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Rev. William Barber, center is flanked by NAACP officials and supporters at Rally and Press Conference.

NC NAACP Announces Registration, Get Out the Vote Effort

The North Carolina Branch of the NAACP held a Voter Registration/Get Out the Vote rally on Fri., Aug. 24 at St. Joseph's A.M.E. Church in Durham.

Rev. Philip R. Cousin, Jr. was the host pastor. What could have been a staid affair, turned out to be an enthusiastic non-partisan rally to focus people in the remaining days of the Presidential election. The reason for the meeting was to announce a plan to get as many people as possible registered and increase the turnout. On the anniversary of the 1963 March On Washington, the rally took on the enthusiasm of those rallies that helped to bring a coalition of then liberal groups together to fight for equality in the 1960s. The hope is that Progressive groups will coalesce to do the same in this election.

Members of the clergy from across the state as well as presidents of many NAACP college chapters were on hand. They spelled out a comprehensive plan of action to get as many segments of the populace ready for the "fight for justice." All expressed the urgency of the moment.

Rev. Barber and others talked about the importance of this election and why the national NAACP has made the theme for this year is "This Is My Vote."

"We often talked about how previous elections have been 'the most important' of its time, but this one is certainly that," Barber said. "We will always defend Democracy and our right to vote."

Rev. Barber went back, in his speech, to establishment of the country and the deliberate exclusion of African Americans in voting and the struggles to gain the right to vote and its results.

Rev. Barber described how the right to vote was originally given only to white men who held property or property with a taxable value. For African Americans that rules for being eligible to vote was given to the states.

N.C. NAACP President William Barber, spoke at length about the history in this state of the successes of African Americans having the vote and being able to use that franchise.

"In 1835 with a vote of 66-61 the ability of free African American men being able to vote was taken away," Barber said.

This was a constant theme of his speech. That every time African Americans were allowed to vote and did, the result was a deliberate, systematic and legislative effort to limit the right to vote at most and to reduce the numbers able to vote in the least. He went on to show that this is the same effort of a Republican-led effort, not only in North Carolina but across the nation.

"In 1868 a large minority of white men made interracial alliances with free black men to form a coalition of endorsed one man one vote, removed property requirements to vote, overturned a long-standing social and economic hierarchy of the time," Barber said.

When they achieved success, the right-wing whites "attacked the ballot box."

Rev. Barber continued, "over time coalitions were formed to challenged the discriminatory laws of the day only to see new laws enacted and set forth in a effort to deny the franchise to African Americans."

As time passed in the state many of the coalitions came to be described as Fusion politics. The melding of African Americans and what is now described as liberal whites to join forces and challenge the social and economic forces of the time.

Student presidents from NCCU, Duke, N.C. A&T and other colleges all spoke of the need to continue the fight for justice and equality.

"I am committed to continue the legacy of the NAACP that was espoused in 1909," said the Duke University student's chapter president.

Younger speakers talked about how they had heard of the work that their parents and grandparents went through to fight for equality and many thought that by now that fight would be over and done. But that now, the same challenges with different names are still in existence.

The evening was topped off with what was scheduled to be a charge for going forward by Rev. Dr. Amos C. Brown, president, San Francisco NAACP chapter and pastor of the Third Baptist Church. (Continued On Page 2)



Bishop Elroy Lewis, pastor, Fisher Memorial United Holy Church, 420 E. Piedmont Ave., holds some of the last grapes the church had on sale for its annual fund raiser. The church had just a few cartons of grapes from the one-ton they ordered.



Rev. Amos C. Brown

NC county settles federal discrimination case

MORGANTON (AP) - A western North Carolina county has settled a racial discrimination complaint filed by the U.S. Department of Justice after a government employee repeatedly used a racial epithet at work.

Under the terms of a settlement issued Aug. 23, Burke County will institute racial harassment and discrimination training for all employees. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin or religion.

According to the federal complaint, a supervisor in the county's social services department used a derogatory term for African-Americans on at least four occasions when an African-American employee was present. The supervisor later claimed to be unaware her use of the racial epithet could be considered offensive, given the lack of available sensitivity training within the county government.

Bullied at work at CSX, NC woman awarded \$685,000

ELIZABETH CITY (AP) - A North Carolina woman intimidated by CSX Transportation Inc. railroad supervisors and targeted by vandals is getting more than \$685,000 plus interest.

A federal judge in Elizabeth City on Aug. 21 awarded Vicky Bennett of Northampton County the money for losses she suffered during her short stint as a CSX railroad conductor in 2008. A jury found CSX was an unsafe and hostile work environment for Bennett.

Bennett complained that she once found her pickup truck spray-painted with racial slurs, the back window smashed, and a mannequin head with a noose around its neck in the back seat.

Bennett said a supervisor angry that she called ahead to get directions drove the resisting black woman off railroad property in his company vehicle, refusing to let her out while he berated her.



Some of the assembled for the NC NAACP Rally