

ACLCL Prayer Breakfast at Church in Jamaica, New York Celebrates Women

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A highlight of Women's History Month this year was the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLCL) Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, March 19 at the New Jerusalem Baptist Church in Jamaica, New York. Dr. Calvin Rice was the gracious host pastor, and Rev. Carolyn Blair was the keynote speaker. The program, enjoyed by over 70 participants, was a great success. The fellowship hall was packed, the atmosphere was warm and people lingered long after the program was over.

Rev. Carolyn Blair, a dynamic preacher, innovative educator, and internationally acclaimed vocalist, gave a very meaningful sermon based on Acts 16:1-5. She thoughtfully analyzed the relationships within the family of Timothy, the chief disciple of the Apostle Paul. She noted that Timothy came from a mixed marriage, and the family was probably not intact. Yet, God worked through the faith of the mothers at a time when women played a minor role in society.

Rev. Jesse Edwards was the Master of Ceremonies, and throughout the program, he testified to True Parents, their connection to Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and the importance of participating in the Marriage Blessing Ceremony.

Minister Hugh Wright was the guest musician. He tied the program together by providing background music throughout the morning. He and Bishop Edwards frequently led the congregation in song.

Rev. Emma Loftin-Woods, one of the 172 ministers who toured Korea at the behest of True Parents in 2011, led the congregation in a responsive reading taken from Genesis 20:1-6, Acts 16:1-5, and 2 Timothy 1:1-5. These verses addressed the importance of faith being inherited by children from their grandparents and parents.

Rev. Sondra Browne, the Administrative Assistant to Dr. Rice, and her staff did a tremendous job preparing for the Prayer Breakfast. The room was beautifully decorated, with elegant place settings, plates and utensils. The food was catered by The Door, a restaurant across the street from the church.

Dr. Rice, Senior Pastor of New Jerusalem, enjoyed the program and invited ACLCL to hold a Prayer Breakfast at New Jerusalem every second month. Under the leadership of Dr. Rice, a church on Staten Island grew from 50 members to 2,500 members. God later sent him to New Jerusalem in Jamaica, Queens. There he helped resurrect an aging church, by establishing a dynamic youth ministry, and he completed the construction of a multi-million dollar church facility.

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