

First Things First with Msny. Richardson

During the month of May we celebrated and honored some great women in the church. The following are a few of the events that took place:

On Saturday, May 5th, First Jurisdiction Illinois held their annual Woman of the Year Luncheon. This luncheon was instituted by the late Bishop Shephard Little fulfilling his desire to give recognition to deserving women in the Jurisdiction. Bishop Booker has allowed the women's department the opportunity to continue with this valued tradition. Since its inception, it has been a blessing to many women. Candidates must be recommended by their peers and stringent requirements must be met in order to be considered.



This year's honoree was **Mother Betty Stripling** from the St. F .W. McGee/Williams Campbell District. Mother Betty Stripling was praised and celebrated for serving with distinction in many positions within her local church and jurisdiction. It was a great time of fellowship and many shared kind words and accolades for the honoree.

Before the honor is bestowed upon the new Women of the Year, the previous Woman of the Year (District Missionary Edith King) must relinquish her crown to the honoree. This is always a bitter sweet time for the previous recipient to relinquish her crown. It is one of the greatest honors one can receive and after holding the title for an entire year, it's not easy to let it go! The torch was finally

passed to Mother Stripling and she was crowned with the tiara, presented with a beautiful plaque and a medallion was placed around her neck. In addition to these tokens of royalty, she received a monetary donation. It was indeed a wonderful day of celebration.



Sunday, May 13th was our traditional Mother's Day celebration. This is the day that we honor and salute all of the mothers or women of the church who have helped to make a difference or played an integral role in the upbringing of a child. This is also the day that we honored our very own church mother, Mother Ophelia Turner. Mother Turner is a faithful, active and dedicated member of the church. We can count on her to be present and on the scene for everything that the church does. Mother Turner along with the Mother's Board were showered with special gifts of love. Every mother and woman present were given a gift along with a rose to remind them that no matter what storms they have to face in life that God will never leave them nor forsake them.



Saturday, May 19th our church was honored to host the State Ministers Wives Alliance under the leadership of Mother Jean Booker. Mother Booker is a dynamic leader and example for this vital department. She always has something new to present to us and to help us in our role as Pastors & Ministers Wives. The ladies came out adorned in their yellow, which was the color for the month. First Lady Missionary Nellie Smith was the selected speaker and she expounded on "Affirming Personhood" – Proverbs 27:19. Msny. Smith provided a wealth of information and inspiration on this important subject. After our meeting we were blessed to dine and enjoy the fellowship of one another.