

Africo-American Presbyterian

"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE"

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SHILOH CHURCH, KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, SECOND OLDEST NEGRO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE SOUTH

By Ray D. Webb,
In The Knoxville Sunday Journal.

With the motto, "The Light-house on the Hill," and with the reputation of being the second oldest Negro Presbyterian church in the South, Shiloh Presbyterian church, East Church Avenue, has played a leading part in the religious life of the Negro population of Knoxville for the past 70 years. At the close of the War Between the States there were a few old time Negroes of Knoxville, who for years had been allowed to have their membership with the First and Second (white) Presbyterian churches of Knoxville. The Gen. Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, commissioned Dr. Reeve and Garnett, leading Presbyterians of Philadelphia, as representatives of the Presbyterian committee for freedmen for the purpose of visiting in the South and establishing missions for the Negroes. Dr. Reeve established Shiloh Presbyterian church in Knoxville, September 4, 1865.

Worshipped on Porch

Col. Perez Dickinson, one of Knoxville's wealthiest citizens, permitted the new church to worship on the porch of his West Avenue home for several weeks. David Scaggs and Lev Lilliston were the first elders of Shiloh and the first pastor was the Rev. George W. LeVere, who had served in the war as chaplain and came to Knoxville from Brooklyn. Later the congregation purchased a lot at the corner of Henley Street and West Clinch Avenue for \$3,300. The congregation increased in numbers and later a handsome church building was erected. The first officers of the church were Levi Livingston, David Scaggs, Edward Livingston, Hamilton Welcher, William Nelson and Nepunt Coffin, well known Negro residents of Knoxville for many years.

Former pastors of the church are the Rev. George LeVere, the Rev. J. C. Lawrence, the Rev. J. R. Riley, who served for 20 years; the Rev. J. H. Byers, the Rev. J. W. Holley, the Rev. S. A. Downer and the Rev. A. H. George.

"Boy Preacher"

The present pastor, the Rev. Thomas A. Jenkins, came to the church from North Carolina. He is a graduate of Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, and was formerly engaged in educational work in the North Carolina district of the Sunday School Department and Young People's Work of the Presbyterian Church. He sometimes is called "the boy preacher," because of his youthful appearance and the fact that he is the youngest Negro minister in Knoxville. He and his family, including his wife, daughter and sister, reside in the handsome church manse, adjoining the church.

Shiloh church during its three score and ten years of service has enjoyed having as its leaders outstanding Negro residents of Knoxville. The church has sent two of its young men to the ministry, Dr. W. H. Franklin, founder and now President Emeritus of Swift Memorial Junior College, Rogersville, and the Rev. John H. Blake, now deceased.

The present home of the congregation was erected in 1931 at a cost of \$31,000, when the old church was razed to make room for the widening of Henley Street. The church audito-

rium has a seating capacity of 900, and there are various Sunday school rooms, an educational department, kitchen, etc., for the convenience of church members. Services are held each Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock and at 7:30 o'clock Sunday nights, with Sunday school at 9:30 o'clock. The religious educational department of the church is sponsored by a church council of religious education and the young people's cabinet.

Members of the church whose ancestors played a leading part in the upbuilding of the church are Dr. S. M. Draper, Blanche Koss and children, A. L. Draper, Rosetta Wentz, Eva and Sylvia Kidd, Denny Mason, Carrie and Mary Mason, Mabel Kirksey and Mabel Wells and children.

Special Music

Several times during the year the church offers unusual musical programs, often as many as 200 taking part on the program. December 23, at 2 o'clock, a Christmas cantata will be given by a large chorus and the public is invited. Christmas morning at 5:30 a candle light service will be presented with the public again invited.

Officers of the church, Sunday school and various departments are:

Church session, the Rev. Thomas A. Jenkins, Moderator; S. J. Wentz, clerk; E. L. Moore, Assistant clerk; W. S. Hannum, treasurer of benevolences; William Fagg, S. H. Toole, G. M. Stone, W. Tate, J. I. Alexander, and W. Brooks; trustees, R. L. Alexander, President; Dr. S. M. Draper, Secretary; William H. Gamble, treasurer; J. J. Gamble, J. H. Hoard, J. S. Dailey, Prof. W. S. Nicholson, R. M. Sterling and Dr. J. H. Presnell; deacons, J. Derrick, J. A. Matthews, St. Clair Cobb, S. Bomar, M. Turner and M. Wells; missionary circles, two circles, L. Fagg and C. Presnell, Presidents; H. Boyd and F. Wolfe, secretaries, and M. Turner and M. Gamble, treasurers; Men's Brotherhood, J. I. Alexander, President, G. M. Stone, secretary and M. Sterling, treasurer.

Sunday school department: William L. Gamble, Superintendent; G. Kyles, assistant; William Fagg, treasurer, and J. R. Poss, E. L. Moore, St. Clair Cobb, M. James, M. Miller and M. Carnes, teachers.

Boy Scouts: J. R. Ross, Scoutmaster, two troops, Tuxis Girls, M. Miller, sponsor; Westminster Guild, L. M. Jenkins, sponsor; Young Men's Fellowship Club, A. Dailey, sponsor; Young People's Forum, O. Williams, President; C. Jenkins, secretary and S. Rose, treasurer.

Ushers: M. Leeper, E. Kyle, and J. R. Ross, Jr., captains with corps of 15; directress of music, church school, R. Williams; director of music of the church, L. D. Drake, with a chorus choir of 35. Members of the choir are E. T. Williams, F. F. Lennon, F. Bradley, S. Bomar, M. Miller, A. Toole, A. Kimbro, E. T. Chairs and M. Kirksey, sopranos; S. Kidd, I. Guilford, S. L. Draper, I. Richardson, M. Wells and E. Gibbs, altos; Prof. W. M. Brooks, R. M. Sterling, J. Derrick, W. Tate, I. Alexander, W. Dooley, tenors; O. Williams, Dr. S. M. Draper, P. Armstrong, Prof. W. S. Nicholson and R. Bradley, basses.

OBERLIN COLLEGE AND RACE PREJUDICE

By Dr. Kelly Miller

In the December issue of the Crisis Magazine Caroline W. Tromason writes engagingly upon "Prejudice Invades Oberlin." She recounts the golden age when Oberlin was founded one hundred years ago on the basis of the co-education of the races and sexes with no discrimination against either. For fully a half century this College held true to the ideal of its founders. But since that time it has been veering toward the modern tendency to handle the Negro with the back part of the left hand. She recites numerous instances to show that this great human rights college is bowing to the Baal of modern day narrowness and bigotry. Let us keep in mind that Oberlin was founded on the crest of the wave of missionary enthusiasm for the forgotten and neglected man. We look back over a hundred years and wonder at the zeal for humanity which was then sweeping certain elements of the nation as a wild fire. In the wake of this movement Berea College was founded in the mountains of Kentucky, dedicated to the co-education of the races in this slave State.

Emerson says our virtues come in moments; our vices are habitual. Those who were caught up for the moment on the Mount of Transfiguration could not build there a permanent tabernacle, but must ascend and mingle with the grosser affairs of life. The zeal and enthusiasm for humanity engendered a hundred years ago did well to survive for a half generation. Oberlin has gravitated to the lower level of her sister colleges on the race question, while local prejudice has wiped out Berea College as an institution for the co-education of the races. We may deplore retrograde tendencies in these degenerate days but we do well to understand, while we deplore. The example of Oberlin and Berea will illustrate the retrograde tendency of the age in which we are living. The Golden Age has given way to the age of gold.

Some years ago I was invited to be the guest of Oberlin College and to be the guest speaker at their chapel assemblage. I was entertained at a luncheon given by the faculty at which there were several toasts upon the spirit of the old Oberlin and the new. Faculty members pointed out that the institution was endeavoring as best it could under distracting influences to maintain the spirit of the founders but found it practically impossible to do so in the face of present day conditions with which they had to deal. Students were coming to them from all parts of the country bringing their local attitudes and prejudices. They were trying to baptize them as best they could in the spirit and tradition of the old Oberlin. But in spite of themselves the college as moving too rapidly from the old landmark toward present day ways. The Dean of Women told me that she could place only two colored girls in each dormitory, and was able to do this only because of immemorial traditions of the institution to that effect. They were then debating the question of establishing a separate dormitory for colored girls as the only feasible plan by which they could handle any considerable number of that sex.

In my response I stated that we at Howard were very anxious to have Oberlin stand by the ancient landmarks; for Howard was largely an offspring of Oberlin and sought

closely to imitate the parent in all directions. I cited the instance of the farmer who, wishing to make a straight furrow across his field, fixed his sight on a cow on the other side, not being aware that the bovine herself was moving. On reaching the other side of the field and looking back upon his furrow he found that he had made a parabola instead of a straight line. This I feared would be the fate of Howard unless our prototype stood by the ancient foundation.

ST. JAMES CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY.

Rev. Dr. Wm. L. Imes, Pastor

The Spiritual Rally of the New York Presbytery which was held at Carnegie Hall, December 5, was a great success. The speakers were at their best, and gave the audience facts which will give them food for thought for many a day.

The huge chorus was made up of members of the different churches in the Presbytery.

Sunday morning, December 16, was known as Social Service Day, and the pastor's sermon was beautifully and fittingly arranged for the great occasion. Dr. Imes preached from the text, Luke 2:34, "And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary, his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." The theme was "Childhood and Youth."

There was a large number of representatives of the different organizations present at this special service.

Another St. James Fall Fair has passed into history, but its memories linger in the hearts and minds of those who worked untiringly and unselfishly to make it a success. The goal was \$500 and through the co-operation of the different organizations and departments the committee takes pleasure in making public that the total amount raised was \$518.41.

The Board of Trustees extends its sincere thanks and joins the committee in wishing each one of you the season's best greetings.

On Tuesday evening, January 8, 1935, Dr. Melville Charlton, organist and choirmaster of St. James, will be guest artist at Howard University, beginning their artists' series for the present season, under the Conservatory of Music of the University.

Dr. Charlton will play for the dedicatory recital on the fine new pipe organ now being installed in the Andrew Rankin Chapel, St. James is very proud of this distinction which has come to Dr. Charlton and wishes him great success.

A Christmas pageant, "The Message of the Manger," was rendered by the church school under the direction of Mrs. B. R. Thomas. It was a real portrayal of the Christmas message.

On Sunday evening, December 23rd, at 8:00 o'clock, there will be a Christmas musicale presented by the St. James choir under the direction of Dr. Melville Charlton. All members and friends are cordially invited to attend this musicale which promises to be a great success.

We were very pleased to have worship in the pulpit with Dr. Imes, Dr. Hardy, formerly of Pittsburgh, Rev. Livingston and Mr. Cole. Mr. Cole will sail in a few days for Liberia where he is to do missionary work in

FAIRFIELD DISTRICT LEAGUE NO. 1 ORGANIZED

First League in Atlantic Synod

Beneath a gray sky, but shielded from last Saturday's (Dec. 8) cold weather by the beautiful walls of the Carmel Presbyterian church, more than one hundred twenty-five young people seeking information and inspiration, and adults ready to inspire and inform, gathered in Chester, S. C., to organize the first Young People's League in Atlantic Synod. There were delegations from at least four churches present at eleven o'clock, at which time the registration began promptly. At eleven thirty o'clock, precisely according to the program, Mr. Joseph T. Jones, the Sunday School Missionary of Fairfield Presbytery and the one responsible for organizing this the Young People's League of District No. 1 of Fairfield Presbytery, called the meeting to order. A count of the delegates showed that one hundred were present.

After a number of hymns sung with the spirit, and the invocation by Rev. B. F. Russell, D. D., Mr. Jones outlined the objectives, among which he gave the following:

1. To enlist the young people in promoting the whole program of the Presbyterian Church.
2. To give young people a knowledge of the work of the Church at large and help them understand their responsibility in it.
3. To develop a more vital Presbyterian family spirit through fellowship and cooperation in the work.
4. To help young people to experience the joy of assuming responsibility in planning and promoting Church work.

Before elaborating on these objectives, Dr. A. B. McCoy, Director of Sunday School Missions, paid tribute to Professor A. A. Adair, who, for a number of years, labored in Fairfield Presbytery and "upon whose labors" the District No. 1 League of the Presbytery had its foundation. Dr. McCoy said that Prof. Adair had expressed the hope of "meeting with us in the first meeting of the Young People's League in Fairfield Presbytery." At the meeting were Mrs. Adair and three of the children; Eugene a student at Johnson C. Smith University, could not be present.

After appealing to the young people to make the most of such an opportunity for service, Dr. McCoy spoke of the uniform objectives of the League, the types of membership, the time of meetings and the program of the League.

The general purpose having been outlined and explained, the League was organized with the election of officers. James Chapple, Brainerd Institute, was chosen President, with Guy Sanders as Vice-President. Eunice Adair, Chester, and Amanda James, Ridgeway, were elected Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. Mrs. J. R. Dungee, Mrs. B. H. Walker, Rev. R. W. Parker and Rev. M. R. Flack were elected to compose the Advisory Board. The officers were installed by Dr. McCoy.

Miss O. L. Wilson, Sunday School Missionary of John's Island, S. C., gave the League a brief, interesting address on "The Young People's Budgeting Plan." Among other points Miss Wilson said the plan "acquaints young people with the program of the Church, enlists young people in the Church program, develops character through training and giving, and pro-

vides a definite program for young people."

The meeting closed with an impressive worship service. The worship message was delivered by Rev. A. S. Powe, pastor of Ladsen Presbyterian church, Columbia, S. C. Rev. Powe chose for a subject, "Christian Activity," and delivered a stirring message.

At four o'clock, precisely according to the program, the League adjourned to meet next quarter at Blacksburg on Rev. Flack's field.

The music for the League was furnished by the Brainerd chorus directed by Prof. J. T. Young.

Rev. J. W. Manoney is the pastor of Carmel church, in which the League was held.

During the recess period, Mr. U. L. Brewer, Sunday School Missionary, of Atlantic Presbytery, conducted the recreations for the delegates. A delightful repast was served by the members of Carmel.

Among other visitors present who have not already been mentioned, were: Rev. A. H. George, professor of Church History and Homiletics, School of Theology, Johnson C. Smith University, and in whose church in Wilson, N. C., some years ago, the first League was organized; Rev. D. T. Murray, of Harbison Institute and McClelland Presbytery; Rev. J. E. Dungee, of Ridgeway, S. C.; Prof. L. S. Brown, Principal of Brainerd Institute; Mr. R. L. Jeans, Sunday School Missionary of Catawba Presbytery and Middler in the School of Theology, J. C. Smith University; Mr. Moses Belton, Sunday School Missionary (summer) McClelland Presbytery and Middler in the School of Theology, Johnson C. Smith University.

This, the first meeting of a Young People's League in Atlantic Synod, is hard to be surpassed. As to time, attendance, and enthusiasm and spirit, the meeting was excellent. Although the latest League thus far organized, if the District No. 1 League of Fairfield Presbytery is to make any progress, as it will do, it will soon vie with some League for leadership.

M. B.

PROMINENT PERSONS ON SCOTTSBORO COMMITTEE

New York, November 30. — James Hardy Dillard, D. Litt., LL. D., Charlottesville, Va., was elected Chairman of the American Scottsboro Committee, Inc., 289 Fourth Avenue, here today. Dr. Dillard is widely known throughout the nation as former President of the Jeanes Foundation for the development of Negro rural schools, and President of the John F. Slater Fund, 1907-1931. He is now Vice-President of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, a member of the General Education Board, Trustee of the General Theological Seminary and formerly Rector of the Williams and Mary College in Virginia. He is the author of two volumes in the educational field; the editor of several publications, and a contributor to newspapers and magazines. In 1928 he was awarded the Harmon gold medal and \$500 for promoting better relations between the races and for activity in increasing educational facilities for Negroes in the South. Dr. Dillard is widely known for his liberal views on educational and economic problems.

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