

**BAILEY TEMPLE CHURCH of GOD in CHRIST: A Historic Westside Church**  
**5370 McKinley Avenue Detroit, MI 48208**  
submitted by Dr. Esther Meyers Coleman

If you are traveling west on I-94, just before you approach the West Grand Blvd Exit, look to your left. Elevated above the embankment you can see a sign that reads, *Bailey Temple Church of God in Christ*. This church is located on the corner of McKinley Street and the Lodge Service Drive (formerly W. Kirby).

For almost a century the church has maintained a presence on the same site in this westside community. The Church is historic whereas it began on this site July 4, 1926, when Elder John Seth Bailey first held tent services here becoming the first Pentecostal church established on Detroit's Westside. Beginning with five members it was known as *McKinley Avenue Church of God in Christ (COGIC)*. As winter approached, services were moved from the tent to an adjacent storefront building, and in 1928 the first brick church structure was erected.

During the Depression membership grew slowly and members living nearby walked to services. In the early 1940s membership experienced significant growth as a later wave of the *Great Migration*, along with growth in the automobile industry; and Detroit as *The Arsenal of Democracy*, attributed to Detroit's overall population surge. Many families from Alabama, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Tennessee, moved north and joined congregations that rekindled their Southern religious worship experiences. Weekday services, as well as Sunday and Sunday night services, were highlighted by spirited worship with gospel music and singing. Summer revivals helped the congregation to flourish and membership grew. Consequently, in 1945 the building was remodeled to accommodate a growing congregation and expanded church activities. Because neighbors and visitors often came just to buy generous chicken dinners on Saturdays and Sundays, these culinary efforts were financially supportive and eventually the church became famous as "the chicken & roll church".

Because membership grew exponentially from 1957 to 1970, a third church building was constructed. During its construction a *Detroit News* article reported it as "A Church Within A Church". In 1958 the church was renamed and dedicated to its founder, John Seth Bailey, who had become the Bishop and State Overseer of Southwestern Michigan Churches of God in Christ.

In its longtime history Bailey Temple became a Mecca for Pentecostal experience on The Westside. Legendary gospel Grammy winners, *The Clark Sisters*, began their careers while their mother, Dr. Mattie Moss Clark, was the Music Director for Bailey Temple. Junior Church services on Thursday nights drew attendance from all over Detroit. Periodically, Interstate Meetings were held with other youth groups in Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania. These meetings between church choirs and the popular Inspirational Choir provided fellowship opportunities with other Westside churches. Often such activities had social settings that formed lasting friendships and other relationships leading to courtship and marriages.

Bailey Temple Church has had three pastors. Elder James M. Johnson was the second pastor. He led construction in 2001 of *The Madison Community Resource Center (MCRC)* as an addition to the 1957 building. In 2009, with a Skillman Grant, the MCRC sponsored and placed a community monument, designed by Hubert Massey, at West Grand Blvd. and West Warren Avenue to commemorate the original site of *The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History*.

In 2012 Elder Randall Greenwood was appointed pastor. His leadership continues the historic outreach ministry of the Church with regular community food and clothing distribution. Bailey Temple's Heritage Committee has applied for the Church to be designated as a **State of Michigan Historic Site**. A ceremony is expected to be held in early Summer 2015 to celebrate placement of the Marker.

### **--Black History Reflections of Dr. Therison Bradshaw**

I was born November 10, 1931 .My first job was as a newsboy delivering black newspapers from the area paper station that my father created. A station that provided jobs for kids in the neighborhood, kids such as myself and Dr. Charles Adams , the pastor of Hartford Avenue Baptist Church.

I built the largest black newspaper route in the state of Michigan covering an area of 100 square blocks, Warren Avenue to Tireman Avenue, West Grand Boulevard to Colfax.

The logistics of servicing this large area was accomplished by the utilization of my bicycle, my father and his car.

In the beginning, I used bicycle transportation , but as my customer base increased I had to continually revisit my home for refills. I solved this first business problem by asking my father to provide me with the means to transport these vast amounts of paper over this 100 square block area. All that I had to do was to ask.

I developed the procedure of taking the amount of papers out of the car that was needed for the first block and he would meet me at the beginning of the next block and we would start all over again, block after block after block. Every Thursday, regardless of the weather, rain, snow, or sleet.

The newspapers were weekly publications, years before Facebook ,that provided blacks with the only means of receiving black news, other than by word-of-mouth.The newspapers were The Michigan Chronicle, the Pittsburgh Courier , and the Chicago Tribune.

This newspaper route provided me with my first business training .I learned the principles necessary to succeed in any business, the discipline of dependability, keeping accurate records, and most important ,obtaining profitability.

I opened my first bank account. Labeled it "my college fund " and it was used exclusively for that purpose.This was easily done because my father provided me with all of the necessities of life , food ,housing ,clothing , and last but not least the Popsicles and Dairy Cups purchased from the bell ringing ice cream truck that canvassed the neighborhood every evening, shortly before the next episode of "The Lone Ranger".

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# The WestSider



## Volume IX No. 1 Winter, 2015

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### From The Desk Of The President

Greetings fellow Westsiders

The month of March indicates the arrival of the spring season and Daylight Savings Time. Daylight Savings Time will begin on March 8th. Remember to "spring forward" by resetting your clocks and watches ahead by one hour. We must first endure the remnants of this record-setting winter. Forecasters predict more days of snow and blustery temperatures ahead. I say to everyone, especially to seniors, school aged children and those of us that work outside: Bundle up and "THINK SPRING!"

Our Annual Christmas Dinner/Dance was very successful and well attended by Westsiders and their guests. Karen Walker served as M.C. and shared interesting events from her earlier years. Esther Coleman related how the Westsiders communities touched the world. Barbara Seldon sang Christmas Carols with the help of all of those present. And Santa Clause was present to wish a Merry Christmas to all. Music was provided by DJ Love. Thanks to Don McSwain, Karen Walker and their committee for planning such and outstanding event.

Felix Seldon and committee are planning our 20th year celebration. Remember to put Sunday, May 31st on your calendar. This year, Rosa and I celebrated our 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in the Dominican Republic. For the entire ten days we were there, the temperature stayed in the mid-80s. We are now so ready for spring to arrive!

The Westsiders meet every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at The Tabernacle Baptist Church from 2 to 4 p.m. Mark your calendar and join us for fellowship. I'll see you there.

*Wallace Craig, President*

Wallace Craig, President

P.S. Support our businesses, large and small, this holiday season.

**The Munificent Sponsors of this newsletter are: Kenneth Leonard and Florence Edwards Scott. We appreciate their contributions.**

### July 18, 1942 ANNOUNCEMENT

With this issue of the Hannibal Register we call your attention to the announcement in the Register dated June 14, 1919. From then until today the Wright family has devoted the publication to the better interests of the Negro race.

As we send forth this last issue of the paper, I take great pride in saluting my sons, George, Jr., Rev. Samuel, Booker T. Dubois, John and Charles for their unrelenting support. The outgrowth of the Hannibal Register has spearheaded the opening of Wright Printers that will be located at 5200 Tireman Avenue in Detroit.

We want to express our kind thanks and gratitude to our many friends and supporters for their cooperation through the years. The largest part of which came from the white businessmen and merchants of Hannibal who were respectful of our right to maintain and be an exponent for racial expression.

More than three quarters of a million copies of the paper have been circulated through the mails since the original publication date of June 14, 1919.

We are pleased to have had the opportunity to serve in a small journalistic venture in this community. Our goals were intent and directed to the vision that would inspire knowledge as well as cooperation.

Perhaps no institution in America renders a greater service to the nation than does the Negro Press of America. The publishers, editors and writers have blazed the trail to a better understanding between the races, provided programs to help the Negro race to become better citizens, educate their children, purchase homes, support their children and elevate the moral and social standard of their race.

It is our supreme hope that Negro children yet unborn will live in a democracy so true that worth and character will be the true evaluation of men, and color will cease a badge of inferiority.

From the historic that Frederick Douglass issued his small news sheet until now, only the Negro press dares to tell America of its many injustices against Negro people. Out of these protests it has enlisted the thinking white people in a fight for justice. The results of these protests are the lifting of many bans, more equal justice, better jobs and better homes.

With God directing our efforts we will open up the Dixie ballot boxes to the Negro in the South.

Our best wishes to the people of Hannibal. To the Negro population of Hannibal, I leave a legacy of dedication and work that moves you forward to stand as leaders in your community.

Yours truly,

**George Hannibal Wright July 18, 1942**  
He is the father of Marie Wright Teasley.

## Bio of Mary Esther Orange McKissic



Living on the Westside of Detroit was a wonderful experience for Mary Esther Orange McKissic and family. She married Leon McKissic. They are the parents of four children (Darin, Leon III, Duane, and Leah), seven grandchildren (Talisa, Lena, Dana, Leon III, Kristin, Duane, Jr., and Devin), and three great grandchildren (Sean, Jayce, and Carter).

When Mary Esther was young, she lived on Tireman Avenue, across the street from families which included: Barbara Burch, Charles Adams, Pat Malone, Pamela Pulliam, Wanda Hickman, and the Thomas Tyler Family (her cousins).

Mary McKissic and family moved from Tireman Avenue to her grandparent's home at 6420-28th Street between Milford Avenue and Moore Place. Her grandfather owned and operated "The Sheppard & Son Moving Company" which was also located at the 28th Street address. When African-American people moved from the South to Detroit, his moving company moved them from the Eastside to the Westside. Her grandmother baked and sold delicious pound cakes and homemade ice-cream from the basement of 28th Street. Jessye, Mary's mother, also delivered the cakes to people in the neighborhood.

Mr. Hicks delivered large blocks of ice to an ice house located across the street on the corner. Next to it was a vacant lot where neighborhood men played croquet. They played with a large wooden croquet set handmade by the men. Several other families who lived on 28th Street included the Craig, Brown, Clavon, Mitchell, Stanbrough (Laundry), White, Newman (Real Estate), McCree, Sloan, Gambrell, Knox (Mom's Kitchen), Carson, Melbern, Lloyd, Scales, Smith, Williams, Easton, Poole, Early, Simon, and Ford families. In those days milk was put on the front porch by delivery men driven by a horse/ truck.

Campbell's Drug Store was located on the corner of 28th Street and Milford Avenue. Mary worked at the neighborhood stores located on Milford Avenue, including Campbell's Drug Store, Johnson's Confectionary Store, Rubin's Five and Ten Cents Store and Mom's Kitchen. She also worked at Stallings, and Mills Legal Firm; R. L. Polk Publishing Company; Ford Motor Company; Shaw College and Wayne County Community College.

Mary Esther McKissic, a native Detroiter, has resided in Detroit for over seventy eight (78) years. She was Secretary of the Virginia Park Association (1959) and member of the Muirland Street Block Club (1963). She is a member of the Russell Woods Sullivan Area Association (1988 – Current) where she has served as Treasurer, Vice President, and Chairperson of the Park Cultural Committee, and a member of the Northwestern Alumni Committee. She is President of The Detroit Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association (DCPAAA), she joined in Year, 2003. She served as Vice President for two (2) years, and President for four (4). She is currently serving as a Community Representative on the Detroit Police Department's Recruitment/Selection Oral Board and the Chief's Advisory Committee.

The goal of Detroit's Citizens Police Academy and its Association is to strengthen the partnership between the community and the Detroit Police Department. In support of this goal under the direction of Ms. McKissic, the Association implemented the Courtesy Greeters. She also planned and organized Crime Prevention Seminars at five (5) Detroit- area high schools (2008=2012).

Mary McKissic attended Wingert Elementary School, Northwestern High School, Highland Park Community College (Associate Degree) and Wayne State University (Masters of Education) and Bachelor of Science in Business Education. She is a retired Administrator and

Teacher from Wayne County Community College where she was employed for over 20 Years (1976-2000). She wrote, developed and implemented the Adult Education Program that is currently at the college. She received over one million dollars in grant funding for the program.

After retirement from the college, she served as Community Developer for V.I.S.I.O.N. (Vital Investments Serving In Our Neighborhoods) and educator of adjudicated youth at Don Bosco Hall, Sutton House. She was the Representative for Junior Colleges/Private Business Schools for Michigan Business Education Association (1999 – 2003). She served as Chairperson of the Political Action Committee. She is serving in the Deacon Ministry at Hartford Memorial Baptist Church (1988 – Current), and she is a member of Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Alpha Theta Chapter.

Ms. McKissic assisted in writing the awarded Comerica Park Grand Slam Grant for Renaissance High School (2012), serves on the Advisory Board for The James Tatum Foundation for the Arts, and serves on the Board of Directors for Vital Investments Serving In Our Neighborhoods (V.I.S.I.O.N.).

In addition to what has been mentioned, Ms. McKissic was a Maxine Powell Model and was Ms. DSR. Her picture was posted on all the old DSR Streetcars.

In recognition of her outstanding services to education, Detroit Police Department, and citizens of the City of Detroit, Soror Mary McKissic was awarded the 2013 Volunteer Appreciation Award from The Detroit Citizen Corps, The Spirit of Detroit Award from the Detroit City Council (2012), a Resolution from the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners (2009), Certification of Appreciation from the Detroit Police Department (2010), Volunteer Community Services Award from the Detroit Public Schools (2012), Distinguished Service Award presented by the Detroit City Council (2010), Certificate of Tribute from The State of Michigan (2010), Educator of the Year Award from the Elks of the world (2003), Educator of the Year Award by the Business and Technical Institute (2008), an award for serving as Vice Chairperson of the YWCA Interim House Board of Management (1955), and Distinguished Community Service Award (2008) from the James Tatum Foundation for the Arts.

Living on the Westside 28th Street in Detroit was a rewarding experience. The neighbors were like family, connected and surrounded by love and support.

## Heard Across the Boulevard

Audrea Burke Calloway has moved to Arlington, VA. She now lives with her daughter and son-in-law, Julie and Ted Lewis. We hope the weather is warmer there than here in Detroit.

Jackie Smith Simpkins wants you to know that Commodore Clark has passed and his services will be some time in March.

Marian Stephens and Cynthia Johnson had a grand time selling books and DVDs at the Historical Museum's Black History Month Celebration.

Dr. Ruth Dent Liles is leading a team to secure a historical marker for Northwestern High School. This is an important venture because of the outstanding alumni of our Alma Mater.

Dr. Angela Dillard, daughter of Paul and Marilyn, is now Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education and Earl Lewis Collegiate Professor of Afro-American & African Studies in the Residential College of the University of Michigan. Dr. Angela was a 2007 Icon of The WestSiders and is a Life Member. Do you remember that her dissertation was the basis for her book, "Faith in the City: Preaching Radical Social Change in Detroit". It features Rev Charles Hill and Rev. Albert Cleage among other clergymen and activists

### News Release

Felix Seldon and his committee are working hard to assure that you have a wonderful time celebrating our 20 years of exploring and recording our history of the old west side. The 20th Anniversary Celebration Banquet will take place Sunday, May 31, 2015 from 4 to 10 P.M. at the Detroit Yacht Club. You may reserve a seat for \$60 by quickly mailing in your reservation. Begin looking for your invitation so you may be among the first on the guest list. We look forward to seeing you there.

Please send your comments and additions before June 1st, 2015 for the Summer 2015 Newsletter to: 3265 W. Outer Dr. Detroit, MI 48221 or to smccree2@Comcast.net

**Our newsletter**, The WestSider needs your help. Won't you join The Roster of Munificent Sponsors? Each issue costs \$300. You may dedicate your issue to someone you love, in memory or just because.

### For Your Pleasure

The WestSiders plan to expand our book "Our Story". Do not be the one to regret that you did not submit Your Story. The committee is looking for stories about a family an individual or your neighborhood. Send your story accompanied by a photo to:

**Marian Stephens**  
**2516 LaSalle Gardens South**  
**Detroit, Michigan 48206**

### MEMBERSHIP - MARILYN GREEN

#### NEW ANNUAL MEMBER

Helen A. Acevedo, Helen Dove-Jones

#### NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Hortense Harvey, JoAnn Lee,  
Gwendolyn Currant Scott

#### IN REMEMBRANCE

Mardell Stricklen

### Our Memorable Winter Vacation

Wallace and I celebrated our wedding anniversary this year in the CARIBBEAN. Delta Vacations was the agency we relied on to help us with our trip to celebrate our fifty-fifth marriage anniversary. It was impossible to acquire accommodations for February 13 (our wedding date) because of the popularity of Valentines Day events. So, February 16- Feb. 26, 2015 was our final choice. We chose the La Romana resort, located in the southeastern coast of the Dominican Republic. It is about an hour's drive from Punta Cana Airport.

La Romana Resort, is billed as" secluded, upscale paradise with beautiful beaches." We concur that it was that and much more. Our package was all inclusive: Flight, transfers, room with mini- bar restocked daily with water, and soft drinks. We loved the private terrace and the availability of 24 hour meals and snacks. The restaurants served plenty of water, bottled soft drinks, lemonade, and red wine and white wine with every meal. Yes and the foods were good too. Fun activities and entertainment were planned for those choosing to participate. Just lying near the pool in the shade of the tall palm trees was a choice also. We loved sitting in an open-air restaurant and looking out over the beach and viewing the blue ocean water beyond.

Our excursions included two bus tours of historic sites: one half- day tour of La Romana and an all day excursion of Santo Domingo. Tourist trade is the means of income in this area but the pressure by independent street venders is irksome and irritating.

In conclusion, our winter vacation was one of rest and relaxation and of recalling our once-in -a -lifetime event of 1960.  
**Rosa Craig**