



Baptist Bulletin

“THIS FAR BY FAITH”

150th Anniversary Commemorative Worship Service To Kickoff Mid-Year Session



Dr. Ricky L. Banks is Pastor of the Saint Stephen Missionary Baptist Church of Elizabeth City and First Vice President of the General Baptist State Convention.

The General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc. will convene its 2017 Mid-Year Session on next week (May 8-10) in Goldsboro, NC. This historic gathering will bring the General Baptists of North Carolina back to the city where the Convention was established 150 years ago.

This 2017 Mid-Year Session has been expanded to include a special commemorative worship service on Monday night, May 8. This special service (under the theme of “This Far By Faith”) will take place at First African Baptist Church (803 Harris Street, Goldsboro.) First African was the place that the organizational meeting of what was to become the

General Baptist State Convention was held in October, 1867.

The Reverend Dr. Ricky L. Banks will be the principal preacher for this worship service. Dr. Banks currently serves the Saint Stephen Missionary Baptist Church congregation at Elizabeth City and is the First Vice President of the General Baptist State Convention. Dr. Banks is a former Moderator of Roanoke Missionary Baptist Association.

Elder Lemuel Washington Boone (1827-1878) was a leader of Afri-

can-American Baptists in North Carolina during Reconstruction. In 1866, he organized the Roanoke Missionary Baptist Association. One year later in 1867, Elder Boone moderated the organizational meeting of what would become the General Baptist State Convention. This organizational meeting was held in Goldsboro at First African Baptist Church. This made the GBSC the first statewide association of black Baptists in the United States.

Elder Boone is said to have “possessed a gift of oratory and mental ability seldom excelled by men of the best opportunity.” Historian Carter G. Woodson called Boone “a preacher of power.” Born a free black man in Northampton County, Elder Boone worked as a brick mason and a teacher before the civil war. After relocating to Herford County, he organized twenty churches with a total membership over 3,000.

Although he moderated the initial meeting to organize the GBSC, he did not become its first president. Instead of seeking the Presidency, Elder Boone assumed the office of Secretary while William Warwick was elected the first President. Elder Boone’s education, literacy, influence and business acumen made him wholly suited in the role of the first Secretary. It is due to Boone’s exceptional gifts that the organizational model of the General Baptist State Convention has always vested large authority in the office of (Executive) Secretary who is charged with the day-to-day operations of the Convention and management of the affairs of the body.

When Elder Boone died in 1878, the Minutes of the Convention recorded this tribute to him: “it is safe to say that from his ordination till his death, no person in eastern North Carolina exerted a eider and more lasting influence among his people than Elder Boone.”

Returning To the Old Landmark

Convention Returns to the Place of Its Origin: First African Baptist Church

First African Baptist Church in Goldsboro will host the 150th Anniversary Commemorative Worship Service on Monday, May 8, preceding the 2017 Mid-Year Session of the Convention. First African was the sight of the organizational meeting of the General Association of Colored Baptists in North Carolina (which later became the General Baptist State Convention.). The service will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Music will be provided by the Bear Creek Association Mass Choir. A reception (sponsored by First African Baptist Church) will follow the worship service in the Church fellowship hall.

First African Baptist Church is located at 803 Harris Street in Goldsboro. The Reverend Dr. Louis S. Leigh, Jr. is the pastor and our host.

Offering to Benefit Local Charity

Offering at 150th Anniversary Commemorative Worship to Benefit HGDC Community Crisis Center

The Minutes from the early years of the General Baptist State Convention show the Convention taking offerings for local missions at each Annual Session. Before 1900, these offerings were often given to aged ministers, to "weak" churches, to orphanages and to black schools educating the recently freed blacks. In those days, the Convention's two main objectives were Shaw University and foreign missions. However, the Convention wanted to make a local impact in every community where it met. Those early offerings were only a few dollars in those days, but they had a large impact when raised.

Returning to this tradition, the Convention will donate the offering from the Monday night 150th Anniversary Commemorative Worship Service to a Goldsboro-based charity. Upon the recommendation of host Moderator Rev. Joe A. Jackson, the Convention will make a contribution to HGDC Community Crisis Center.

The HGDC Community Crisis Center is a

non-profit charitable organization which provides crisis or intervention services to assist individual to meet their basic human needs and provide opportunities for persons to become self-sufficient.

Among their programs and services are:

- Soup kitchen feeding the homeless and hungry one meal daily
- A clothes closet providing free clothing to homeless and low income families
- A food pantry providing free groceries to low-income families in need
- Shower stalls and dressing rooms for the homeless to take hot baths and attend to personal hygiene needs
- Supportive counseling to alcoholics, drug addicts and ex-offenders
- Emergency financial assistance to low-income families facing eviction or utility disconnection. Assisted the elderly with medical cost
- Human Resources Development Program to educate and train individuals

for success in the workplace.

- A transitional house to provide suitable housing for 8 to 10 homeless persons. All persons housed in this facility must be enrolled in a self-sufficiency program.

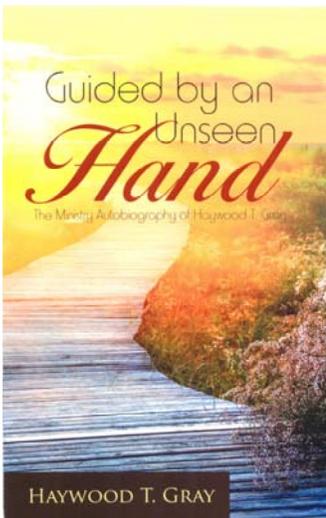
"I applaud President Avery's desire for this Anniversary observance to be more than a 'big party,'" says EST Haywood T. Gray. "The President has rightly challenged us to make a difference in our celebrating."



HGDC Community Crisis Center is located at 607 South Slocumb Street in Goldsboro. Elder Adeen L. George is the Executive Director.

Gray to Donate Book Sales

Sales of Book at 2017 Mid-Year Session



Dr. Haywood T. Gray, author of *Guided by an Unseen Hand: The Ministry Autobiography of Haywood T. Gray*, will donate copies of his new book for sale at the Mid-Year Session in Goldsboro. The entire \$15.00 purchase price will be donated to the General Baptist State Convention for each sale made at the Mid-Year Session. Gray is donating up to 200 books for sales to benefit the Convention.

Guided by an Unseen Hand is the story of the people, places, and events that influenced and shaped the ministry of Haywood T. Gray. After forty years in ministry, Gray shares both the mistakes and the miracles of his ministry as a means of encouraging others. The book is not his life story but an intimate look at what has shaped him, challenged him, and grown him in ministry. It is funny and sad, silly and brilliant, heartwarming and thought-provoking. The writer's aim is to provide a tool for readers to reflect, think, and grow. While specifically aimed at young ministers, the book

can help any Christian who wishes a deeper commitment and a stronger faith and who seeks hope within life's struggles.

Gray, now in his thirteenth year as Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the General Baptist State Convention, is also the author of *A Ministry of Service*, *A Ministry of Joy: A Guide for Ushers in General Baptist Churches in North Carolina*.

GBSC History on Facebook

Interesting facts and stories about the history of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina are being posted to the GBSC Facebook page (@GBSCNC). The Convention is using Facebook to tell a part of the glorious history of what began in 1867 as the General Association of Colored Baptists in North Carolina.

The historical posts will continue throughout the 2017 Anniversary Year. Among the posts already published are "Dr. A. W. Pegues, Ph.D.," "Setting High Standards for Ministers," "First Baptist Newspaper: The African Expositor," and "The Father of Negro Baptist Preachers in North Carolina."

Take a moment to learn our history. Be sure to "like" and "share" our Facebook page. @GBSCNC



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