

## 30 Clergy bring congregations to ACLC Prayer Breakfast at Clifton Family Church

Augustus Stallings  
November 5, 2016



On November 5, 30 clergy brought members of their congregations to an American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) Prayer Breakfast at the Clifton Family Church. The 70 participants were excited to come to the church, some for the first time. It was a full program, with powerful testimonies, songs of praise, and a spirit-filled message.

Rev. Stephen Webb, pastor of the New Life Christian Center, opened the program by sharing his excitement for a reunion of ACLC clergy who had not seen each other for a long time. He then invited Rev. Banks, a minister from his church, to bless the meal.

After breakfast, the New Jerusalem Choir lifted the spirit to even higher ground with two beautiful musical selections, followed by welcoming remarks from the host, Pastor Manoj Jacob.



Dr. Lizzie Alston, pastor of Universal Church of God, was called on to lead the unity prayer. She read an excerpt from True Father's speech "Standing in the Presence of God," which was followed by a prayer by Rev. Dr. Jeffery Garland, pastor of the Berean Baptist Church.

Annette Dockens of the International Pentecostal Fellowship Church then sang a selection of praise songs preceding the testimony given by her pastor, Rev. Wehye. Before meeting the ACLC, Rev. Wehye had heard rumors about True Father. When he came to America and attended an ACLC meeting, what he heard drew him to the edge of his seat. He asked himself, How can this man be so informed? Reverend Moon must be inspired by the Holy Spirit. He left the audience with this piece of advice: "If you want to know something don't hear it from other people. Try to dig into it yourself."

The master of ceremonies, Rev. Webb, shared a short testimony about meeting True Father in Korea before introducing Rev. Dr. Sykes, the ACLC National Executive Committee Member, and his wife Rev. Zena Sykes, who reminded the audience that only "people of God" could save the country through "blessed marriages." Dr. Sykes and his wife received the Marriage Blessing at the Clifton Family Church in 2014. Since then, they have been inspired to share the Blessing with others and have made two tours to

meet clergy around the country. Rev. Sykes testified to the enthusiasm that many clergy expressed upon learning about the Marriage Blessing.



All the testimonies acted as a prelude to the sermon by Bishop Jessie Edwards, the ACLC Evangelist. Bishop Edwards pointed to a banner on the wall which read, “The Kingdom of Heaven is Realized through Families,” and was the theme of the prayer breakfast. He recounted how Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom was at hand. “Why did Jesus say the Kingdom is at hand?” he asked the audience. “Because he wanted a wife and a family. He often talked about children and family. His lineage would not have had the fallen nature of sin.”

Bishop Edwards declared that we are 2,000 years behind schedule and are not doing our job as Christians. He then spoke about the presidential candidates. “If we don’t like either candidate, why don’t we find a godly, spirit-filled one to put in office? If all the Christians, if every child of God in the United States got together, we could put anyone we wanted in office. [But] we are too worried about the kingdom of our own churches and members, [and we ignore people outside of our congregations].”

Bishop Edwards went on to ask the audience why God had created a man and a woman. “He wanted to see himself in His creation. God is love. However, love all by itself is incomplete. God needed a family to become His love.” He then proclaimed, “We don’t need to die to go to heaven. Jesus came to set up the kingdom right here on earth.” Then he asked, “Which do you feed the most, your body or spirit? The one which you feed the most is in control of you. If you feed your spirit, you will walk in the spirit.”

Bishop Edwards pointed to Rev. and Mrs. Sykes and asked, “What makes this marriage so blessed? They have accepted the blood of Christ... [Jesus] was to become the true Messiah, the father. His wife was to become the mother of all mankind. However, the disciples and the Romans didn’t see it that way. The Jews who waited so long for the Messiah to come didn’t see it that way. This is why Jesus said, “thou knew not the time of thy visitation” (Luke 19:44). Bishop Edwards proclaimed, “I don’t want to miss his visitation. Do you? I don’t want to miss the anointing of God’s spirit!” Bishop Edwards concluded by saying, “What is the Kingdom? The marriage of man and woman.”

