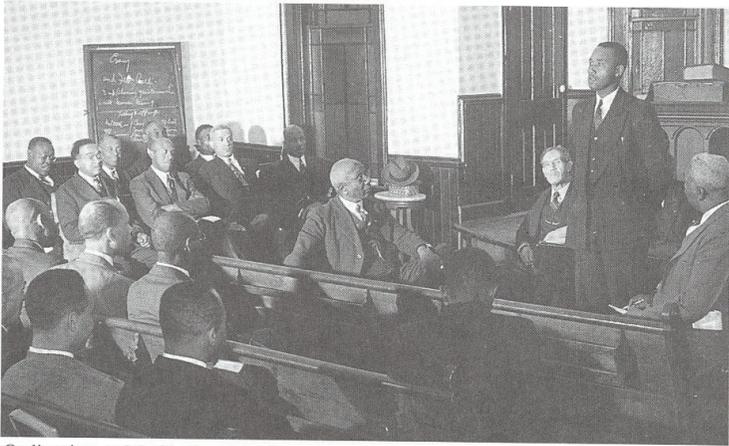
Lucy Craft Laney.



Deacons and elders with their wives at the Goodwill Presbyterian Church session.



James Henry Boyce is seated at the head of the table with the Session of Pinecrest Presbyterian Church in Houston, Texas.



Ordination at McClelland Presbytery.