

FIRST THINGS FIRST WITH MSNY. RICHARDSON

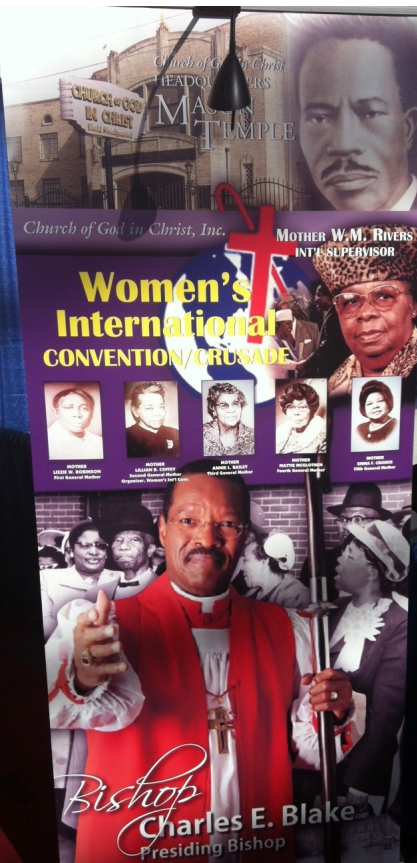
I was blessed again this year to attend the 2012 Women's International Convention and Crusade of the Church of God in Christ. Organized in 1911, this represented the 100th year celebration for the Women's Department and the 62nd Annual Women's International Convention. The Women's Department has a lot of rich history and plays a vital role in the global ministries of our great church. The Women's International Convention has much to offer from prayer, praise, worship, workshops, musicals, singing, teaching and phenomenal preaching.



Mother Willie Mae Rivers is the General Supervisor of Women in the Churches of God in Christ. She is also the Convention President, who does an exceptional job of staying out front and in charge. Mother Rivers, quoting from Elijah L. Hill's writings from the book "Women Come Alive" regarding Bishop Mason and the role of women in ministry stated: *"unlike most of his male religious contemporaries, Bishop Mason believed that women should be out front in leadership roles, cooperating alongside men in church work. In the beginning from the Azusa Street Revival until 1920, women were very visible in ministry... His vision was that women leaders would work alongside male leaders with women governing, organizing, and facilitating other female leadership roles."* Mother Rivers always has many words of wisdom to share with the women of God.

A few of the highlights of the convention:

For many years Mother Rivers headed the Leadership Conference which is an integral part of the Convention. This conference started 24 years ago with just a very few women attending and has now grown to thousands of women in attendance. Just a few years ago she incorporated a 12 hour prayer session that is always well attended and most motivating and inspiring. Mother Rivers incorporates delegates across every age group to play a part in this convention. The 49 years and under are privileged to have a dialogue with the General Supervisor. Everyone looks forward to seeing and hearing the Sunshine Band and the Puritans during the Friday day session. During this session our Presiding Bishop, Bishop Charles E. Blake prays and anoints all the youth in attendance. There is a banner parade that represents the various auxiliaries and departments within the global women's department. Time is taken to honor the seniors and to hear expressions from jurisdictional supervisors and workers that are involved in the foreign fields.



This year's theme for the Convention was "Seeking God through Prayer, Obedience and His Word". Mother Rivers along with other speakers during this convention drove home the point that there is a call for more Esther's, Mary's, Deborah's, Jochebed's and many other women in the bible that were used by God. We learned that we need more teachable women for the ministry. We need women to be on the frontline. We need real evangelists that are concerned about souls. We need more women who will give their lives to the Lord and, who will pray and fast, and seek God for His power to serve. We need to study God's Word, and get a grip of the master's hand so that we will be ready for the call of duty that He has for us!

There is much more that went on in this glorious convention. As always I left charged and motivated to seek God more through prayer, obedience and His Word. I am looking forward to attending the convention next year which will be in Orlando, Florida.