

# BLACK CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION



## Black Church and Community Organization

### Introduction

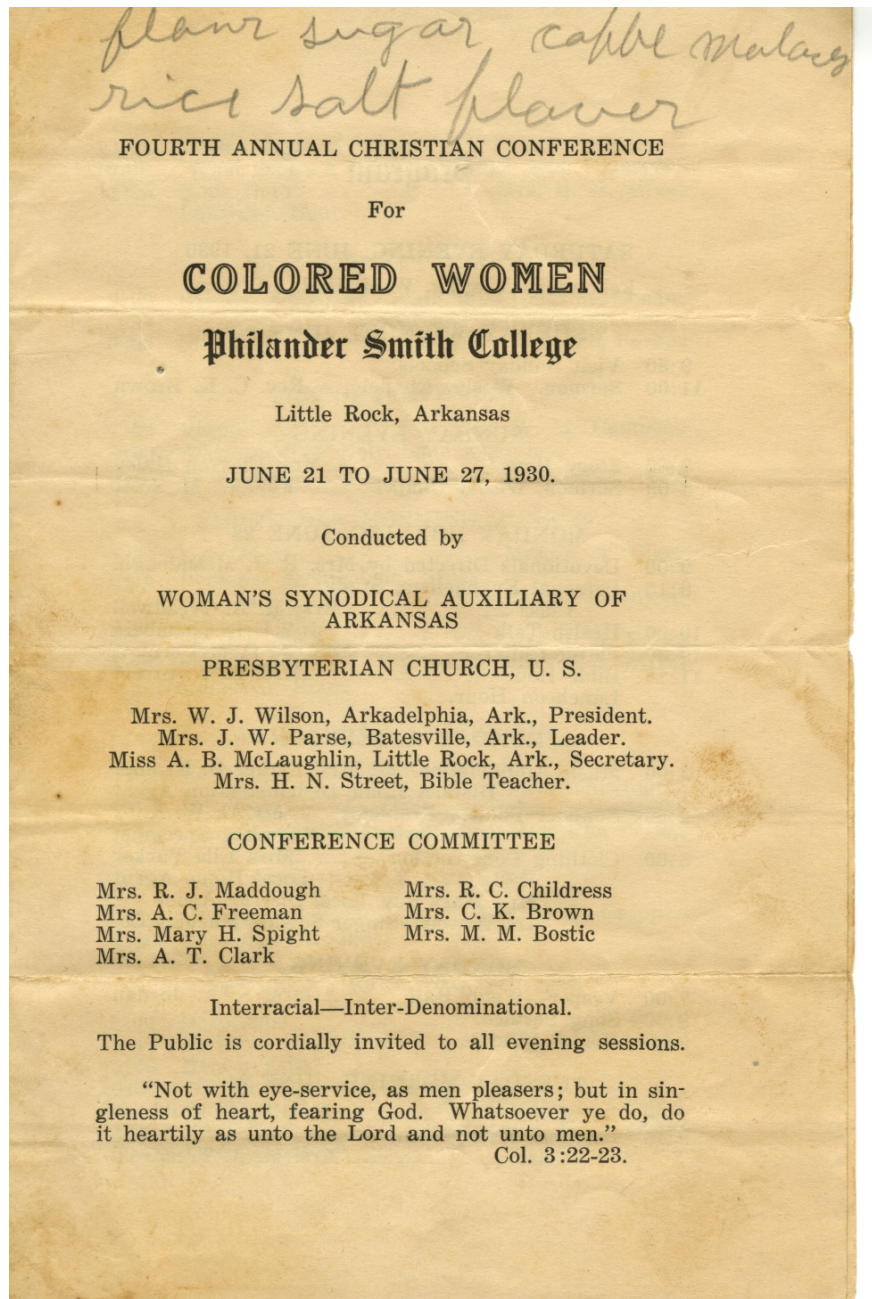
The Black Church has been historically one of the most important institutions for African American communities. During the centuries when African Americans were enslaved, deprived of political and civil rights, and legally segregated from their fellow white Americans, the Black Church remained the heart 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.

# BLACK CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION



CENTER FOR ARKANSAS  
HISTORY AND CULTURE  
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK



“Fourth Annual Christian Conference for Colored Women, Philander Smith College,” Little Rock, 1930, p. 1 (Porter Family Papers, 1902-1996)

# BLACK CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION



CENTER FOR ARKANSAS  
HISTORY AND CULTURE  
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

## Program

SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 21, 1930

Fellowship Meeting, Webb Hall, 8 O'clock.

SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 22

9:30 Visit Sunday Schools.  
11:00 Sermon. Wesley Chapel ..... Rev. C. K. Brown

SUNDAY EVENING

7:00 Story Hour ..... Mrs. Clayton Haley  
8:00 Sermon, Wesley Chapel ..... Rev. W. M. Scott

MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 23

9:00 Devotionals Directed by Mrs. R. J. Meaddough.  
9:15 Personal Evangelism, Study  
Class ..... Mrs. M. A. Treadwell  
10:00 Health Talk ..... Miss Erle Chambers  
10:30 Better Children ..... Mrs. W. P. McDermott  
11:15 Bible Hour ..... Mrs. H. N. Street  
Luncheon Hour.

MONDAY AFTERNOON

2:00 Music Appreciation ..... Mrs. Esther G. Kramer  
District Home Demonstration Agent  
2:30 Summer Poultry Problems ..... Mr. 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 Vesper—Webb Hall ..... Mrs. S. A. Jordan  
8:00 Song Service.  
8:30 Health Film.

TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 24

9:00 Devotional ..... Mrs. R. C. Childress  
9:15 Personal Evangelism, Study  
Class ..... Mrs. M. A. Treadwell

“Fourth Annual Christian Conference for Colored Women, Philander Smith College,” Little Rock, 1930, p. 2 (Porter Family Papers, 1902-1996)

# BLACK CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION



CENTER FOR ARKANSAS  
HISTORY AND CULTURE  
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

10:00 Health Talk.  
10:30 "What makes a House a Home," Mrs. Barcarfer  
11:15 Bible Hour ..... Mrs. H. N. Street  
Luncheon Hour.

## TUESDAY AFTERNOON

2:00 Breads—Fancy and Plain, Miss Gertrude Conant  
Foods and Nutrition Specialist  
3:00 Clothing ..... Mrs. Atwood, Mary Ray, Ella Parker

## TUESDAY EVENING

7:00 Vesper ..... Mrs. W. M. Campbell  
8:00 Address—The Holy Land as it is  
Today ..... Rev. Roy Davis

## WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 25

9:00 Devotional ..... Mrs. A. T. Clark  
9:15 Personal Evangelism, Study  
Class ..... Mrs. M. A. Treadwell  
10:00 Health Talk.  
10:30 "Better Mothers" ..... Mrs. J. H. Fuller  
11:15 Bible Hour ..... Mrs. H. N. Street  
Luncheon Hour.

## WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON

2:00 Games and Plays for Community  
Recreation ..... Miss Doris Whittington  
Asst. County Home Dem. Agent.  
3:00 Clothing ..... Mrs. Atwood, Mary Ray, Ella Parker

## WEDNESDAY EVENING

7:00 Vesper ..... Mrs. H. E. Carolina  
8:00 Missionary Address.

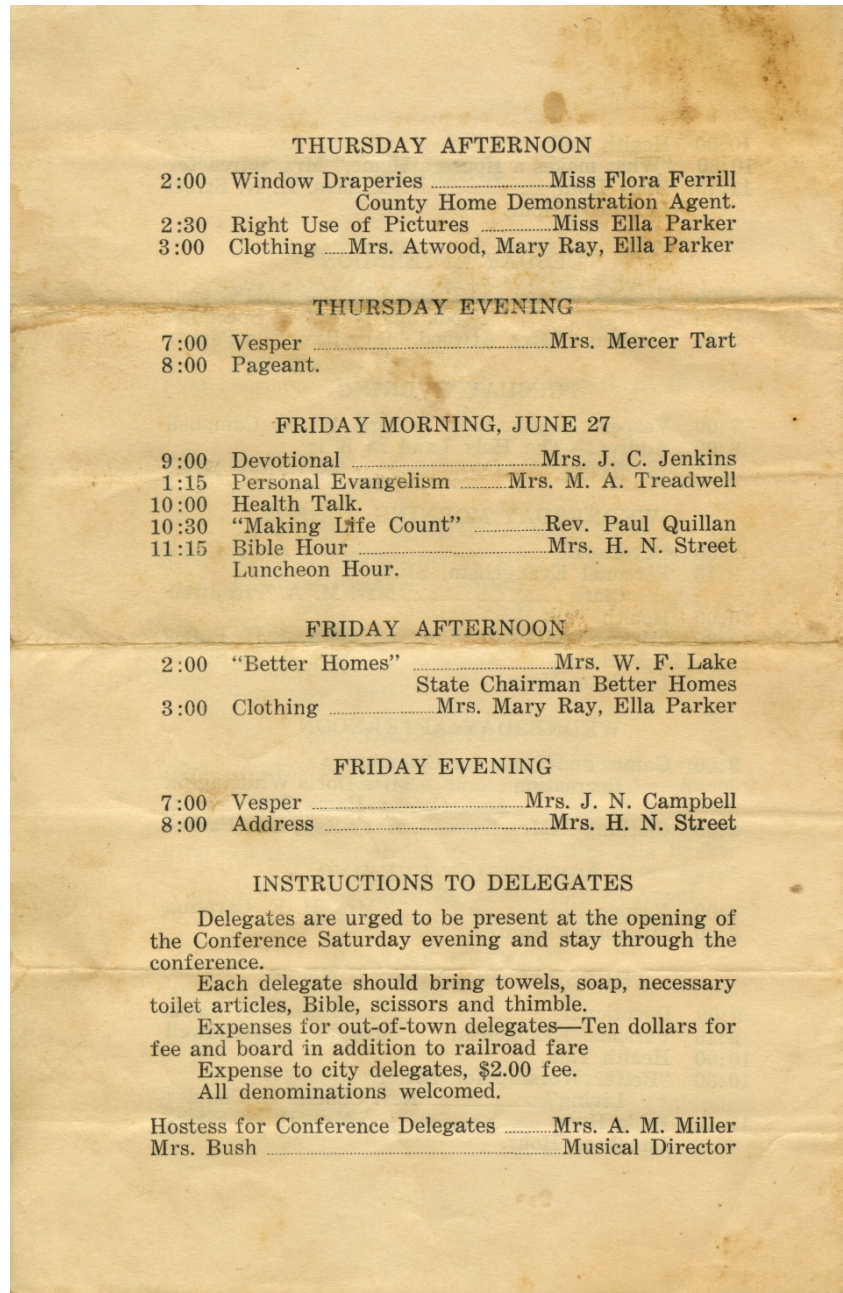
## THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 26

9:00 Devotional ..... Mrs. A. T. Clark  
9:15 Personal Evangelism ..... Mrs. M. A. Treadwell  
10:00 Health Talk.  
10:30 "Better Worship for Better  
Living" ..... Rev. Charles E. Chapler  
11:15 Bible Hour ..... Mrs. H. N. Street  
Luncheon Hour.

"Fourth Annual Christian Conference for Colored Women, Philander Smith College," Little Rock, 1930, p. 3 (Porter Family Papers, 1902-1996)



CENTER FOR ARKANSAS  
HISTORY AND CULTURE  
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK



“Fourth Annual Christian Conference for Colored Women, Philander Smith College,” Little Rock, 1930, p. 4 (Porter Family Papers, 1902-1996)

# BLACK CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION



## 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?