



FIRST JURISDICTION IL HOLY CONVOCATION



As stated in Bishop Ocie Booker's letter to delegates, friends and guests regarding the First Jurisdiction IL 56th Annual Holy Convocation "We EXPECT God's presence to fill the temple every day and night. Souls would be saved, set free, and delivered through inspiring messages. Bodies would be healed through prayer and the laying on of hands. Families would unite and rekindle their love for each other. Every level of worship would be raised to a new dimension because we EXPECT GOD". These expectations were fulfilled!

The convocation convened Monday August 13th through Friday August 17th at the Abounding Life COGIC, where Pastor James Adams was the gracious host. Our theme this year was "The Nature of the Church". Truly God came in and met us every night.

Each night our praise team and jurisdictional mass choir under the leadership of Pastor Kenneth Lockhart and Sister Cathy Bogan, raised the roof with uplifting songs and melodies that prepared our hearts and minds for a powerful worship experience.



On Monday Night our special guest and keynote speaker was Bishop Brandon B. Porter. Bishop Porter is the Jurisdictional Prelate of Central Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Tennessee and the celebrated pastor of the Greater Community Church of God in Christ in Memphis Tennessee. He directed our attention to 2 Corinthians 4:17 "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" His subject was in the form of a question "How much does your Trouble Weight?". Bishop Porter delivered a profound message of encouragement for the believer who is experiencing trouble. He informed us that everything has weight and the weight of our trouble will determine the weight of the Glory that will be revealed to us and that this measure of

Glory will far outweigh the measure of trouble that we endure. Bishop Porter was simply phenomenal. After the message he made an appeal to those who were seeking the gift of the Holy Ghost. Many came to the altar and many received the precious gift of the Holy Ghost. There was dancing, shouting and celebration. The weight of Glory was tremendous, abundant and overwhelming!

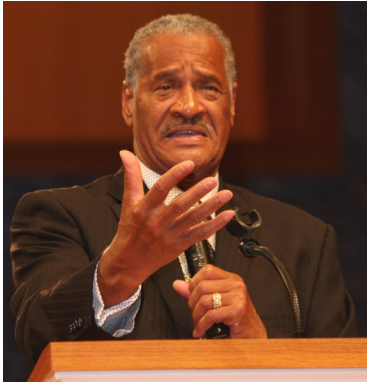
Tuesday night was Youth Night. The Youth Choir occupied the choir stand and blessed us tremendously with inspiring songs and melodies with a youthful flavor. Dr. Jane Crosley, Commissioner of Education and Mother Esther Grover, Chairperson of the jurisdiction's Scholarship Committee, presented monetary scholarships to various young people of the jurisdiction to assist them in the furtherance of their education.



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Also on Tuesday night was the presentation of the Pastor of the Year award for 2012. This year the recipient of this prestigious award was Pastor Rex Peel of the Greater Love Church of God in Christ. Pastor Peel was praised for the phenomenal work he is doing at his local church and the tremendous support he gives to our jurisdiction. The congregation stood and rendered a thunderous applause as he received the award and a monetary gift.



On Tuesday Night our special guest and keynote speaker for the evening was Bishop Roger L. Jones. Bishop Jones, the Jurisdictional Prelate of the 3rd Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of South West Michigan, captured our hearts and arrested our attention with his powerful testimony of deliverance of a cocaine addiction and his restoration to a stronger relationship with God. His message for the evening was fueled by his own personal experience of failure, restoration and a sincere desire for more of the power of God. He directed us to Exodus 33:11 "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle." His subject was "Getting Closer to God". Bishop Jones stressed that we must not be comfortable in the confidence of just being saved, Holy Ghost filled or just being known as Pentecostals. We must desire more than titles, positions and status, but we must have a burning desire to get closer to God. After this very emotional and transparent message, many came to the altar to get closer to God!



On Wednesday night the highlight of the evening was twofold. First we were blessed by the presence of our stately Jurisdictional Supervisor, Mother Charlotte Eades who encouraged the women of the church to move forward. Secondly we were blessed by the presence of our General Supervisor of Women of the Church of God in Christ, Mother Willie Mae Rivers. Mother Rivers was our keynote speaker for the evening and she was absolutely fantastic. Mother Rivers informed us that she would only be sharing a brief testimony due to the lateness of the hour. However the audience encouraged her to take her time and allow the

Lord to use her.

Mother Rivers based her discourse on the theme of our Convocation, which is "The Nature of the Church". She shared many attributes that describe the nature of the church and admonished us to exemplify these attributes in our walk with God. We should be kind, loving, faithful and most of all holy! She provided practical, proven and godly instructions that addressed many of the issues that are relevant to the church today. We were all blessed as we basked under the wisdom, wit and anointing of this seasoned and sober vessel of God.



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On Thursday our special guest and keynote speaker was the Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ - Bishop Charles E. Blake. Bishop Blake came to the podium to share what God had given him for this house. After his informative remarks regarding various projects completed in our church, Bishop Blake directed our attention to the book of 2 Chronicles 1:10 where Solomon prays for wisdom and knowledge that he may go out and come in before God's people. After sharing this very familiar passage of scripture, Bishop stated that after a careful and analytical study concerning the wish that Solomon made and taking into consideration the consequent downward spiral of Solomon's life, he believed that Solomon made a mistake. Bishop agreed that a wish for wisdom and knowledge, especially when it comes to leading God's people is a good and commendable wish, but he warned us that it was not the best wish that Solomon could have made. He suggested that if Solomon could have wished for the more of God, instead of just wisdom and knowledge that Solomon may not have made the blunders that he made and that his life may have taken a different direction. Bishop encouraged us not to make the mistake that Solomon made, and to wish for the best that God has to offer and that is Him. Bishop was simply fantastic. At the climax of his message the Saints praised God for his Best.

On Friday Night, which was the final night of this glorious meeting, our Jurisdictional Prelate, Bishop Ocie Booker spoke on the theme for the convocation, which was "The Nature of the Church. He began his discourse by expressing his concerns about the excessive disrespect for the church. He emphasized that the disrespect is not just the obvious that you would expect from those outside of the church, but that the disrespect is from those within the church. He stated that he sees the church almost like an abused child who is an orphan that has been placed in the hands of a foster guardian who did not take in the child because they loved them but solely because of financial gain. He told us that no child deserves this type of disrespect and neither does the church. He reminded us that the church was born through suffering. He also reminded us that the church is the bride of Christ and that Christ is getting the church ready to meet Him. Bishop encouraged us not to disrespect the church by our selfish aspirations to be enriched by its coffers, but to come together in unity and pledge our unselfish devotion to it. Bishop stated that the Church could be a powerful instrument against sin if its members would come together. Many powerful nuggets of insight, revelation and inspiration were bundled in Bishop Booker's official message. We were all blessed and moved by the powerful message delivered by our leader. Without question, this was one of the greatest convocations we have ever had!



Every level of worship was raised to a new dimension because we EXPECTED GOD and He SHOWED UP. Excerpts of each night are on the jurisdictional website (www.fjicogic.org) under the media selection.