

# Church of God in Christ Women Impacting the Nations through International Missionary Work

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## Introduction

Christian women are open to God using them in any way He wishes. That New Testament narratives interweave stories of female disciples who followed Jesus, supported His ministry, courageously stand with Him at the Cross, and be the first to meet Him after the Resurrection comes as no surprise when you read Scripture in light of the elevation of women. *Royalty Unveiled* mentions some women whom God used to spread the truth of His love and grace:

Both the Old Testament and New Testament offer role models: the wisdom of the prophetess Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), the strategic planning of the matriarch Rachel (Ruth 4:11), the boldness of the prophetess and judge Deborah (Judges 4:4), and the intellectual prowess of the daughters of Zelophehad (Numbers 26:33, 27:1-4) along with those noted in the New Testament including the faithfulness of the temple attendant Anna (Luke 2:36), the organizational skills of Martha the disciple of Jesus (Luke 10:38), the anointing of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 2), and the trustworthiness of the *diakonos* Phoebe (Romans 16:1) among others.<sup>1</sup>

God used both single and married women. The story of Priscilla (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom. 16:3; I Cor. 16:19; II Tim. 4:19) reveals a married woman whom God used to interact with Rome, Greece and Asia Minor. Working as a team with her husband, she is an example of the definition of the missionary as one sent to a foreign country to do the work of the Lord. She supported the Apostle Paul, was a bold witness to the orator and Egyptian Christian Apollos and along with Aquila planted a church in Ephesus.

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### God's Audacious Assignments

Sometimes God is audacious in His assignments resulting in fear or intimidation when considering seemingly insurmountable obstacles to success. Yet Christian women such as Amanda Smith Berry and Mary McCloud Bethune have risen to the task.

Amanda Smith Berry was born a slave in 1837 to Samuel Berry and Marian Matthews Berry who lived on adjoining farms. Her father's mistress allowed him to buy his freedom. After the death of her mother's mistress, her father was able to purchase his wife and children. Amanda Smith became sanctified but yet had a fear of whites and she was called by God to be an evangelist during a time of opposition, resulting in criticism and doors closed by both Blacks and Whites.<sup>2</sup> God blessed her to overcome many obstacles expanding her ministry across America, to Europe, India and Africa and many were saved. After the publication of her life story, *The Story of the Lord's Dealings with Mrs. Amanda Smith the Colored Evangelist*, many Blacks, especially in the South, entered the holiness movement, including Rev. Charles H. Mason, who claimed the grace of divine sanctification after reading this work.<sup>3</sup>

Mary McCloud Bethune was born in 1875 to former slaves. At five years old Bethune's job, along with her mother and sister, was to carry water to refresh cotton pickers. Seeing white children going to school she vowed to her sister Rachel that she would go to school, learn to read and write, and in turn teach others. After successfully accomplishing what she vowed, she entered Moody Bible Institute and studied for two years with the intent of journeying to Africa to share the gospel but was turned down. Observing that Blacks in America needed both to hear about Jesus and taught to read and write, in 1904 she started a school with seven students (including her son Albert) with \$1.50. There she taught the students that their self-worth and dignity came from the love God showed to them. During the days of segregation she successfully raised funds for the school from sources such as John D. Rockefeller, and she was a personal friend to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Today the Bethune-Cookman University serves thousands of students annually.<sup>4</sup> Bethune was also a mentor, supporter and confidante to Dr. Arenia Mallory, President of the Church Of God In Christ Saints Junior College in Lexington, Mississippi.

Women like Smith and Bethune offered their gifts back to God through intercessory prayer, showing compassion and outreach to the poor and planning strategic partnership to fulfill the Great Commission. Other Blacks were called and were able to officially venture outside the

United States. Betsy Stockton is recognized as the first single female missionary to go overseas. She was appointed in 1822 by the American Board of Foreign Missions and traveled to the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii) with thirteen White missionaries, a single man, three national Islanders and a Tahitian.

Stockton's entrance into foreign missionary work opened doors for women of all races to enter into foreign services. Women of the Church Of God In Christ (COGIC) also traveled to missionary fields outside the United States. The Church of God in Christ was established in 1897 by former Baptist ministers Rev. Charles P. Jones and Rev. Charles H. Mason. Arriving at the Azusa Street Revival, Mason saw various races, denominations, classes and genders working together. He testified that he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and

I sat there a while giving up to God. The anthem of Heaven seemed to rise then; I felt myself rising out of my seat, without any effort. I thought at first it was imagination; then I saw it wasn't imagination. Well when I was drawn to my feet there came a light in the room above the brightness of the light of God. When I opened my mouth to say "Glory to God," a flame touched my tongue and my English left me, and I said "Glory" and then my hands was moved by the power of the Spirit of God. He had complete control of me. Now when this was over I was filled with the presence of God. I didn't move a foot; I sat there just as I am sitting now; I knew everything going on; the people even talking in the room. I was looking at them just as I am looking at you. God didn't knock me out. I saw others that were knocked out.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to note that while Mason spoke with tongues as *confirmation* of Holy Ghost baptism, it was the *impartation* of the Spirit that Mason and others sought. Upon his return from the Azusa St. Mission, Mason and Jones separated, mainly over the issue of speaking in tongues. The Church Of God In Christ was reorganized as a Holiness-Pentecostal organization in 1907 when Mason sent a letter to both males and females who believed as he did in the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the sign of speaking with other tongues. The first meeting was held in September 1907 and the first Holy Convocation of the Church Of God In Christ convened that same year from November 25 to December 14.

During the early years, the COGIC model welcomed any Spirit-filled individual to utilize their gifts for the glory of God. Mother Lizzie Robinson was the first Overseer of Women's Work (National Mother) appointed by Bishop Charles H. Mason in 1911. Using her entrepreneurial leadership skills gained through establishing Bible Bands across the south, the former washerwoman turned educator trained other women to go out and spread the gospel, the

doctrine of sanctification and the need for Holy Ghost baptism. Female adherents impacted the nation as they traveled throughout Mississippi, Tennessee and Arkansas and later in northward migration to Chicago, New York and other cities. One team of twins, Leatha and Reatha Herndon, reportedly prayed and established up to 75 churches in the name of the Church Of God In Christ.

#### Some Notable COGIC Women in Missions<sup>6</sup>

Other female adherents were called to international mission fields. These left the United States in answer to God's call. The official sending agency of the COGIC was the Home and Foreign Missions Board, established in 1926. However, some were sent prior to its establishment. Bishop Mason is reported to have sent out missionaries to Brazil in 1911; however the following are taken from official Home and Foreign Missions reports beginning in the mid-1900s with date of service cited.

##### 1. *Mattie McCaulley (1926-?)*

*Mission Stations:* Trinidad; Cristobal, Canal Zone, Costa Rica

*Place of Origin:* Tulsa, Oklahoma; though her husband is not named, records list her as "Mrs." McCaulley.

*Appointed to Missions Work by:* First foreign missionary sent after the establishment of the International Home and Foreign Missions Board.

In the 1926 Year Book of the COGIC, compiled by Lillian Brooks Coffey, Mother Mattie McCaulley provides a report of the work in Trinidad.

"I sailed from California on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, arrived in Christobal, Panama, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February. Had to wait 11 days for the next boat, so I inquired as to whether there were any Christians there. I found some said to be the Assemblies of God, so I went in to worship with them and found they were sanctified, so I labored day and night with them. The preacher told the people that he had never heard the gospel as I gave it. I left them all on the altar waiting for the Holy Ghost. I came on to Trinidad and began my work here. Souls have been saved and the sick healed by numbers. Now I have a little church established; Sunday

school, prayer and Bible band, Sunshine Band, and Y.P.W.W [Young People Willing Workers], all at work and doing nicely. Through much suffering, thank God I can now say victory is ours.”<sup>7</sup>

2. *Elizabeth White (1929/1930-?)*

*Missions Station:* First Church Of God In Christ Missionary officially sent to Africa, to Liberia; Founder of Wissekeh, Wrouke, Wuluken Mission Stations in Liberia.

*Family:* Mother White’s marriage was said to have been annulled and the only family she was known to have was a brother.

*Appointed to Missions by:* Mother Lizzie Robinson

*Other highlights:* Beatrice Lott remembered hearing the story of Mother White openly challenging a Voodoo priest in Liberia. She began calling on Jesus. The Voodoo priest fell out as if dead, powerless before the name of Jesus.

Elizabeth White met Bishop Mason and Mother Lillian Brooks Coffey in Atlanta, GA. The following information is primarily taken from the testimony of Bishop Abraham Brown, former Overseer of COGIC Mission Stations at Manolu, Tugbaken and Wissikeh, Liberia.

Mother White initially went to the mission’s field under the Assemblies of God banner; later joined with Sister Hathaway and Sister Wright of Chicago, members of a Black splinter from the Assemblies of God. While visiting an Assemblies of God working with the Tribe of Barobo Rev. William Klorjuo Brown met Missionary White. In 1928 he asked her to come to his hometown of Manolu where he was now Tobou Chieftain, Maryland County, and open a mission. She responded that once she finished her rotation, she was soon to return to the United States, but she promised to return to Liberia. Before 1929 she was back in Liberia and came as a Missionary of the COGIC, working with the Nyambo people at Bonniken.

Soon she relocated to the hinterland of Wissikeh and established the first Liberian Church Of God In Christ. She promised Rev. Brown that she could make arrangements for another Missionary to come and open a mission at Manolu and authorized him to open a school and serve as teacher until she could provide him a teacher. When Rev. Brown appealed to the chiefs and tribal leaders, they gave him 18 young men to form his first class of Manolu Mission School. Later she opened a mission at Wuluken, Tobou Chiefdom. From there Missionary White sent several teachers to assist Rev. Brown with the school until Missionary Francina Wiggins arrived.<sup>8</sup>

3. *Willie Curtis Ragland (1934-1946)*

*Mission Station:* Founder of the Tugbaken Missions in Liberia along with Missionary Beatrice Lott.

*Place of Origin:* Columbus, GA; Mother and father Buddy and Mary Hudson

*Appointed to Missions Work by:* Mother Lizzie Robinson

*Family:* Although the name of her husband is not known the couple had one daughter, Mrs. Curtis J. Day.

Ragland received the call to serve on the foreign fields when she was a very young woman. She was the second missionary appointed by the International Home and Foreign Missions Board to be sent to Liberia. At that time, she did not know Mother White, nor did she know that the Church had a missionary in Africa. Mother Lizzie Robinson informed her. In 1934 Mother Willie C. Ragland was sent forth to join Mother White in this New Field. Mother White was formerly with the Assemblies of God and Mother Ragland was formerly a member of the Seven Day Adventist Church.<sup>9</sup>

4. *Beatrice S. Lott (1939-1962)*

*Mission Station:* Founder of the Tugbaken Mission in Liberia along with Missionary W.C. Ragland.

*Place of Origin:* Born February 13, 1907 to James and Savannah Lott in Hearne, Texas; retired in Cleveland Ohio

*Call to Missions:* In 1937, "during a revival service called "The Time of Refreshing," I was caught away in the Spirit for three days and nights and could only speak in unknown tongues. The Lord readily gave the interpretation: "You've been called to Africa now. Go! Go! Go!"<sup>10</sup>

*Appointed to Missions Work by:* Mother Lizzie Robinson in 1939.

*Tours:* In 1939 Missionary Lott and Missionary Ragland boarded the *S.S. Andamia* in New York with the voyage taking 34 days after a layover in Liverpool, England. They left in 1942 by command of U.S. during WWII; returned to Tugbaken in 1944; left Tugbaken in 1952 bringing two girls, Lillian and Esther, with her. She returned accompanied by Martha Barber in 1955 and her niece, Rosiland Jones, whom she raised. She made another trip in November 1960.

According to Bishop Abraham Brown she made her last trip to visit her work in 1994. Also served as a short-term missionary to Rio de Janeiro and other countries outside the U.S.

*Other Highlights:* Along with Sis. Martha Barber she built a girl's dormitory, a house for missionaries, and built a church in 1963 and then added an extension. She also played a steel guitar.

*Died:* November 9, 1996 with services held November 16, 1996 at the Williams Temple COGIC, Cleveland, OH

The following account of her call is from an interview with her caretaker Dr. Lisa Peeples.

“This is an amazing story. Mother Lott was in her late 20s or early 30s. She was working in the church and had not gotten married. She was at Bishop Page's church in Dallas, working with the children and she said she was bored. She was sitting in church one day and there was a missionary who came and ran a revival. During that revival she received a refreshing from the Lord. The Lord filled her. She was only able to speak in tongues for 3 days. People were coming to see this girl who could only speak in tongues for 3 days. The missionary interpreted the tongues and said “Go to Africa.”

When the interpretation came her tongue was loosed. Bishop Page saw that she was to go to Africa. Many of the saints came and brought everything she needed and put it on the stage. One of the saints said “girl look at my knees I've been picking cotton to send you to Africa.” They brought a sewing machine, her bed. They could see the move of the Holy Spirit upon her. The saints brought money. She needed to do nursing training. It seems that during that time the Department was very organized and very powerful.

In 1939 she went and there were already missionaries of the Church Of God In Christ there, the pioneer Mother Elizabeth White and Missionary Martha Barber.”<sup>11</sup>

##### 5. Martha Barber (c. 1946-?)

*Mission Station:* Tugbaken, Liberia

*Place of Origin:* Chicago, IL

*Appointed to Missions Work by:* Mother Lizzie Robinson

*Family:* Sometimes after returning to the United States, Missionary Martha Barber is supposed to have married Elder Otis G. Clark of Oakland, California. He was the first male preacher to stay at the Lillian Brooks Coffey Rest Home at 154 Arden Park in Detroit, Michigan, and he served as Mother Coffey's "unpaid chauffeur."

Report to Whole Truth from Cape Palmas, Liberia, W. Africa

"To Christendom and friends everywhere, we greet you.

Since our arrival March 28<sup>th</sup> on a rather bright day about 6:30 p.m. we can truly witness His Marvelous acts amongus. Our double chores have about shut off our communication by correspondence.

Leaving you in New York March 17<sup>th</sup>, we arrived in Liberia's Air Port (Robertsfield) March 18<sup>th</sup>, about 9:30 p.m. G.M.T.

There waiting the planes to return to the States was Bishop Jackson and Party who had attended the dedicatorial services of The College of West Africa, which has been recently completed.

Annie and Tutu, (alias) Mary Ella Carnita Barber, soon accepted their disembarkment from that splendid Air Craft to the soil of their nativity. This never to be forgotten trip was made possible by the grand Leaders, Officers of The H&F Board, members and friends of the COGIC.

In the flood lites of that gorgeous Airport of the P.A.A. Co., after leaving from the commitments and agreements of our Board, I also demounted to the grounds of my labor. . . . Having been rushed to the relief of Sister Melvina Harris, who had such a marvelous job in holding the school with Teacher Sampson Janafo, she also with Elder Robert Kman, had oversight of the yard. Sister Harris, certainly according to her write up to the Whole Truth some years ago while she was yet at home in Monrovia, desiring to be a missionary, proved worthy of being a missionary. I therefore recommend her for license. . . .

During Sec. Taylor's visit to Liberia, I was quite pleased after gaining an interview with Senator and lawyer A. Dash Wilson, who had been employed along with Hon. And Mrs. W.A. Rogers in 1949 to negotiate the surveying and settling of Our Mission Land Grant. Therefore they guided us to first get the Tribal agreement for a parcel of land for Mission Work. Similar steps had first been taken by Missionaries Ragland and Lott, in 1939 when they opened the station, Tugbake. In

1950 the Tribal grant was signed and Hon. Rogers prepared and mailed it for preparation for The Legislature, which was set to open at that time.

Upon my return having been asked to ask for a larger plot of land, I started before I reached the mission or even Cape Palmas so as to forward to Our Board the necessary documents while this meeting is on. The land was properly surveyed and paid advance by our good friends the Rogers. While waiting the time for the House of Legislature to open, there came an awful blow to us all that there had been an attempt assassination (but failed) and the surveyors name was entailed. This is the reason for any question of the present situation of our church mission land grant in Tugbake.

Martha M. Barber.”<sup>12</sup>

#### *6. Dorothy Webster Exume (1947-1977)*

*Mission Station:* Haiti

*Place of Origin:* Born August 10, 1922 in Cleveland, Ohio to Fred Daniel Webster and Mary Webster (Doll).

*Stateside Profession:* High School French Teacher

*Education:* Dual degree in French and Sociology with an English minor (Case Western); Masters of Religious Education (Interdenominational Theological Center 1972); Doctorate with emphasis in Christian Education (Union Graduate School 1982).

*Call to Missions:* Between the ages of 8 and 12, Dorothy heard a message about African missions at Liberty Hill Baptist Church and said, “When I grow up I want to go and help them.” After praying about serving in foreign missions the Lord gave her a dream which was interpreted by Mother Elizabeth Bracy to serve in Haiti. She was assigned and arrived in Haiti in 1947 accompanied by the International Supervisor Mother Lillian Coffey and Bishop A.B. McEwen.

*Appointed to Missions by:* Mother Lillian Brooks Coffey.

*National Work:* Founder, COGICs Mason School and Orphanage in Haiti; Secretary to Mother Lillian B. Coffey; Staff Member of Planning Committee of First International Women’s

Convention; Founder of Aides to the President, a prestigious group of women, recommended by their State Supervisor to serve the Women's Convention, name later changed to Task Force; Along with Mother Anna Crockett Ford Dr. Exume served as broadcaster for Women's Convention radio programs; First Supervisor of Haiti under Bishop Esau Courtney and briefly under Bishop D'atrouche; Instructor, C.H. Mason Theological Seminary, Trustee Board Member, C.H. Mason Theological Seminary.

*Died:* January 4, 2011

Missionary Dorothy Webster Exume was an unusual woman and unusually gifted. She established missions, approximately twenty churches, a number of schools, a multi-family housing project, feeding programs, and launched new programs for arriving missionaries and micro-financing self-sufficiency for entrepreneurial single mothers.

7. *Francina Wiggins (1949-1961)*

*Mission Stations:* Manolu (sometimes spelled Monolu), Liberia.

*Place of Origin:* Michigan

*Appointed to Missions Work by:* Mother Lillian Coffey

Mother Naomi Lundy recalls Mother Wiggins as a woman of order and an educator. The following is taken from the testimony of Bishop Abraham Brown, former Overseer of Church Of God In Christ Mission Stations at Monolu, Tugbaken and Wissikeh, Liberia.

"Rev. William K. Brown prayed for a Missionary for his hometown of Manolu for over twenty years. His prayer was answered on August 17, 1949 when a young Missionary arrived in Harper County, Liberia. Her name was Francina B. Wiggins. After resting at the Bethel Home, a missionary home in the coastal Harper City, she moved on into the interior to meet Mother White at Wuluken Mission. Joseph Brown, a student at Manolu notes that the missionaries received their assignment from Mother White as she was the oldest missionary. From Wuluken, Missionary Wiggins received her assignment to move to Manolu to establish the Manolu Mission Station. Rev. Abraham W. Brown served as her interpreter as she did not speak the language. With determination Missionary Wiggins built the Manolu Mission from "nothing" but served the Lord in Liberia until 1961 when she returned to the U.S.<sup>13</sup>

She gives a report of her work in Liberia in the Whole Truth.

“Cape Palmas, Liberia, West Africa

The Church Of God In Christ has three established missions in this section. At Manalu where I am in charge we have a membership of fifty. We have served in this town for the past five years under Mother White who supported a day school here. When I came over I began the mission buildings and organized the church. We have operated a full mission program for the past year.

God is blessing our labor. Many of the young people came and accepted Christ. The young saints and the school children are now engaged in our first permanent school and church building. Prior to this we used temporary mud huts for services and school. We also operate an elementary mission school. The present enrollment is 45 students. Fifteen of these are boarding students. They live on the mission premises supported wholly by the grants sent from our board. Applications are in hand for receiving twice this number, but we do not as yet have the accommodations. One other native teacher and myself make up the faculty and staff.

We have an outdoor clinic which is operated by your missionary and supported by medical supplies from one Sister Ida Burrell in Princeton, New Jersey. One twelve year old Alfred Weah who was dying of spinal meningitis was touched by God. A baby choking to death of intestinal worms was healed; A fourteen year old was dying from a poisonous snake bite was healed. Another young woman suffering, was unable to get off her mat for several months, was healed. She now does all her farm work. We are praising God for his great works among the people here. Pray for us that we may gather in the harvest of the Lord.

We have just received into our organization another church in a town about ten miles from here. They are heathens turning to Christ. They have never been in any other organization. We have carried several Evangelistic services into that town, also to every surrounding town within fifteen miles of our station. We stay overnight sleeping and eating among the heathens that they might hear the gospel. We are soliciting for pastor, school teacher and two deacons, four pairs of men's shoes, size eight; four used dress suits; four shirts and four pairs of trousers. They are faithful and loyal to the work serving as unto God. . . .

Francena Wiggins”<sup>14</sup>

8. *Pearl Page Brown (1962-1963; 1965-1968)*

*Mission Stations:* Honduras, Haiti, Liberia

*Place of Origin:* Born in Mississippi, raised in Sikeston, Missouri; currently residing in San Jose, California.

*Marriage:* To Elder J.D. Brown (1976), pastor of the Temple of Prayer Evangelistic Church Of God In Christ (presumably San Jose, California) after returning from Missions Field

*Education:* Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from San Jose State University; Doctor of Divinity, International Bible College and Seminary, San Jose, California.

*Stateside Profession:* Educational Counselor

*Appointed to Missions by:* Mother Annie L. Bailey

Mother Pearl Page Brown was saved at five years of age at St. Louis' Kennerly Temple where Elder Samuel Jones served as pastor. She is a self-described Masonite. She received her first license under Mother Lola Young, State Mother of Ohio North Jurisdiction, in 1951. She relocated to California in 1959 and worked her way to Belize, British Honduras in 1960. The church sent her to at least three countries; however, she has ministered in twenty-seven. In 1962 Mother Lola Young accompanied her to Miami and put her on a ship to Haiti where, she served until she returned home in 1963 because of political unrest in the country.

The International Outlook Magazine was the official organ of the COGIC Missions Department and was a communications tool for stories from the missions' fields, requests for assistance, updates on conferences and news from the foreign missionaries themselves. Below is a story written by Mother Pearl Page Brown (she served in Liberia from 1965-1968):

"On My Way to Liberia – International Outlook 1964

It has been a pleasure serving and ministering to the Lord's people in America, Honduras, and Haiti. I do mean to work until the day is done.

Once again I am saying, "Here am I, Lord, send me." I shall be leaving for Liberia, around the first of the year, to serve the Church there.

This time I will embrace a new phase of missionary work: that of clinical practices. The Lord blessed me to recently graduate from a school of Missionary medicine in Los Angeles, where I learned a smattering of just about everything from pulling teeth to the study of tropical diseases, public health, and sanitation, laboratory sciences, pharmacology, and therapy, etc. . . .

Pearl Page<sup>15</sup>

9. *Elizabeth Copeland (1955-)*

*Mission Stations:* Mother Copeland has worked in Haiti and currently serves in the Philippines.

*Place of Origin:* Calls Daytona Beach, Florida home.

*Marriage:* July 1955 at age 17.

*Education:* Begin attending the Chicago School of Design at age 13.

*Stateside Profession:* Fashion Designer; client list included Sammy Davis, Jr., Fats Domino and The Supremes.

*Call to Missions:* Her first assignment as an international missionary began when she traveled to Haiti for a design project and ventured “to the wrong side of the country.” Appalled to see individuals sleeping in the streets she vowed she would never return to Haiti. She changed her mind and from the mid-1950s to 1968 she traveled across the Caribbean helping people to help themselves.

Like other women who became international missionaries Mother Copeland’s acumen was developed by her work in foreign service and as a home missionary. In 1968 she was diagnosed with cancer and doctors gave her up to die. But God had other plans for the woman who refused to call herself a missionary. As she lay alone one day God told her to get on her knees and pray. Instructing her to “look up” He healed her instantly. Soon after her healing another crisis would catapult her into her calling. A group of young men, who had burglarized her Ft. Lauderdale home, were scheduled to become part of the prison system when God spoke to her to form a group to minister to them.

Through the *I Care Ministry*, later renamed the *Yes I Can Ministry* she taught young people the art of craft making and her work took her to the Florida Governor’s Mansion and the White

House. But she yet had to accept her full calling. In 1988 after years of good health she fell immobile on the floor and listened as God told her that she had done many good things, but had not answered the call. He said He would give her blessing all over the world if she would say 'yes.' When she said yes she was able to get off the floor and since then has returned to Haiti. With the help of engineers from the University of Florida, she built a system with PVC pipes that delivered water to villages. In 1997, she began working with the Aeta people of the Sapang Bato village in the Philippines setting up factories to manufacture the Aetas' unique wood carvings and intricately woven fabric. By paying them \$10 per day (compared to the \$3 most workers get) Mother Copeland's ministry opened and continues to open doors for the gospel to be preached to these aboriginal Filipinos.<sup>16</sup>

10. Charles and Betty Kennedy (1956-1964)

*Mission Stations:* Tugbaken, Wissekeh, Liberia

*Place of Origin:* Pennsylvania

*Call to Missions:* While living in Puerto Rico, Betty had a vision of a man in Africa asking her to come. She and her husband prayed and found it was the will of the Lord for them to sell most of their belongings and save to go to Africa.

*Appointed to Missions Work by:* Mother Lillian B. Coffey

*National Office:* Supervisor of the Democratic Republic of Congo Church Of God In Christ; Elder Kennedy served as Treasurer-Auditor of the International Home and Foreign Missions Board

While Bro. Abraham Brown and Mother Jessie Brown were appointed missionaries in their native Liberia, Mother Mary Beth Kennedy and Father Charles "Chuck" Kennedy were the only couple documented to have been sent by the COGIC to the mission field prior to 1970. Having informed Bishop O.T. Jones, Sr., he was delighted with their interest in the work of missions. Returning home to Erie, they lived with her mother and made plans for Africa. The couple contacted Mother Martha Barber and asked if she needed help at Tugbaken, Liberia. She responded that she would love for them to come. They were approved by Mother Lillian Coffey

and the Home and Foreign Missions Department for service in Liberia where two of their children were born.

After working for almost a year in Tugbaken assisting Mother Martha Barber, a group of villagers came and asked Elder Kennedy to come and explore the abandoned Wissikeh Station where he found the missions station in ruins. After spending one year at Tugbaken, they relocated to Wissikeh and spent seven years there. They were a true missionary team working as a single missionary unit. They rebuilt the station and reopened the school up to the high school level. The Kennedys traveled throughout Africa and the third-world ministering in Zambia, Ivory Coast, Dominican Republic, Haiti and other countries. They built a school in Erie, Pennsylvania which celebrated 42 years of existence in 2010. Father Kennedy also pastored in Erie.<sup>17</sup>

#### *11. Grace Yancey (1954-1973)*

Missionary Yancey taught in the private schools of Bangkok, Thailand as well provided private lessons. Although it was hard for her to take the gospel to a wider audience because of the modes of travel, the work of the Church Of God In Christ grew.

Bishop B.J. Crouch was appointed as Bishop of Thailand in 1955 and sometime in the late 1960s Bishop Samuel Crouch visited Thailand to encourage Grace that the headquarters had not forgotten her. As a result she reported in 1970 that Sis. Sarah Green and the Women's Mission Circle of the Emanuel Church Of God In Christ, Los Angeles, supported her with love gifts along with Elder and Mother Jessie Condy who constantly remembered her. Bishop E.E. Cleveland was also a great supporter of the Thailand work.<sup>18</sup>

#### *12. Naomi Lundy (1962-1966)*

*Mission Station:* Manolu, Liberia.

*Place of Origin:* born in Emporia, Virginia, January 26, 1920, but family relocated to Philadelphia where she was raised. She was saved in 1938 in a revival conducted by the famous evangelist Elder Utah "Two Wings" Smith, and was baptized in a river.

*Married to:* Briefly married during World War I.

*Call to Missions:* The Lord gave her a vision of a harvest field. A "little short man" stood in the field holding a sickle but she could only see his head. She asked the Lord the meaning of the vision of Africa. He answered "this man needs all the help he can get." After sharing the vision with her pastor, Bishop O.T. Jones, Sr., she was interviewed by Mother Lillian Coffey and Mother Arenia Mallory in Memphis, TN.

*Appointed to Missions Work by:* Mother Lillian Brooks Coffey. Her last trip to Liberia was 1985.

*Other service:* After returning home, she evangelized in New Jersey, New York, Philadelphia, Arizona, California, and Mexico. She has worked at the Community Center in Glassboro, New Jersey assisting in teaching children the Word.

One of the guiding principles in the life of Naomi Lundy is Prov. 30:5 "*Every word of God is pure; He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him.*" (KJV) A child of the Depression, she found that God took care of her during challenging personal tests and while on the foreign fields. During World War II she wanted to do something and after meeting Mother Lillian Coffey and Bro. Abraham Brown in Memphis, Tennessee became interested in foreign missions work.

"I was inspired by God to be a Missionary Worker in Africa. Incredibly, there was a need for a worker at Monalu Mission Station and I was appointed by Mother Coffey to serve. I left for the bush of Africa and worked for 3 ½ years at the Manolu Mission. I served as a missionary in the church, clinic and school. On completion of my tour of duty at Monalu, my successors were: a pastor, missionary couple, Rev. and Mrs. [Abraham] Brown who were former students of the mission. The Brown's were educated by the National Church School [headquartered] in Lexington, Mississippi. The National teacher who assisted me during my administration was sponsored to the states through my efforts to further his education. Rev. Nyema returned to Africa as a missionary to his people and has established two church works as an evangelist and teaches High School for his government."<sup>19</sup>

### *13. Evangelist Elizabeth Scott (1960)*

The Church Of God In Christ was first planted in the free nation of Nigeria by Bishop F.L. Grier of New York City. Through Bishop Grier and the sacrificial labor of Mother Scott “on the spot” the Church Of God In Christ developed.<sup>20</sup>

### Conclusion

There were many other women who worked in the foreign fields to bring the gospel such as Mateal McCoy to the Bahamas (1958-1973), June Blackwell to Liberia (1962-?) and Rosetta Graham to Ghana. Today, Church of God in Christ Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake is leading the Church in 2014 to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Bishop Charles Harrison Mason. Bishop Mason’s vision was that COGIC would *go into the everywhere*. Today international missionaries, single men and women and married couples, serve in over sixty countries where the Church Of God In Christ has planted assemblies. The 21<sup>st</sup> century emissaries should give homage to early pioneering women who courageously impacted nations following the commands of our Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> Williams Goodson, Glenda *Royalty Unveiled: Women Trailblazers in Church Of God In Christ International Missions 1920—1970* (Lancaster, TX, HCM Publishing, 2011), 104.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Amanda *The Story of the Lord's Dealings with Mrs. Amanda Smith the Colored Evangelist Containing an Account of Her Life Work of Faith, and Her Travels in America, England, Ireland, Scotland, India, and Africa, as an Independent Missionary* (Chicago: Meyers and Brothers Publishers, Chicago, 1893), 17-22, 80:

<sup>3</sup> Clemmons, Ithiel *Bishop C.H. Mason and the Roots of the Church of God in Christ* (Bakersfield, CA, Pneuma Life Publishing, 1996), 5.

<sup>4</sup> [www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Mary\\_McLeod\\_Bethune](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Mary_McLeod_Bethune)

<sup>5</sup> McBride, Calvin S., *Walking in a New Spirituality* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2007), 67.

<sup>6</sup> Following are excerpts from Goodson, *Royalty Unveiled*, Chapter 9 which tell the story of Church of God in Christ international missionaries.

<sup>7</sup> Goodson, *Royalty Unveiled*, 228 (227-228).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 229-231.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 231-232.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 233.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 234 (232-234).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 235-237 (234-239).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 240-241.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 241-243 (240-243).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 244-245 (243-245).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 250-252.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 252-253.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 254.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 256 (255-257).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 257, 282-285.