

Black Church and Community Organization

Introduction

The Black Church has been historically one of the most important institutions for African American communities. During the centuries when African Americans were enslaved, deprived of political and civil rights, and legally segregated from their fellow white Americans, the Black Church remained the heart of the African American life. It provided a safe space to preach and pray but it has always been much more than a place of spiritual practice. It was the center of education, civil rights struggle, and social activism but also the center of respite from racial oppression, entertainment, and artistic expression. While historically men served as pastors and political leaders, women became community organizers in their churches. In that role, they organized social services for those in need, educational programs for children and adults, or leisure time activities for African American families unwelcome in white-only segregated spaces.

In this activity, you will analyze a program of a 1930 conference organized by African American women, who belonged to an organization known as the Woman's Synodical Auxiliary of Arkansas, which was affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. This document illustrates how African American women organized and supported their communities during the era of racial segregation. Note that the conference took place at the Philander Smith College, which is a private historically black college that exists until today in Little Rock, Arkansas.



apple malay FOURTH ANNUAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE For COLORED WOMEN Philander Smith College Little Rock, Arkansas JUNE 21 TO JUNE 27, 1930. Conducted by WOMAN'S SYNODICAL AUXILIARY OF ARKANSAS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U. S. Mrs. W. J. Wilson, Arkadelphia, Ark., President. Mrs. J. W. Parse, Batesville, Ark., Leader. Miss A. B. McLaughlin, Little Rock, Ark., Secretary. Mrs. H. N. Street, Bible Teacher. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE Mrs. R. J. Maddough Mrs. R. C. Childress Mrs. C. K. Brown Mrs. M. M. Bostic Mrs. A. C. Freeman Mrs. Mary H. Spight Mrs. A. T. Clark Interracial—Inter-Denominational. The Public is cordially invited to all evening sessions. "Not with eye-service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God. Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men." Col. 3:22-23.

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	Program	
	SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 21, 1930 Fellowship Meeting, Webb Hall, 8 O'clock.	
	SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 22	
9:30 11:00	Visit Sunday Schools. Sermon. Wesley ChapelRev. C. K. Brown	
	SUNDAY EVENING	
7:00 8:00	Story Hour Mrs. Clayton Haley Sermon, Wesley Chapel Rev. W. M. Scott	
	MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 23	
9:00 9:15	Devotionals Directed by Mrs. R. J. Meaddough. Personal Evangelism, Study	
10:00	Class Mrs. M. A. Treadwell Health Talk Miss Erle Chambers	
10:30 11:15	Better Children Mrs. W. P. McDermott Bible Hour Mrs. H. N. Street Luncheon Hour.	
	MONDAY AFTERNOON	
2:00	Music AppreciationMrs. Esther G. Kramer	
2:30	District Home Demonstration Agent Summer Poultry ProblemsMr. G. W. Knox Poultry Specialist	•
3:00	Clothing Construction Miss Ella Parker Local Home Agent	
	Mrs. Mary Ray, Local District Agent Mrs. Atwood, Singer Sewing Machine Co.	
	MONDAY EVENING	
7:00 8:00 8:30	Vesper—Webb Hall Mrs. S. A. Jordan Song Service. Health Film.	
	TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 24	
9:00 9:15	Devotional Mrs. R. C. Childress Personal Evangelism, Study	
	Class Mrs. M. A. Treadwell	

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10:00 10:30	Health Talk. "What makes a House a Home," Mrs. Barcarfer	
11:15	Bible HourMrs. H. N. Street	
11119	Luncheon Hour.	
	TUESDAY AFTERNOON	
2:00	Breads—Fancy and Plain, Miss Gertrude Conant	
2.00	Foods and Nutrition Specialist	
3:00	ClothingMrs. Atwood, Mary Ray, Ella Parker	
	TUESDAY EVENING	
7:00 8:00	Vesper Mrs. W. M. Campbell Address—The Holy Land as it is	
8:00	TodayRev. Roy Davis	
	WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 25	
9:00	DevotionalMrs. A. T. Clark	
9:15	Personal Evangelism, Study	
10:00	Class Mrs. M. A. Treadwell Health Talk.	
10.30	"Retter Mothers" Mrs. J. H. Fuller	
11:15	Bible HourMrs. H. N. Street	
	Luncheon Hour.	
	WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON	
2:00	Games and Plays for Community RecreationMiss Doris Whittington	
	Asst. County Home Dem. Agent.	
3:00	ClothingMrs. Ttwood, Mary Ray, Ella Parker	
	THE WEST AND THE WIND	
*	WEDNESDAY EVENING	
7:00	Vesper Mrs. H. E. Carolina	
8:00	Missionary Address.	
-	THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 26	
9:00	Devotional	
9:00	Personal Evangelism Mrs. M. A. Treadwell	
10:00	Health Talk.	
10:30	"Better Worship for Better Pay Charles E Charles	
11:15	Living" Rev. Charles E. Chapler Bible Hour Mrs. H. N. Street	
9070	Luncheon Hour.	
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THE PARTY OF THE P	
THURSDAY AFTERNOON	01
2:00 Window DraperiesMiss Flora Ferri County Home Demonstration Agen	t.
2:30 Right Use of PicturesMiss Ella Parke 3:00 ClothingMrs. Atwood, Mary Ray, Ella Parke	r
THURSDAY EVENING	
7:00 VesperMrs. Mercer Tai	+
8:00 Pageant.	
FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 27	
9:00 Devotional Mrs. J. C. Jenkin 1:15 Personal Evangelism Mrs. M. A. Treadwe	IS]]
10:00 Health Talk.	
10:30 "Making Life Count" Rev. Paul Quilla	n
11:15 Bible Hour Mrs. H. N. Stree	et
Luncheon Hour.	
FRIDAY AFTERNOON	
2:00 "Better Homes" Mrs. W. F. Lak	e
State Chairman Better Home 3:00 Clothing Mrs. Mary Ray, Ella Parke	es er
FRIDAY EVENING	
7:00 Vesper Mrs. J. N. Campbe	11
8:00 Address Mrs. H. N. Stree	et
INSTRUCTIONS TO DELEGATES	
Delegates are urged to be present at the opening of	
the Conference Saturday evening and stay through the conference.	e
Each delegate should bring towels, soap, necessar	У
toilet articles, Bible, scissors and thimble. Expenses for out-of-town delegates—Ten dollars for	r
fee and board in addition to railroad fare	1
Expense to city delegates, \$2.00 fee. All denominations welcomed.	
Hostess for Conference Delegates	r
Mrs. Bush Musical Directo	r
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Questions:

- 1. Who are the women who organized the conference and for whom was the conference organized?
- 2. What themes and activities did the women cover during the conference? Which of them were of religious and which of secular (non-religious) nature?
- 3. What do the themes and activities covered during the conference tell you about these women's lives and choices?
- 4. Why do you think the conference organizers added on the first page "Interracial Inter-Denominational. The Public is cordially invited to all evening sessions."?
- 5. How would you characterize the social status of the women who could come to this event in 1930? Were they poor or well off? Well educated or uneducated? Urban or rural?