

Silver Anniversary

of

The Knox Presbyterian Church

BROADWAY, GAY AND BIDDLE STREETS

1930

1955

MAY FIFTEENTH TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH

NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE

REV. H. OCTAVIUS GRAHAM, PASTOR

DIRECTORY OF CHURCH AND COMMUNITY CENTER

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Mrs. C. A. Hall, *Clerk and Treasurer*

Miss Rachel C. Swann, *Director of Christian Education*

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Junior Choir

Cherub Choir

SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL

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Mrs. Roberta Bacoat

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FOREWORD

Behind this milestone of twenty-five years of work as an organized church there were four years of preparation before Knox came into being. Many years ago there had been a Knox Church which was dissolved. When he came to Baltimore, the pastor found an old gentleman, Samuel Distance, who was an elder in that first church, who said, "Reverend, if you are successful in organizing a church please call it Knox in memory of the old church". This was June 1926. Mr. Distance died in July of that same year before we even had a permanent Sunday School established. However, he had previously encouraged his grandchildren to attend Sunday School so they became a part of that first group.

The road by which we have come has been narrow and meandering at times like a winding river. The unfaltering consecration of the followers gave heart to the leader, and the work as it is today, is a tribute to their faith. Though it has been twenty-five years since Knox was organized, its first real opportunity came in October 1944, when for the first time we had a church building at the corner of Ashland Avenue and Washington Street.

We thank God for all the blessings which have come to us, for the many churches of the Presbytery which gave financial and moral support, and for the Board of National Missions for the enlarged opportunity to minister to the community. Finally, we thank God for the challenge of a thirteen year old boy who said to the pastor in January 1944, "I am tired of being in an old dilapidated store front church and if you fail to get a real church building by December of this year I shall not believe in your preaching and I cannot have faith in God". God gave us a church in October. That same boy is now preparing for the Gospel ministry as the first son of Knox to hear and answer the call to preach the Word of God.

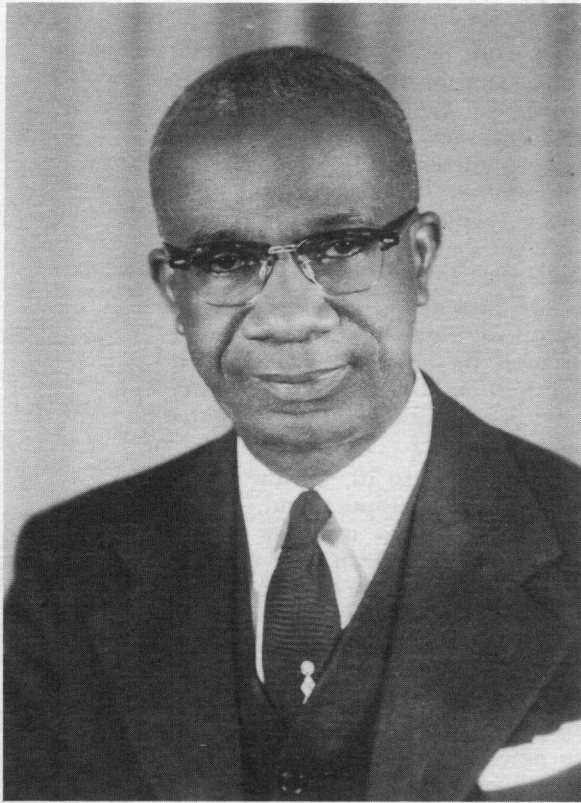
This celebration is but the beginning of a new era in Kingdom Building. It is our hope that one day Knox will be supporting a full time missionary on some field, for "to whom much is given much is expected".

The officers and members join with the pastor in thanking all who have helped in any way to make this celebration a success.

THE PASTOR



The Session



REV. H. OCTAVIUS GRAHAM



MRS. H. OCTAVIUS GRAHAM



Church Building and Community Center

HISTORY OF THE KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Matt: 17:20

From humble beginnings, great edifices oftentimes develop. Such was the beginning of Knox Presbyterian Church. A young man dreamed and visualized a church of tomorrow to serve as a shining star for the building of God's Kingdom. He realized, as did many men of note, that before harvest can come, a storm of rain must batter the field. Before a tree takes root, the kernel must decay to liberate the seed. He knew that "faith works that which it expects." He had read the Apostle James (1:17) "Faith without works is dead." He understood that "faith always looks in two ways: (1) it looks to God; (2) it looks to self.

H. Octavius Graham, possessing humility, foresight and faith was inspired because he dreamed dreams and saw visions. Just as the Christ Child was born in low estate, so was Knox Presbyterian Church. From an acorn, as tiny as it might be, the arms of the oak tree grows to expand; its shade falls upon the earth. It shelters the animals and serves to satisfy the needs of man. All the creations of God begin small, develop slowly, and expand immensely. From original man, great tribes grew in multiplicity, replenish the earth and procreated numerous nations. What does this have to do with the development of Knox Presbyterian Church and those of us who have assisted in making it the beacon light that it is today? It exemplifies the knowledge that to climb to a ladder you must be willing to make efforts. To get to the top, you must keep faith, hope, confidence, love energetic ambition, and a heart full of charity and forgiveness.

"God's Hand Stretched Forth to Lincoln University"

Rev. Graham came to Baltimore in June, 1926, at the invitation of The Baltimore Presbytery. The far-sightedness of the late Rev. John T. Colbert brought about this invitation. Reverend Colbert saw the need for a Presbyterian Church in East Baltimore because of its dense and increasing population. He wrote to the President of Lincoln University and requested that a young man of splendid qualifications be sent to Baltimore for the work. God's hand stretched forth and fingerpointed Rev. Graham for the stupendous task. Previous to the coming of Rev. Graham to Baltimore, the Elders of Grace Presbyterian Church held Sunday School in the Star Theatre on East Monument Street. However, this Sunday School was held in the summer months, and was non-existent when Rev. Graham arrived.

Rev. Bruce McDonald was Executive Secretary of the Presbytery when Rev. Graham came to this city. He did everything possible to foster the work, but it seemed that the Presbytery was not ready to accept this responsibility.

"Humble Beginnings and Dark Shadows"

Rev. Graham came as a young graduate of Lincoln

University. As an article stated in an edition of The Afro American paper, the story of Knox Church is the story of Rev. Graham. Without a church structure or a congregation, Rev. Graham began his work here by ringing door bells. A room in the 1600 block of East Monument Street was secured for the little church. The first church member and two of her three children are working members of Knox Church today. By mid-July, twenty-five children attended the Sunday School, and three adults attended the Church. Disappointments and obstacles beset Rev. Graham on every hand. He often thought of packing and going in other directions. However, the challenge to continue his work here was squarely met by Rev. Graham's deep faith in God and the possibilities of his Creator. He and his little flock weathered the storms of the depression, and through growth found it necessary to move to 1242 East Monument Street near Central Avenue. The latter part of 1927, the church moved to another store-front at the corner of Eden and Jefferson Streets. To make this new place of worship a monument to God and His work, Rev. Graham purchased folding chairs from Blums for \$156.00 for the comfort of his followers. Under Rev. Graham's leadership and diversified program, the work progressed and in 1929 the mission requested to be admitted to the Presbytery as an organized church. After many disappointments and trying situations, Knox was organized May 20, 1930 through a commission sent by the Presbytery.

With its forty members, Knox Presbyterian Church became one of the many churches of many denominations catering to the needs of the populace in East Baltimore. The members were taken in the Knox Mission under the care of the Grace Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John T. Colbert its pastor.

"Increasing Disappointments and Shadows"

The location of the new Junior High School invited the membership to select the corner of Eden and Jefferson Streets as an ideal site for our church. The depression descended with dark shadows and stifling proportions on our ideals and dreams. Soon the aid given by the Board of National Missions was sharply cut, and in the heart of the depression around 1933, all aid was completely ceased. The Committee on National Missions informed the church that there were no more funds to foster Knox. This meant that there were one of two things that Knox Church could do—"fight with bulldog tenacity to overcome the obstacles or give up in defeat." The only two elders were called by the minister to discuss the problem. He remembered his messages on faith. He had preached Faith in Christ, Faith in the Presbytery, now was the test for Faith in Him. He explained to them that if they would continue to follow his leadership under God's guidance, he was willing to continue. Soon after this meeting, Rev. Graham took a regular job outside of his regular church duties, the church

HISTORY OF THE KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CONTINUED

assumed a greater obligation, and a building fund was started.

"Faint Sunlight Through The Dense Shadows"

To ease the financial pressure on the congregation, the landlord was requested to reduce the rent, which he did. The Rev. Dr. William J. G. Carruthers, a minister and friend to all who needed him, came to the rescue. He held conferences with Rev. Graham and young members of the church to encourage youth work. Through the sympathy and understanding of the Rev. Dr. Carruthers, who befriended the pastor and congregation, investigations were made with the idea of publicizing the work. Dr. Carruthers became Chairman of the Subcommittee for Negro work under the care of the Board of National Missions for Knox Church. His interest paved the way for the return of financial aid to the church from the National Missions. He fostered a series of surveys. The survey was made by the Urban League which was released by permission of the League through the Federation of Churches; and then another by Mr. Novak under the direction of the Secretary of the Baltimore Federation of Churches. A third survey, or appendix to the general survey, was made by Mr. Novak at the request of the Committee on National Missions of the Baltimore Presbytery. Ministers of every denomination were called in conference at the Faith Presbyterian Church to voice their opinions on the need of a Presbyterian Church in East Baltimore. The ministers agreed that the existence of Knox Church should continue and that it ought to be encouraged. The Reverend C. Edward Browne was Rev. Graham's staunchest friend and most loyal supporter during this crisis. After the impressive surveys were made, and the successful conferences were held with the ministers, Knox was again put on the payroll of the Presbytery.

Dr. Carruthers encouraged every minister of the Presbytery to see the deplorable condition in which Knox worshipped. He personally assisted Rev. Graham in the securing of speakers once a month for an extensive period of time. He was further instrumental in re-establishing the Building Fund after he had observed a Building Chart in the church. When he found out that monies for the original fund were lost in the bank crash, he was deeply concerned and spurred to action. Donations of furniture, books and needed church materials were also secured under his guidance. Truly this man of God had our work at heart, and Knox today stands as a symbol of his untiring efforts and Godly actions.

The congregation was elated over the purchase of lots to be used for building the church. However, this jubilation was of short duration. Subsequently, the lots were sold through an order of the Presbytery when a newly founded organization requested permission to buy them for a playground for their children. The Presbytery acquiesced.

"Stronger Sunlight"

Dr. Walter Cremeans, our present general Presbyter,

came on the scene just in time to complete the work so nobly begun by our beloved Dr. Carruthers. Working closely with the Presbytery, Dr. Cremeans assisted us to secure our first building and to realize our first dream and aspiration for Kingdom Building. At the present time the Rev. T. Guthrie Speers, Pastor of the Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church, is the Chairman of the Knox Committee. Dr. Speers is doing a commendable job to enhance the scope and magnify the work in its larger aspects.

Knox Presbyterian Church, now with an increased membership, felt the need for an adequate building. At the request of Rev. Graham, a committee was named by Presbytery to look into the securing of a desirable edifice. The old Bohemian Moravian Presbyterian Church at the corner of Ashland Avenue and Washington Street was secured, and on the last Sunday in October, 1944, the Knox congregation occupied this building.

The Rev. Earl Seymour Fox, the Pastor of The Forrest Park Presbyterian Church, was a friend to the Pastor and the church. He used great influence personally in assisting Knox to receive financial aid. He was influential in getting his church to give active financial support to Knox through benevolence. Abbott Memorial Presbyterian Church, under the leadership of Dr. Rea W. Martin, also gave substantial financial help.

Many accomplishments were realized at Ashland Avenue and Washington Street. In six and one-half years of progress at this location, Rev. Graham inaugurated a program that proved his value to the Baltimore Presbytery and citizenry. The congregation grew and more responsibilities were added:

1. Daily Vacation Bible School organized.
2. The reorganization of the Usher Board.
3. Revitalization of the Sunday Church School.
4. Development of a Girl's Choir.
5. Development of Dramatic Clubs for Special Day Activities.
6. Organization of Westminster Fellowship.
7. Training Class for Communicants.
8. Organizing of the Missionary Society.
9. Foundation for Boy Scouts started.
10. Senior Choir reorganized.

"Wonders—God Planned"

"Radiant—Sunbeams"

Even before our facilities and possibilities at this location had been exhausted the opportunity came through a recommendation for the occupancy of the present location. The Washington Street Church was sold to the John Wesley A. M. E. Zion Congregation by the Presbytery. The Faith Congregation, due to the phenomena of shifting population, made plans to erect a new church in a new locale. They built their church and moved on Woodbourne and Loch Raven Blvd. On Sunday, April 29, 1951, Rev. Graham led his congrega-

HISTORY OF THE KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CONTINUED

tion into the big greystone structure on Broadway, formerly pastored by his dear friend, Dr. Carruthers.

"God Worked in a Mysterious Way This Wonder to Perform"

Here, the work took new aspects. In the words of our beloved pastor, whose unflinching faith led his people all the way with divine guidance, "we can administer to all areas and needs of a man's life". Our present structure is a modern church which serves spiritual, moral and physical needs and demands. Its facilities and personnel offer a seven day program. The doors are open at all times. The services of a Director of Christian Education and a Director of the Community Center are utilized to provide a valuable addition to the cultural life of East Baltimore and a moral service to East Baltimore youth of all races and denominations. The Center now employs four paid workers, plus a volunteer staff for the Community Center. The Church has four paid workers. Together, the Church and Center have eight paid workers, including the Pastor, plus numerous volunteer workers.

There is a close coordination between the Church, the Community Center and the Pilot House. Most of the activities are inter-racial. Bible School and Youth Activities are taught and sponsored by inter-racial Christian leaders under the Director of Christian Education. Christ has and is using Knox as a beacon light throwing out a lifeline to the young and old alike. The use of the Sanctuary, Chapel, separate auditorium, gymnasium, plus numerous Club and Social Rooms afford the community many opportunities for expansion of worthy projects "curbing rather than curing delinquency". Some of the activities provided for Kingdom Building here are:

1. Correlation of activities between Church and Community Center.

2. Knox Chorale.
3. Sanctuary Choir.
4. Cherub Choir.
5. Deacon Board.
6. Departmentalization of the Church Sunday School.
7. Week-end Work Camps (Inter-racial and Inter-faith).
8. Pre-school Program for children and parents (Kiddie Kollege).
9. Week Day Clubs to meet interests of children and youth (Arts, crafts, etc., skating, cooking, dramatics, club groups, dance groups).
10. Daily Vacation Church School (Inter-racial and Interdenominational).
11. Sports (Basketball, Baseball, Indoor Games, etc.)
12. Junior Ushers.
13. Training Class for Communicants.
14. Teen Council.
15. Scout Troups (Explorers, Boy Scouts, Senior Girl Scouts, Intermediate Girl Scouts, Brownies).

We are thankful for the realization that success of this church which brings us thankfully to its twenty-fifth anniversary is a journey planned by the Heavenly Father to lead men to their destination. This Church is a manifestation of God's love and divine guidance. Humbly, we are grateful. Where there is no vision, the people perish. Faith, prayer, love and sacrifice have brought us to this memorable day. Through continued faith, trust and works of love, one with another, let us march forward, onward and upward. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.



Mrs. Louise Jones, One of the first Sunday School pupils.



Mrs. Marie Johnson, a loyal friend of Knox and one of the first to help the church to secure a pianist.



Dr. Walter R. Cremeans, General Presbyter of the Baltimore Presbytery.



Miss Emma Hamner, a devoted friend of Knox and a liberal contributor.



The Late Rev. Dr. Carruthers, former pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church, who helped to promote the Building Fund of Knox.



The Late Rev. John T. Colbert, who was responsible for the coming of Rev. Graham to Baltimore.



Deacons



Trustees



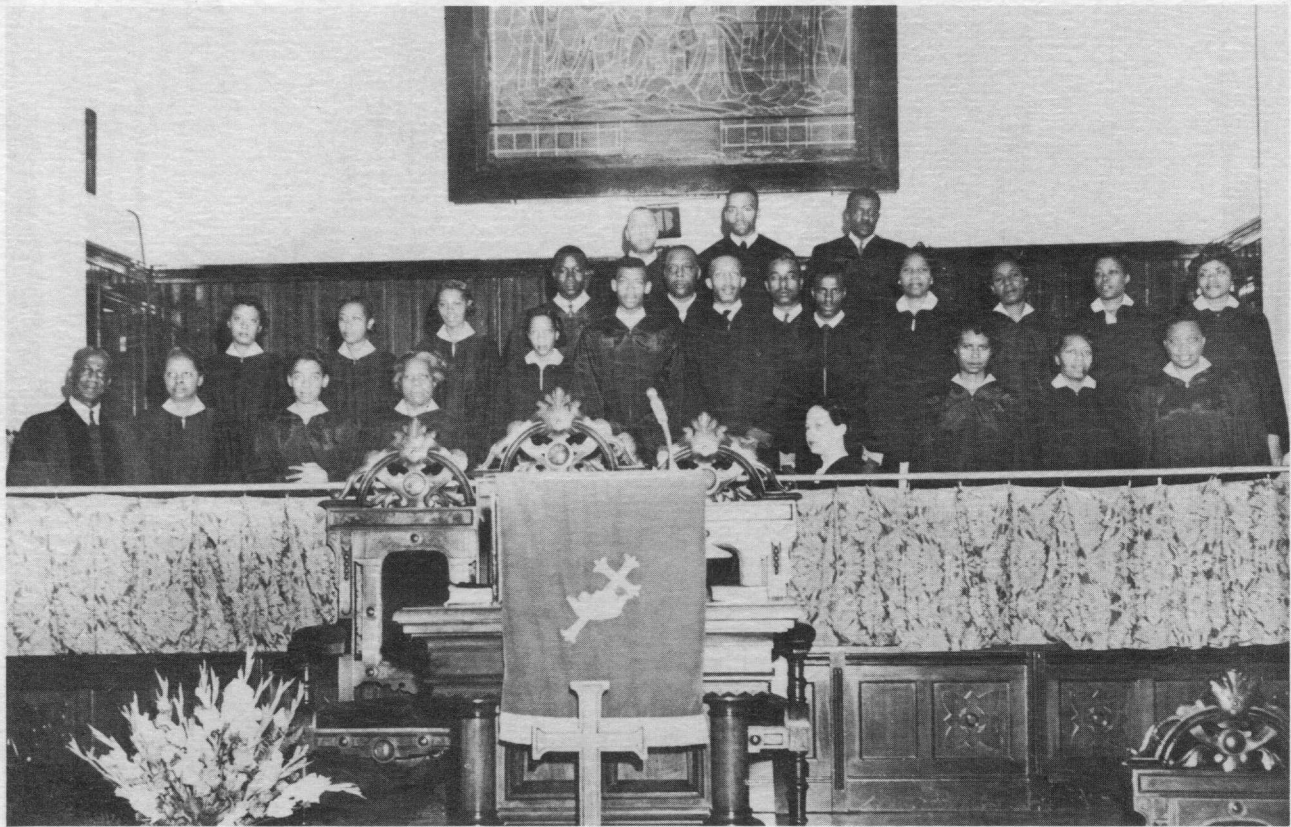
Missionary Society, Mrs. H. Octavius Graham, President.



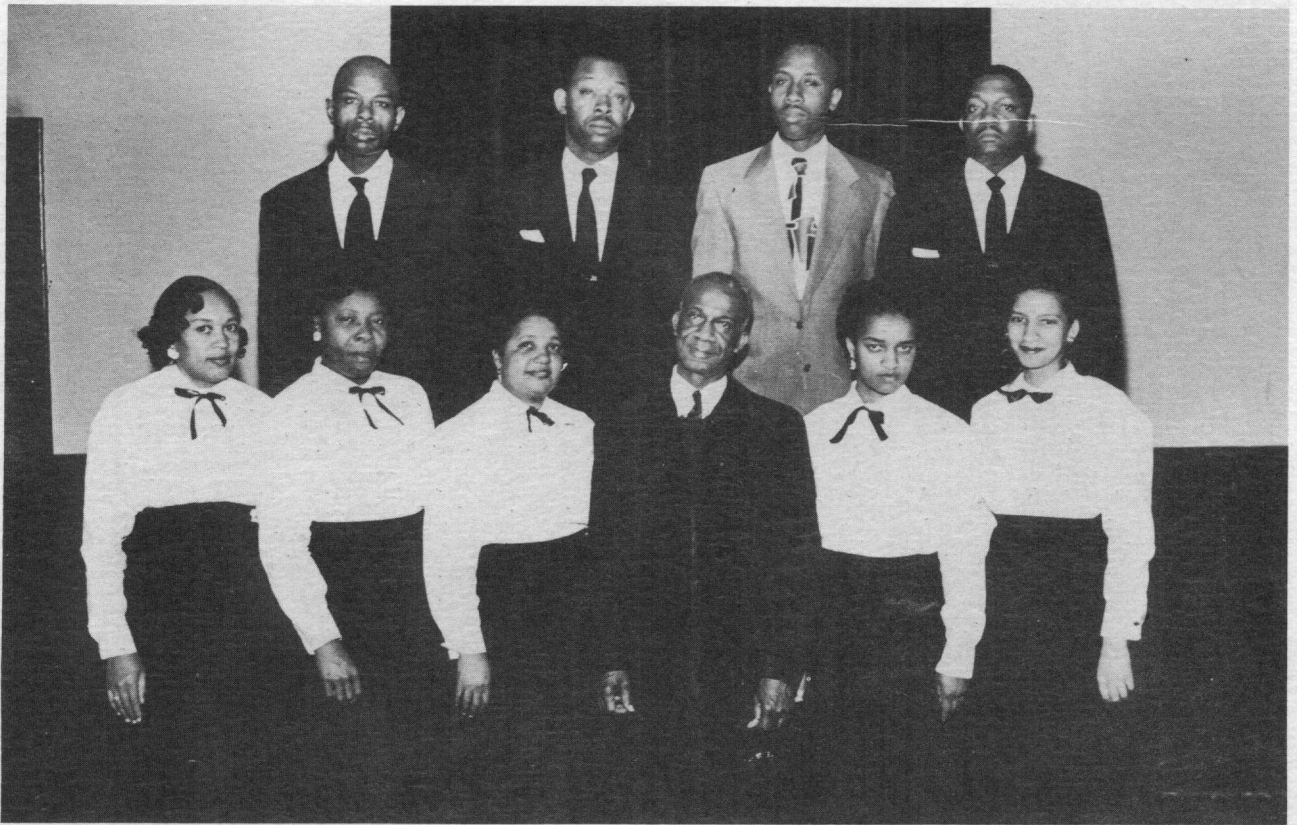
Sunday Church School



Sunday Church School Teachers and Officers



Sanctuary Choir



Senior Ushers



Junior Ushers



Three Generations, *Left to right,* Mrs. Beulah Caldwell, one of the first Sunday School pupils; Hansonia Caldwell, baptised and received into the church on Palm Sunday 1955; Mrs. C. A. Hall, Grandmother and first member to be taken into Knox Church. Pastor in center.



Miss Rachel C. Swann, Director of Christian Education and Director of the Community Center.



Pastor and Family—Mrs. H. Octavius Graham, an understanding and faithful helper to pastor and church; Rev. H. Octavius Graham; Herman Octavius, Jr., who is preparing for the gospel ministry and Alvin Russell, a medical student.



One of the Week-end Work Camps at Knox

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Mrs. Anita Hall.....	25.00	Mrs. Willie Moore.....	7.00
Mr. Colonel Hall.....	25.00	Mrs. Ada Lomba.....	10.00
Miss Emma Hamner.....	25.00	Many thanks to all of our contributors. Names not	
Mr. and Mrs. William Hawkins.....	25.00	appearing were submitted too late.	

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The activities for children include games, stories, music, folk dances, clubs, handwork, block building.

The activities for youth and adults include clubs, social dances, parties, hobbies, crafts, music, drama, table games, table tennis, athletics.

The Christian Education activities include Westminster Fellowship, Vacation Church School, Day Camp, Conferences and Camps of Presbytery, Choirs, and Work Camps.

Rachel C. Swann, Director

Clarice B. Patterson, Program Chr.

Sincere Greetings from

The Pastor, Officers and Members of
GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

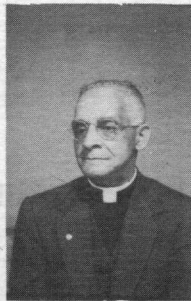
Dolphin and Etting Streets

To the Pastor, Officers and Members of Knox Presbyterian Church
on this happy occasion of your Silver Anniversary.
May the blessing of God rest upon you as you begin
another year of service in His name.

Rev. Robert T. Newbold, Jr., Pastor

The Pastor, Officers and
Members of
Union Bethel A. M. E. Church
RANDALLSTOWN, MD.

Extend to you our hearty greetings
in this year
25th Anniversary Celebration
REV. W. N. EDWARDS



May God bless you on this your

Silver Anniversary

SAMUEL R. OWINGS

*Congratulations to the
Pastor and Congregation of
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Mrs. Mary Thurstin
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Dear Mary:

The Reverend H. Octavius Graham Pastor Emeritus of the Knox United Presbyterian Church tells me that his sermon topic will be "The Generation Gap". The scripture lesson from the Old Testament is Psalm 90. Should you need a new Testament lesson, Mr. Graham is suggesting that you choose one.

Here is a brief biography of the speaker. Mr. Graham is a graduate of Lincoln Seminary. He organized the Knox United Presbyterian Church in 1930, and served as the only pastor for that congregation until July 12, 1974. He also organized the Knox Presbyterian Church Community Center in 1951. This organization provides day care, recreation, and social services for the community. He has been secretary of the Baltimore Chapter of the NAACP; Moderator of the Presbytery of Baltimore; and four times Commissioner to the General Assembly. For more than 25 years he was a member of the visiting clergy staff of Johns Hopkins Hospital. Mr. Graham has been honoured by the Governor of Maryland, Presbytery of Baltimore, the Knox Church and the community for his more than 40 years of service to Baltimore and the state of Maryland.

His faithful wife, Janie, has been by his side through all of his successes and failures. He has two sons; one is a practicing physician in Portland, Oregon and the other is Director of the Garden Valley Community Center in Cleveland, Ohio.

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Sincerely,

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