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THE LIVING CHURCH

National Ushers convention attracts over 1,500

They came by bus, plane, cars and train. More than 1,500 citizens from 27 states are attending the 62nd annual National Convention of the National Church Ushers Association of America, Inc.

The six day convention is being held at the Hilton Hotel downtown and the national banquet and installation services will be held today (Friday) 7 p.m. at the hotel.

The National United Church Ushers Association of America, Inc., was organized in Philadelphia, Pa. in July 1910. Elijah A. Hamilton was the founder and the purpose of the organization is to create a better service and to broaden the field in Christan, social and moral activities as ushers.

About 50,000 ushers from approximately 800 churches in 100 cities throughout the country make up the association. James E. Anderson is senior president. Gloria Johnson is the young adult president and Cheryl Barker is junior president.

The public relations department of the association sponsored its annual program and luncheon in honor of the golden age ushers at the hotel on Monday.

All ushers over 65-years-old were honored and Mrs. Rosalie Patton, 82, of Philadelphia, Pa., received special recognition for being the oldest active usher attending the convention.

Mrs. Louise Nelson of Virginia presided and Mrs. Daisy Williams is the national chairperson of the committee and Mrs. Susie Bedden is program chairperson.

The largest crowd of ushers were seen Tuesday attending the ushering school class, where Isaiah Tatum from Los Angeles California teaches ushers how to receive and seat guests, receive an offering and make sure a person is comfortable when they arrive at church.

James Anderson, president of the convention from Providence Rhode Island, has been an usher for 30 years. Anderson said, "The organization is interested in teaching the uniform system of ushering. In white churches they greet you and give you programs. We see that you are seated comfortable and take more of a interest in the person.

"Ushering starts as soon as the car pulls up at the curb. We open the doors of the church, seat you, see to it that you are comfortable."

The school of ushering provides a one week ushering workshop at each early convention of the church ushers. Participants receives instructions in professional ushering techniques as well as inspiring and historical messages related to their role in their denomination.

The ushers association presents annually four year scholarships to deserving young men and women to attend the college of their choice.

National officers are Henry Ballard, Raymond A. Smith, Laura Purnell, Doris B. Lewis, Ernestine Smith, Ella M. Thigpen, Inez Witcher, Nettie Martin, Blanche Dabbs Jackson, Raymond Gray, Alma C. Hawkins, Charles W. Wilkerson, Karen B. Brown, Castella LeCompte, Mattie Thomas and John Everett.

State officers of Maryland are Gladys Trappe, Henry Sorrell, Aliceteen Wade, Jane Johnson, Ruth King, Anna McCormick, Josh Jones, Vanessa Copeland, Willie King, Ernest Wilson, Floyd Cooper, Tracey Wilkins, Patricia Harris, Jessie L. Brown, Mary I. Robinson, Gloria Holman, Ruby Anderson, Jennie Jackson, Allan Morse and John Sanders.

AFRO photos by Roman Hankewycz

62nd ANNUAL CONVENTION of the National Church Ushers Association of America Inc., is being held this week at the Hilton Hotel downtown, with more than 1,500 delegates from 27 states attending. James E. Anderson is president of the Ushers Association.

HEAD TABLE GUESTS seen at the National Church Ushers Association of America Inc., convention, shown from (L) are the Rev. Harold R. Palmer, Central United Methodist Church in Baltimore; Dr. Robert L. Carter, pastor of Congdon Street Baptist Church in Providence Rhode Island; the Rev. Marcus G. Wood, pastor of Providence Baptist Church and James E. Anderson, senior president.

RECEIVING THE GUESTS — Ushers attending the national convention this week at the Hilton Hotel, were shown how to greet guest at church. Shown from (L) at the ushering school class are Lawrence Taylor from Illinois; Grace L. Johnson, California and Paul Finch third vice president from Dayton Ohio.

TEENAGE USHERS from Washington D.C., seen at the convention shown from (L) are Diane Brown, 15; Chawanna Brown, 14 and Grace McMillian 13.

DALLAS TEXAS USHERS—A group of 39 ushers from Texas came to Baltimore by bus for the 62nd National Ushers Convention at the Hilton Hotel. Three of the ushers from Texas shown from left are Marie Hollis, who has been an usher for 36 years; Henrietta Jordon, an usher for 20 years and Anna E. Howard, has served as an usher for 31 years.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT of the Eastern Regional is Raymon Thomas, who participated in the six day ushers convention.

BALTIMORE USHERS seen at the Tuesday workshop were Margaret Spence Perkins Square Baptist Church; William King, Mount Olive Christian Church and third vice president of the Ushers Union of Maryland and Anna E. McCormick, recording secretary for the Ushers Union of Maryland and a member of Morning Star Baptist Church.

PUBLIC RELATIONS committee members who participated in the six day convention involving more than 1,500 people shown from (L) are Daisy L. Williams, chairman from Detroit Michigan and Alma C. Hawkins Washington D.C.

1980 NATIONAL QUEEN — Bessie Lyles (R) from Seattle Washington was the National Queen of the Ushers Convention. Mrs. Lyles, who was seen at New Shiloh Baptist Church last Sunday said she raised more than $2,000 last year when she was crowned queen. Shown with her is Lou Annie Charles from Seattle Washington, who has been an usher for 36 years.

NATIONAL YOUTH OFFICERS who participated in the convention, shown from left are Emery Stephens from Massachusetts; Saundra Ray, third vice president from Dallas, Texas; Cheryl Barker junior president from Racine Wisconsin and Romaine Wilkins, financial secretary.

(Photo by Paulette Hammond)

GENERAL SESSION — More than 600 ushers attended the general session and school of ushering classes on Tuesday at the National Ushers convention at the Hilton Hotel.

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