



INTERNATIONAL PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH

Legacy

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Number 4



THE
MEMPHIS
MIRACLE



Harold D. Hunter, Ph.D.
Director
Archives & Research Center

Roots ^a _n ^d Wings

Raised in the multicultural environment of the Church of God of Prophecy, my personal journey of commitment to the equality of all God's children started at a young age. The

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tapestry of my life has been intertwined with the rich culture of various peoples, especially an African American as best friend and "best man" in my wedding in 1970.

Through the years of preaching, worshipping and even serving together as executives at the World Headquarters of the Church of God of Prophecy, my life has been enriched as my non-white friends and I formed a loving community. Seminary teaching and preaching in excess of 40 countries has brought me face-to-face with fellow pilgrims who are among God's choice vessels.

These experiences, coupled with intense study of related issues, elevated the level of my engagement in such affairs. Those who live in isolation do so to the peril of the body of Christ.

The Memphis Miracle

I had the privilege of participating in the October 17-19, 1994, meeting of *Pentecostal Partners: A Reconciliation Strategy for 21st Century Ministry*. The cover picture celebrates a highlight of the event labelled the "Memphis Miracle" by the press.

I value the washing of saints feet and understand the significance attached to the symbolic footwashing captured in this photo. However, as we meditate on this experience, we cannot remain content with only an episodic repentance, but must have an eternal commitment to justice and righteousness. Our daily words, deeds and attitudes will be held accountable in this on-going reconciliation process.

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The IPHC can celebrate the fact that without the intervention of **Bishop B.E. Underwood**, there would not have been a transition from the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) to the newly

integrated Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). A man who turned his convictions into a deed of significant healing. An example well worth imitating.

Conference-Appointed Archivists

In 1983 the General Board of Administration (GBA) established guidelines for the IPHC Archives & Research Center. Among their
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COVER: Pictured is the spontaneous washing of Bishop Ithiel Clemmons' feet by an Euro-American pastor from Florida during the birthing of the racially-integrated Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA), on October 17-19, 1994. Bishop B.E. Underwood, IPHC General Superintendent and president of the white-only Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA), spearheaded the reconciliation and transition to PCCNA, offering membership to Pentecostal/Charismatic churches of all races. Other IPHC participants pictured are (on left) Dr. Vinson Synan, Rev. James Leggett, and Dr. Harold D. Hunter (right).

THE MEMPHIS MIRACLE

BY BISHOP B.E. UNDERWOOD



The modern Pentecostal movement began in 1901 under the leadership of Charles Fox Parham. But the miraculous expansion of this sovereign move of God took place under the leadership of William J. Seymour in Los Angeles, California, in 1906. The spiritual explosion was the beginning of the greatest phenomenon of church growth in the twentieth century. This Pentecostal/Charismatic movement now numbers approximately 500,000,000 strong in the world.

One of the most dramatic aspects of the Azusa Street Revival was the breaking down of racial barriers in the midst of a racist American society. The statement often quoted was, "The blood has washed away the color line." There is no questioning that the Holy Spirit performed a tremendous miracle

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in bringing to this dynamic movement a unity of the Spirit which transcended the shameful racist culture into which it was born.

But tragedy lurked in the midst of this triumph. The fledgling movement came under vicious attack by the secu-



The "20/20 Meeting" of the Racial Reconciliation Dialogue.

lar media. One of the primary points of this attack was the miracle of racial reconciliation. The press became spokesmen for a racist society. This blistering attack on the prophetic Pentecostal movement was too much for the Euro/American participants. They succumbed to the pressures of the racist culture, rather than continue to surrender to the gracious work of the Holy Spirit. The manifestation of racial reconciliation survived at Azusa Street for about three years—from 1906 until 1909. With few exceptions, however, all signs of this racial unity had disappeared by 1924.

There is no doubt that God Almighty was providing a supernatural remedy for racism in America. The recipients of the supernatural outpouring of the Holy Spirit could conceivably have provided a beautiful paradigm shift in the midst of a culture dominated by Jim Crowism. Sadly, they missed this God-given opportunity. They heeded the call of the wild rather than the bidding of the Spirit.

The result of this fall has been three quarters of a century of division in the Pentecostal family in America. What a difference it could have made during the civil rights movement in America if all the children of the Pentecostal revival had stood together as

a shining example of what God could do to solve the problems of racism and discrimination!

When the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) was formed in October of 1948, in Des Moines, Iowa, all of the participants were from white Pentecostal denominations. This pattern continued until the PFNA was disbanded in 1994.

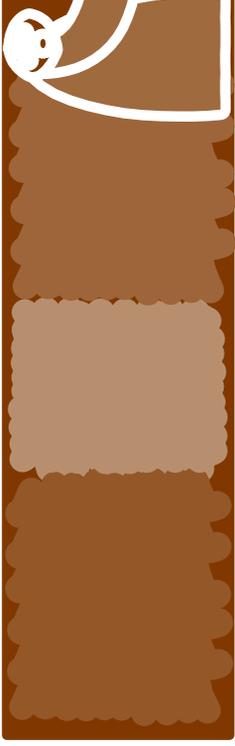
While there had been many efforts to bring African-American Pentecostals into the fellowship, none had succeeded. The division was too deep for this kind of reconciliation. Several members of the Board of Administra-

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tion of PFNA had discussed and deplored this state of affairs over the years, but a dramatic move was necessary in order to bridge this racial chasm.

I became chairman of PFNA in October of 1991. At the first meeting over which I presided on March 6, 1992, the Board of Administration of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America voted unanimously to pursue the possibility of reconciliation with our African-American brethren.

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RACIAL RECONCILIATION MANIFESTO

Challenged by the reality of our racial division, we have been drawn by the Holy Spirit to Memphis, Tennessee, October 17-19, 1994, in order to become true “Pentecostal Partners” and to develop together “A Reconciliation Strategy for the 21st Century Ministry.” We desire to covenant together in the ongoing task of racial reconciliation by committing ourselves to the following agenda.

- I** . I pledge in concert with my brothers and sisters of many hues to oppose racism prophetically in all its various manifestations within and without the Body of Christ and to be vigilant in the struggle with all my God-given might.
- II** . I am committed personally to treat those in the Fellowship who are not of my race or ethnicity, regardless of color, with love and respect as my sisters and brothers in Christ. I am further committed to work against all forms of personal and institutional racism, including those which are revealed within the very structures of our environment.
- III** . With complete bold and courageous honesty, we mutually confess that racism is sin and as a blight in the Fellowship must be condemned for having hindered the maturation of spiritual development and mutual sharing among Pentecostal-Charismatic believers for decades.
- IV** . We openly confess our shortcomings and our participation in the sin of racism by our silence, denial and blindness. We admit the harm it has brought to generations born and unborn. We strongly contend that the past does not always completely determine the future. New horizons are emerging. God wants to do a new thing through His people.
- V** . We admit that there is no single solution to racism in the Fellowship. We pray and are open to tough love and radical repentance with deep sensitivity to the Holy Spirit as Liberator.

VI . Together we will work to affirm one another's strengths and acknowledge our own weaknesses and inadequacies, recognizing that all of us only "see in a mirror dimly" what God desires to do in this world. Together, we affirm the wholeness of the Body of Christ as fully inclusive of Christians regardless of color. We, therefore, commit ourselves "to love one another with mutual affection, outdoing one another in showing honor" (Romans 12:10).

VII . We commit ourselves not only to pray but also to work for genuine and visible manifestations of Christian unity.

VIII . We hereby commit ourselves not only to the task of making prophetic denouncement of racism in word and creed, but to live by acting in deed. We will fully support and encourage those among us who are attempting change.

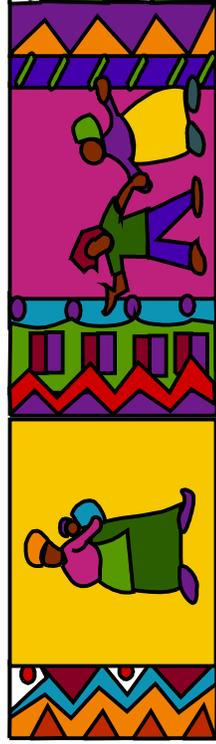
IX . We pledge that we will return to our various constituencies and appeal to them for logistical support and intervention as necessary in opposing racism. We will seek partnerships and exchange pulpits with persons of a different hue, not in a paternalistic sense, but in the Spirit of our Blessed Lord who prayed that we might be one (John 17:21).

X . We commit ourselves to leaving our comfort zones, lay aside our warring, racial allegiances, respecting the full humanity of all, live with an openness to authentic liberation which is a product of Divine Creation, until the shackles fall and all bondage ceases.

XI . At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Azusa Street Mission was a model of preaching and living the Gospel message in the world. We desire to drink deeply from the well of Pentecost as it was embodied in that mission. We, therefore, pledge our commitment to embrace the essential commitments of that mission in evangelism and mission, in justice and holiness, in spiritual renewal and empowerment, and in the reconciliation of all Christians regardless of race or gender as we move into the new millennium.

MANIFESTO COMMITTEE:

Bishop Ithiel Clemmons Dr. Cecil M. Roebeck, Jr.
Dr. Leonard Lovett Dr. Harold D. Hunter



The Reconciliation Journey

There were four steps in the road to the "Memphis Miracle." This could be called the "Reconciliation Dialogue Journey."

◆ First, there was a meeting on July 31, 1992, at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport Hyatt Regency Hotel. There were ten people in this meeting, but only one was African American. Bishop O. T. Jones, Jr. made a significant contribution to the reconciliation process. His presence at the meeting was crucial to the journey. There were several other African-American leaders who were invited to this meeting, but none of them came. Two or three did send their regrets and expressed their desire to attend.

◆ The second meeting took place in Phoenix, Arizona, January 4-5, 1993. This was a powerful meeting. Thirty-three denominational leaders and pastors spent two days in prayer and dialogue concerning this reconciliation.

This [racial reconciliation] meeting will certainly not be the end of God's reconciliation strategy. ...We must purpose to travel this road together. ...We will have to travel through times of both repentance and forgiveness.

While the only African-American representative present was Pastor Reuben Anderson from Compton, California (he was sent to represent Bishop Charles Blake), he was a powerful catalyst for this meeting. God spoke prophetically in this meeting and all of the participants became convinced that we were involved in a move of God. I knew following this meeting that God was at work to ac-

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(Excerpt from B.E. Underwood's focus statement to the Racial Reconciliation Dialogue.)

We are gathered here in Memphis, Tennessee, to return to our roots and to recapture the initiative of the Spirit. This will be a time of repentance for the sins of the past. This will be a time of forgiveness as we rely upon the wonderful grace of our loving Heavenly Father and mirror that grace in our relationships with one another. The time has come for reconciliation! The time has come to recapture our heritage! We gather here as the children of God and heirs of the twentieth century Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal of the church. Our Father has called us to unity.

The theme of our meeting is "Pentecostal Partners: A Reconciliation Strategy for 21st Century Mission." The goal is to bring healing to this part of the Body of Christ. We really have no choice. Our Lord has called us to unity. The high-priestly prayer of our Savior is that we all may be one, so that the world may believe in the only begotten Son of God. We grieve over the 88 years of rebellion against the reconciliation work of the Holy Spirit. We return with all our hearts to the unity of the Spirit manifested during the blazing revival at Azusa Street.

The Reconciliation Dialogue will deal with some of the major issues facing us. We will look at the historical roots of racial unity and division. We will examine the problem of racism and discrimination in the Pentecostal movement. But we will then turn to the biblical pattern for unity. And finally, we will focus on a strategy for reconciliation.

We have not gathered just to talk about the issues. We are here to act. We must take substantial steps toward implementing the strategy for reconciliation. As a first step in this direction, the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America will conduct its final convention tomorrow afternoon. The final act will be to dissolve the PFNA in order to make way for a new fellowship which will be an interracial fellowship.

The organizational meeting for the new interracial fellowship of Pentecostal churches will be held Wednesday afternoon. We have a prepared constitution to be considered and a proposal for a twelve-person executive committee composed of an equal number of African Americans and Euro/Americans.

We must also identify and enlist a key group of leaders who will serve as catalysts in major cities across America to implement the vision of this reconciliation. The example set by the Pentecostal/Charismatic community in Memphis during the past six months may well point the way for dozens of other locations. God seeks to restore the unity of the Spirit that will position us to truly evangelize our nation. Racism in the Pentecostal/Charismatic community must be eradicated. The communion of saints must become a visible reality.

This meeting will certainly not be the end of God's reconciliation strategy. It is just the beginning. We have a long road to travel. We must purpose to travel this road together. Like a marriage that has come apart, our recovering the unity of the Spirit will require both courage and commitment. We still have much to learn about each other. We will have to travel through times of both repentance and forgiveness. But thank God, we have set our faces in the right direction!

Seven years from now, if Jesus tarries, the Pentecostal World Conference will meet in Los Angeles, California. During the week leading up to Pentecost Sunday, we hope to have the largest gathering of Pentecostal/Charismatic believers ever held on the North American continent. As we gather to launch the second century of the Pentecostal renewal, we want to present to the whole world a model of racial reconciliation in the American Pentecostal community.

complete reconciliation.

◆ The third event was the PFNA Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, October 25-27, 1993. Bishop Gilbert Patterson and Pastor Jack Hayford both spoke powerfully to the convention on the subject of reconciliation. It was during this meeting that Bishop Ithiel Clemmons and I were asked to serve as co-chairmen of the continuing Racial Reconciliation Dialogue process.

◆ On January 10-11, 1994, the “20/20 Meeting” brought together twenty representatives from each of the two movements to make final plans for the climax of the dialogue to be held in Memphis, Tennessee, on October 17-19, 1994.

Finally, during the opening evening service of the Racial Reconciliation Dialogue on October 17, 1994, I presented a focus statement to the assembled delegation [see page 6].

The “Memphis Miracle” was widely covered by the media. Newspapers from the Boston Globe to the Los Angeles Times gave considerable space to the event. It also triggered action toward racial reconciliation on many other fronts. Several denominations and para-church organizations took significant steps toward reconciliation in the months following the Memphis meeting.

Editor’s Note: During this October, 1994 meeting, the PFNA was disbanded and the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) was formed with the top three officers as follows: Chairman, Bishop Ithiel Clemmons (Church of God in Christ); Vice-Chairman, Bishop B.E. Underwood (International Pentecostal Holiness Church); and Second Vice-Chairman, Reverend Thomas Trask (Assemblies of God).

Take a Note

✍ When the Pentecostal World Conference (PWC) requested an IPHC history to be published in conjunction with their 18th conference to be held in South Korea, September 22-24, 1998, **Bishop B.E. Underwood** turned to the director of the IPHC Archives and Research Center, **Dr. Hunter**’s original research for this project has pointed out the acute shortage of original IPHC resources on hand. Desperately needed are the following: *Holiness Advocate* 1900-1908, *Way of Faith* 1906-1909, *Apostolic Evangel* 1907-1929, and some issues of *Live Coals* 1902-1906.

✍ Scarecrow Press of London, England, has contracted with **Dr. Harold D. Hunter** to author a dictionary on global pentecostalism. The forthcoming volume will be entered in the multi-volume series titled, *Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements*. This ambitious project is scheduled to be released in time for the 2001 Pentecostal Centennial Celebration to be held in Pasadena, California, by the Pentecostal World Conference.



✍ Conference superintendents **T. Elwood Long** and **Ronald W. Carpenter, Sr.** are the first conferences to appoint archivists for their respective conferences: **D. Chris Thompson**, North Carolina Conference and **Carl J. Sexton**, Upper South Carolina Conference. These men will actively promote the solicitation of historical materials for the IPHC Archives and Research Center and coordinate the efforts of forthcoming local church archivists.

✍ The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), representing 70 million Christians and members worldwide from several branches of the Pentecostal movement, met May 11-15, 1997, at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. The faculty host was **Dr. David Daniels**, an ordained minister with the Church of God in Christ. **Dr. Harold Hunter** was asked to serve on the WARC Dialogue as a Pentecostal scholar representing North America. This meeting was devoted to “The Role and Place of the Holy Spirit in the Church.” The evening worship sessions enriched the

dialogue as the group of 20 visited various Pentecostal congregations.

✍ Look Smart, a subsidiary of *The Reader’s Digest*, announced their Editor’s Choice Award as the web site maintained by the IPHC Archives and Research Center <<http://www.pctii.org>>. The center has received notification of another honor. The site will be printed and recommended in *Virtual Roots: A Guide to Genealogy and Local History on the World Wide Web*, a book by Jay Kemp (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1997). **Dr. Hunter** is the webmaster of this site.

✍ During the March, 1997 meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS) in Oakland, California, a loose cooperative labelled Archivists of Pentecostal Collections was set in motion. The first joint project at hand was to contribute to an imaging project by Vanderbilt University featuring the Pentecostal movement. The IPHC Archives and Research Center was the first center to make available digital images of Pentecostal leaders and events for this project. **Dr. Hunter** has been a member of SPS for 23 years and has served in various leadership capacities, including SPS president.

ST★R Contributors

Thanks and much appreciation is due the following individuals and conferences who understand the importance of preserving materials that tell the IPHC story and the on-going financial needs of maintaining the IPHC Archives and Research Center.

\$500 Donations:

- **Upper South Carolina Conference, Greenville, SC** - Rev. Ronald W. Carpenter, Sr., Superintendent

Other Monetary Donations:

- **Rev. & Mrs. Smith Haley-Macon, GA**

Document Contributions:

- **Rev. & Mrs. Harrison H. Valentine-Fort Smith, AR:** Scrapbook with photos of Harrison H. Valentine and other PH ministers; other misc. pictures.
- **Mr. John L. McCaul-Vancouver, WA:** Scrapbook on missionaries and other materials that give origin and growth of the PHC in Hawaii from 1947 to 1980s.
- **Rev. Charles E. Bradshaw-Franklin Springs, GA:** Bound *Advocates* for 1945, printer's plates for the first *Advocate* published (May 3, 1917); miscellaneous pictures and documents.
- **Mrs. Charlotte Iaquinta-Oklahoma City, OK:** Book, *Remember Our Goff-Hodges and Their Kin*; books by Florence Goff (ON LOAN): *Test and Triumphs, Life of Rev. J.A. Hodges, Child Stories, and Stories Told in Children's Services.*
- **Mrs. Cecil Brown-National City, CA:** Scrapbook and various news clippings on IPHC.
- **Mrs. W.J. Nash-Tulsa, OK:** Various books, including *The Pentecostal Holiness Church 1898-1948* by J.E. Campbell and *In the Latter Days* by Vinson Synan; various publications; Georgia Conference minutes from 1918-1988 (incomplete set).
- **Mrs. Irene Browning-Winslow, AR (on behalf of Rev. C.E. Neukirchner):** Audio tape of C.E. Neukirchner.
- **Lois Henson-Shawsville, VA:** Various photos; selection of books, including original copy of *Fifty Years on the Battlefield for God* by Florence Goff.
- **Mrs. Daisy Morris-Falcon, NC:** (ON LOAN) Photos and news clippings on W.E. Morris.
- **Laverne Murr-Oklahoma City, OK:** Group photo of Panhandle Conference (TX) 1937 camp meeting; group photo of Preacher's Convention at Central Church Spring in 1948.

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resolutions was the establishment of conference and local church archivists/historians. This is an important resolution

I just threw away old PH booklets and magazines. If only I had known you wanted those old items.

that I have sought to activate in order to involve every PH member and friend who values their historical roots as a pentecostal and member of the Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Too often we hear from local church members, "I just threw away old PH booklets and magazines. If only I had known you wanted those old items." Our goal is to have someone in every conference to be an advocate for preserving our historical roots, then have each local church appoint someone to help gather and send these items to the IPHC Archives and Research Center.

Conference Archivists to Meet in 1988

The first training session hosted by the IPHC Archives and Research Center for conference archivists will convene April 25, 1998, at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA. We are still awaiting the appointment of conference archivists from more conference superintendents.



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