

## Family Values Banquet Honors Detroit Pastors

David Kasbow  
May 3, 2013  
State Pastor of Michigan



*Award winners from Detroit's 11th Annual ACLC True Family Values Banquet. (From left to right: Rev. Michael Balcomb, Rev. Kevin Lancaster, Rev. Earnest Hatcher and Rev. David Kasbow)*

American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLCL) pastors and Family Federation members joined in celebrating Detroit's 11th Annual ACLC True Family Values Banquet on Saturday, April 27, 2013. This year the program was held near the Family Federation church in the Detroit suburb of Warren, Michigan. Based on the model of the Chicago's ACLC annual Banquets, we have developed our own style which is gradually becoming an interchurch event.

One hundred and fifty attendees, including Rev. Michael Balcomb, Family Federation USA President, and Rev. Kazuo Takami, district pastor of district 7 (Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan), gathered to honor seven award winners, mostly pastors, who were nominated by members of their congregations as well as by Family Federation members who typically visit other churches around the city on Wednesday nights.. We sent out a press release for nominations in the categories of "Promotion of Marriage and Family," "Promotion of Abstinence before Marriage," as well as "Outstanding Parents" and "Outstanding Families." As the nomination forms came in, our pastors decided on the winners.

Rev. Balcomb joined with our ACLC Co-Chairs, Rev. Earnest Hatcher and Rev. David Kasbow, to hand out the framed award certificates. We were also honored to have the State Representative of Warren, Jon Switalski, come to give Certificates of Recognition from the state of Michigan as well. One award winner was Rev. Kevin Lancaster. He is pastor of Love Life Family Christian Center. We met him through a visit to his bible study by our members, Rev. Ed Taub and his wife. They nominated Rev. Lancaster for "Promotion of Marriage and Family" after hearing his excellent education on marriage in his bible studies.

The keynote speaker for the event was Detroit City Councilman, and African Methodist Episcopal (AME) pastor, Rev. Andre Spivey. He gave a heartfelt testimony of his family, sharing the laughter and the tears that come from loving the best and the worst behaviors of our children and relatives. Many in the audience concluded that he was a classic example of the good father. Just before the banquet he had been at his son's baseball game. He had to apologize for wearing gym shoes to the stage, since he had forgotten to bring his dress shoes; this brought some laughter from the parents in the audience.

In the past our event has mostly been planned by our church. However, our core ACLC pastors decided that the Family Federation church has been paying too much money for the event. We held pastor meetings to look at ways to cut down the cost. Ironically, the big changes we came up with also improved the program. When we investigated and found that a noon-time event is half the cost, we decided to move the program at a banquet center to a Saturday at 12:00 p.m.

We received a lot of good feedback about this. We also decided to invite a local pastor to speak to save on travel- and hotel costs. Having a local pastor, who is on the Detroit city council, give the message was also a big plus for our local development since everyone knows and respects him. This year our Family Federation International choir sang in the program but we already have plans to create an interdenominational choir next year. The pastors said our Family Federation young people are good ushers, but we also plan for young people from our ACLC churches to help out with this next year as well.