preached by Judas, Annas, Pilate and Herod." We recognize, therefore, the apostolicity of what we have received from our slave ancestors who, though "unlearned and ignorant" men and women, reinterpreted the distorted Christianity they received from the slavemasters and passed down to succeeding generations of Black believers the story of Jesus who was "the strong Deliverer," "the rose of Sharon, the bright and morning star," "the king who rides on a milk-white horse," "the dying lamb," "the Lord who's done just what he said," "the Balm in Gilead," and "the help of the poor and needy, in this land...". But we acknowledge the importance of the Apostolic tradition being engaged and not merely passed on. Apostolicity must be lived out in the context of contemporary events. It is not the recitation of past formulations, but the living of the present commandments of the Risen Lord.

In the final analysis the test of apostolicity is the experiencing of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in our daily struggle against demonic powers that seek to rob us of our inheritance as children of God redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Our deeds, more than our creeds, determine whether we have fully received and acted upon the faith of the apostles.

Jesus said, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31,32). Afro-American Christians look to the words and acts of the Jesus of history for the Apostolic teaching as well as to the mystery of the Christ of faith. We take seriously the life, ministry and teaching of Jesus as the One who identified with the marginated of society and continues to identify with them. It is in the Black Church's historic identification with marginality that Jesus is appropriated as the Black Messiah, the paradigm of our existential reality as an oppressed people and the affirmation of our survival and liberation.

Finally, for Black Christians, the search for an expression of the Apostolic faith must be multi-racial and multi-cultural rather than captive to any one race, sex, class or political ideology. The Church and the ecumenical movement must no longer submit to domination by social, economic or intellectual elites. The faith once delivered to the apostles by Jesus Christ is for the whole world and must be capable of being transmitted and responded to by all.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Afro-American Christian tradition, embodied particularly in Black Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal Churches, but continuing also in other Black-led Protestant and Roman Catholic congregations, has been and continues to be an indigenous expression of the faith of the apostles in North America.

2. The Richmond Consultation affirms the World Council of Churches study "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today" and is committed to work with the WCC and other ecumenical bodies toward the unity we seek.

3. We invite the other churches participating in the Faith and Order movement to give greater study and recognition to how God has maintained the continuity of the Apostolic Faith primarily through the oral character and noncreedal styles of the African American tradition expressed in worship, witness and social struggle.

4. We urge the other member churches of the National and World Council Commissions on Faith and Order to take note of the unity of faith and practice that the Black Church has historically emphasized and to engage the Faith and Order movement in greater involvement in the struggle against racism and all forms of oppression as an essential element of the Apostolic confession.

5. We call upon Black churches in North America, the Caribbean and in Africa to confess boldly the faith we received from the Apostles, despite every effort made to distort and falsify it, and joining with us who were a part of this historic consultation in Richmond, to intensify their involvement in the Faith and Order movement by sharing the "gift of Blackness" with those of other traditions.

6. Finally, we urge that this report be published and widely disseminated by the Commission on Faith and Order of the WCC as a study document and that Black Christians all over the world be encouraged to initiate interracial discussion groups for the consideration of its content and implications for the ecumenical movement; and that the result of such dissemination and discussion be reported back to the Commission on Faith and Order by cooperating national councils.

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"The Gift of Blackness" by Cornish Rogers (*Christian Century*, June 5-12, 1985) provides an account of the Black Churches Consultation held at Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia on December 14, 15, 1984.

Wainwright Celebrates 18th Anniversary

Left to right: Dr. M.M. Peace, Pastor, Monumental Baptist Church, Phila. Pa.; Dr. Leslie E. Wainwright, Pastor, Unity Baptist Tabernacle Church, Mount Vernon, N.Y.

Harlem's Linkage to Ethiopia

At such a time as this let us remember the occasion of His Majesty Haile Selassie who presented the Ethiopian Coptic Cross in recognition of the linkage between the Abyssinian Baptist Church and Ethiopia (formerly known as Abyssinia). The Abyssinian Baptist Church was named after the country of Abyssinia by the founders of the church, who were from the country now know as Ethiopia, in 1908.