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### Black Adventism in North America

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# Black Adventism in North America

DR. TREVOR O'REGGIO

# MLK

- ▶ NOTHING IN THE WORLD IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN SINCERE IGNORANCE AND CONSCIENTIOUS STUPIDITY

# IDA B WELLS

▶ THE WAY TO RIGHT  
WRONGS IS TO TURN  
THE LIGHT OF TRUTH  
UPON THEM

# Origin Myths of America

- ▶ Christopher discovered America
- ▶ Puritans escaping persecution/to evangelize the Natives
- ▶ Jamestown 1607/Plymouth 1619
- ▶ Great open land-no inhabitants
- ▶ Providence gave this land to our forefathers.
- ▶ Colonial, Revolutionary, Modern

# Foundations of the American Nation

- ▶ Military conquest and theft of Native land
- ▶ Native driven off their land-savages, pagans
- ▶ Massive infusion of African labor to build America
- ▶ Treated as chattel-animals-degraded-dehumanized
- ▶ Take over of Mexican territory- half million square miles
- ▶ 1836-Texas, Southwest 1848- Hidalgo Treaty
- ▶ 1893 overthrow of Hawaiian Queen
- ▶ 1898-Cuba, Puerto Rico, Philippines, Guam

# Major Turning Points in African American History

1619 - **FIRST** BLACK INDENTURED SERVANTS LANDED AT JAMESTOWN, VIRGINIA.-LABOR SHORTAGE FOR TOBACCO CULTIVATION. NATIVE LABOR INADEQUATE SLAVERY-NEW INSTITUTION FOR ENGLISH SETTLERS.

PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH STARTED IT 150 YRS PRIOR.

1640 - WHIPPING AND BRANDING BORROWED FROM ROMAN PRACTICE APPEARS IN VIRGINIA.

- ❖ Runaway slave, Emmanuel convicted of trying to escape in July 1640 is given thirty stripes and the letter R branded on his cheek and works in shackles for one year.

# Major Turning Points in African American History

1641 - MASSACHUSETTS **FIRST** COLONY TO LEGALIZE SLAVERY.

1660'S - COLONIES ENACT LAWS TO DEFINE AND REGULATE SLAVERY, CHILDREN OF SLAVE WOMEN MUST SERVE FOR LIFE.- BREAK FROM TRADITION-FATHER DEFINED STATUS OF CHILD

1662 - VIRGINIAN LAW ASSUMED AFRICANS REMAIN SERVANTS FOR LIFE.

❖ **First** laws punishing interracial relations



# Major Turning Points in African American History

1664 - MARYLAND PASSED LAW MAKING LIFELONG SERVITUDE FOR BLACK SLAVES.

- ❖ Law prohibiting marriage between White women and Black men; remained in effect for over three hundred years, repealed in 1967.

1667 - BAPTISM OF SLAVES DID NOT EXEMPT THEM FROM SLAVERY.

- ❖ Can Blacks be enslaved if they become Christians?
- ❖ Historically Christians didn't enslave fellow Christians

# Origins of Whiteness

- ▶ Black slaves and white indentured labors revolt against their masters
- ▶ Bacon's Revolution 1676- Blacks and Whites revolt caused alarm among ruling elites
- ▶ Divide and conquer strategy- poor whites given special privileges – guns, local militia
- ▶ First time -Whiteness given special privileges

# Major Turning Points in African American History

- 1670 - VOTING RIGHTS REMOVED FROM RECENTLY FREED SLAVES AND INDENTURED SERVANTS
- 1680 - AMERICAN SLAVERY ESTABLISHED SLAVES AS AN ARTICLE OF PROPERTY-CHATTEL SLAVERY
- 1688 - QUAKERS SIGNED ANTISLAVERY RESOLUTION, FIRST FORMAL PROTEST AGAINST SLAVERY IN WESTERN HEMISPHERE

# Major Turning Points in African American History

- 1712 - MAJOR SLAVE REVOLT IN NEW YORK, NINE WHITES KILLED, TWENTY BLACKS EXECUTED; SOME WERE BURNED ALIVE.
- 1772 - GEORGE WASHINGTON DRAFTS PETITION LABELING SLAVE TRADE A GREAT INHUMANITY, YET CONTINUED TO KEEP SLAVES
- 1775 - CONTINENTAL CONGRESS BARS BLACKS FROM AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMY.



# Revolutionary War


1775 –1783 WAR OF REVOLUTION

- ❖ Blacks fought for their freedom but Americans who fought for their freedom used their freedom to enslave Blacks

# Introduction: Declaration of Independence

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT:

THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL; THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS; THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS; THAT, TO SECURE THESE RIGHTS, GOVERNMENTS ARE INSTITUTED AMONG MEN, DERIVING THEIR JUST POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED . . .



EVERY STATE FROM PENNSYLVANIA NORTHWARD  
ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ENSLAVEMENT OF  
BLACKS WAS FUNDAMENTALLY INCONSISTENT  
WITH REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGY, ALL MEN ARE  
CREATED EQUAL WAS BEGINNING TO REQUIRE  
REAL FORCE AS A BASIC PRINCIPLE.

## 1787 – CONSTITUTIONAL CONGRESS COMPROMISE

- ❖ Blacks 3/5 human; part of Constitution
- ❖ Naturalization Act of 1790
- ❖ First law defining citizenship: Only People Free white persons of good moral character, two years of residence.



# Whiteness enshrined in citizenship

- ▶ First Naturalization Act of 1790 to define American citizenship
- ▶ 1. Free white person
- ▶ 2. good character
- ▶ 3. 2 years of state residence

# Critical Race Theory

- ▶ USA is not and never was a benevolent nation of immigrants.
- ▶ Rather it is a nation of settler-colonialism, genocide, white nationalism, racial slavery, legal torture and institutional rape.
- ▶ Since the inception of this country laws and legal practices favored whites economically, politically and socially
- ▶ Whiteness- a form of protected property
- ▶ America Canaan for whites, Babylon and Egypt for Blacks

# Definition of blackness

- ▶ - Hypodescent law- mixed race people assigned to the race which is less social dominant race of parents. Designed to protect racial purity and discourage marriage between ethnic/racial groups.
- ▶ Purity/pollution-proximity to blackness pollutes
- ▶ One drop rule- any drop of Black ancestry made that person black.

# Major Turning Points in African American History

- 1774 - RHODE BECAME THE FIRST TO ABOLISH SLAVERY
- 1777 - VERMONT ABOLISHED SLAVERY
- 1780 - PENNSYLVANIA ABOLISHED SLAVERY.
- 1782 - GEORGE WASHINGTON MAJOR SLAVE OWNER IN FAIRFAX COUNTY VIRGINIA.
- 1787 - CONSTITUTIONAL CONGRESS ADOPTS THREE-FIFTHS AS COMPROMISE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH



# Freedom in the states

1777-VERMONT

1784-CONNECTICUT

1827-NEW YORK

1804-NEW JERSEY

# Major Turning Points in African American History

- 1804 - HAITIAN REVOLUTIONARIES FREES ALL SLAVES AND KILLS ALL WHITES WHO DO NOT FLEE.
- 1808 - SLAVE IMPORTATION BANNED INTO THE USA.
- 1820 - MISSOURI COMPROMISE ESTABLISHES 36 DEGREE AND 30 PARALLEL AS A DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN FREE AND SLAVE TERRITORIES
- 1850 - FUGITIVE SLAVE ACT ALLOWS SLAVE HOLDERS TO RETRIEVE RUNAWAY SLAVES IN NORTHERN STATES AND FREE TERRITORIES

# Manifest Destiny



# Manifest Destiny

- ▶ Coined in 1845 that God has destined America to expand its dominion and spread democracy and capitalism across North America.
- ▶ Used to justify forced removal of natives from their land, take over of Mexican land





# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

THE EARLY BEGINNINGS  
1830-1863

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

## THE EARLY BEGINNINGS. 1830 – 1863

- ❖ The work of the Millerites (1830-1840s; forerunners of Adventists) during the pre-Civil War era was confined primarily to free Blacks living in the North.
- ❖ Several of them accepted the message and a few became leaders.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

BLACK HISTORY **THEMES** (TAKEN FROM BAKER, DELBERT W. "IN SEARCH OF ROOTS." *ADVENTIST REVIEW*, FEB. 1993, 13-14.)

- ❖ The development of the Black work was the providential outworking of God's plan for Adventists to take the gospel to all the world.
- ❖ From its beginning, God designed that the Seventh-day Adventist Church be multicultural and inclusive of all people.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

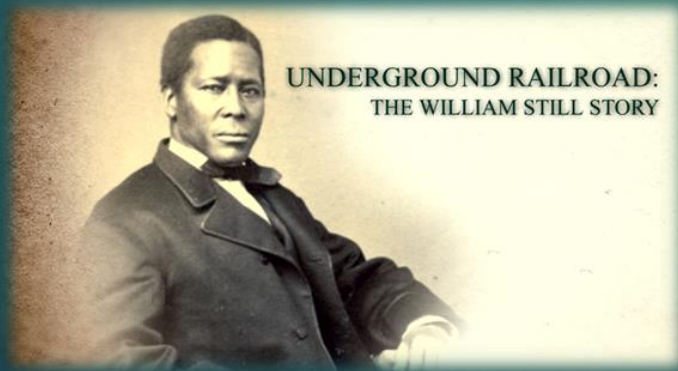
## BLACK HISTORY THEMES (CONTINUED)

- ❖ Ellen White was the single most influential person in the Seventh-day Adventist church to advocate the development of the Black work.
- ❖ The Black work was instrumental in helping the Adventist church mature in its outlook on multiculturalism.
- ❖ There is cause for celebration concerning the Black church work because progress in this area was the result of the combined efforts of the entire church.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1841 – William Still

Ardent abolitionist working with the Underground Railroad accepts Millerite teachings and later experiences the Great Disappointment.



1842 – William Foy

Receives prophetic gift and has four visions relating to the early Advent Movement. In 1844 Foy meets Ellen White and recognizes her prophetic gift and ministry.



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

## 1841 CONTENT OF FOY'S MESSAGE:

- ❖ Mercy and justice
- ❖ Fairness and impartiality
- ❖ Compassion and delay
- ❖ Salvation and damnation
- ❖ Warning judgment preceded by warnings

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

## Differences with Ellen G. White:



Foy

Pre-disappointment

Limited in scope and time

4 visions

12 ½ hour long vision

E. G. White

Post-disappointment

multi-faceted

2,000 visions

Longest vision 4 hours



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

**Similarities** with Ellen G. White:

Foy and E. G. White

- ❖ Did not claim title of a prophet
- ❖ Similar in content
- ❖ Had visions in public and examined by doctors



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

- 1843 – CHARLES BOWLES ANOTHER WELL-KNOWN BLACK MILLERITE MINISTER SPEARHEADS THE ORGANIZATION OF QUARTERLY MILLERITE MEETINGS.
- 1850 – FUGITIVE SLAVE ACT – PASSED REQUIRING CITIZENS TO TURN IN RUNAWAY SLAVES.
- 1857 – DRED SCOTT CASE OF SUPREME COURT – BLACKS DECLARED NON-CITIZENS, HAVE NO RIGHTS.
- 1859 – ELLEN WHITE - COUNSELS MEMBERS TO DISOBEY FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1861 – ELLEN WHITE RECEIVES HISTORIC VISION AT ROOSEVELT THAT REVEALS THE HORRIBLE CURSE AND DEGRADATION OF SLAVERY AND THE PROPHECIES OF GOD'S JUDGMENT IN AMERICA FOR THE "HIGH CRIME" OF SLAVERY.



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

FEEBLE EFFORTS  
1863-1894

# Reconstruction 1865-1877

- ❖ Civil War and its consequences
- ❖ 1862-1867 Homestead Act-160 acres per citizen
- ❖ 100 million acres for rich, 50 m for white settlers, no Blacks included
- ❖ 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments
- ❖ Election of 1876
- ❖ Redeeming the States
- ❖ Restoration of Home Rule
- ❖ North won the war, South won the peace

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

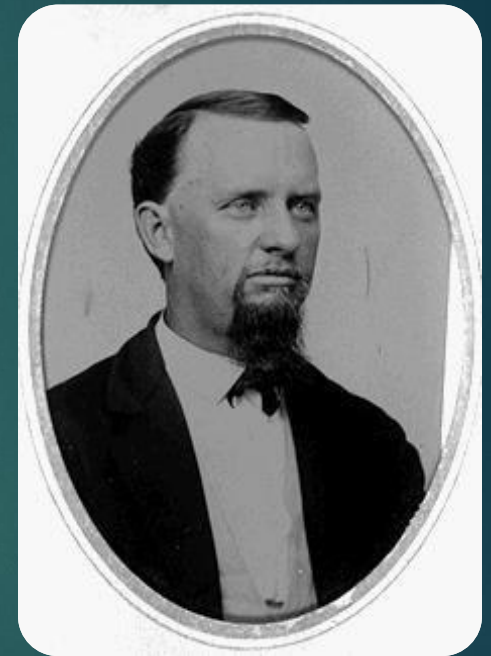
## FEEBLE EFFORTS 1863 – 1894

ADVENTISTS BEGIN TO MAKE SPORADIC FORAYS IN THE SOUTH WHERE THE VAST MAJORITY OF BLACKS LIVED. THESE EARLY ATTEMPTS WERE CARRIED OUT BY A FEW BRAVE MINISTERS, LITERATURE EVANGELISTS AND INTREPID LAY PEOPLE.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1871 – ELBERT B. LANE – **FIRST** ADVENTIST MINISTER TO HOLD MEETINGS IN THE SOUTH IN A TENNESSEE DEPOT BUILDING WITH WHITES AND COLORED OCCUPYING SEPARATE ROOMS.

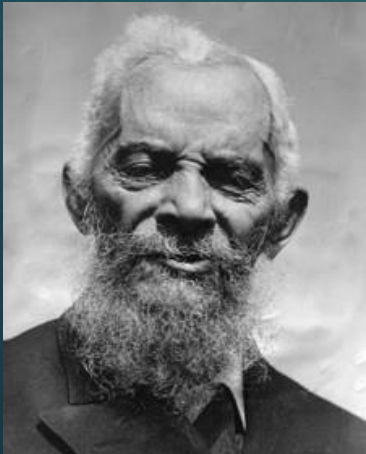
1877 – **FIRST** BLACK SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST SCHOOL BEGINS IN MISSOURI.



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1886 – **FIRST** BLACK CONGREGATION IS FORMED IN EDGEFIELD JUNCTION, TENNESSEE.

1889 – CHARLES M. KINNY - **FIRST** BLACK ORDAINED SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MINISTER.



- ❖ Converted by J. N. Loughborough
- ❖ Becomes one of the major pioneers in Black work
- ❖ **First** proposed concept of Black conferences to increase effectiveness of work among Blacks.
- ❖ Advocated regional conferences because of racism and prejudice

# CM Kinny

- ▶ Born Richmond Virginia 1855
- ▶ Converted Reno Nevada 1878, baptized by JN Loughborough, heard EGW preached
- ▶ One of seven charter member of Reno SDA church- served as Tract and missionary secretary  
1878-1883
- ▶ Student at Healdsburg College, CA 1883-1885
- ▶ Defended Sabbath against Black Baptist pastor
- ▶ Obstacles to reaching Blacks: Ignorance, superstition, poverty, and false teachings



# CM Kinny

- ▶ Strategies 1. Friendship evangelism. 2. Direct and personal invitation. 3. One meeting per week.
- ▶ Focused on Black Christians-thru personal evangelism, selling literature
- ▶ Ordained 1889- worked West, Midwest, South
- ▶ Organized 3<sup>rd</sup>. Black church-Bowling Green, June 13<sup>th</sup>. 1891, 4<sup>th</sup>. Black church-New Orleans, June 4<sup>th</sup>. 1892, 5<sup>th</sup>. Black church-Nashville, Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>. 16<sup>th</sup>. 1892
- ▶ First called for Black conference 1889, retired 1911
- ▶ Appealed to GC in 1891. supported by EGW
- ▶ Our Duty to the Colored People

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1891 – MARCH 10 – KILGORE, GENERAL CONFERENCE WORKER - RECOMMENDS SEGREGATED WORK FOR BLACKS AT GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION.

- ❖ Ellen White opposes March 21 and preaches famous sermon:

*“Our Duty to the Colored People”*



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION  
1894-1944

# America's racial landscape

- ❖ White Supremacy-law of the land
- ❖ 1896-Plessy vs. Ferguson
- ❖ Legal segregation, law of the land
- ❖ Jim Crow laws
- ❖ Blacks disenfranchised, terrorized, lynched.
- ❖ 1890-1970 4,400 Blacks lynched
- ❖ Greenwood and Tulsa- Black Wall street 1921



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

## EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION 1894 - 1944

THIS PERIOD MARKS THE FIRST SYSTEMATIC EFFORTS TO EVANGELIZE BLACKS IN THE SOUTH. IT WAS SPEARHEADED BY EDSON WHITE, SON OF ELLEN WHITE AFTER RECEIVING ENCOURAGEMENT FROM HIS MOTHER TO TAKE UP THIS NEGLECTED WORK.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

## SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR THE CHURCH IN CARRYING OUT ITS WORK FOR THE AFRICAN AMERICAN

- ❖ God had given a commission to the Adventist Church to take the gospel to all the world, including the Black people of the South.
- ❖ Adventist were obliged to do what was morally right. It was not morally right to go to the foreign countries of the world and ignore the Blacks.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

- ❖ All decent people, Ellen White reasoned, who saw the suffering and need of a people just out of slavery would be compelled as compassionate human beings to follow the example of Christ and provide help.
- ❖ While the White race was not in the same state of need as the Black race, they should try to understand what it must be like to be in bondage and to be deprived of education and domestic and civil freedoms, to be abused and ignored, to be treated as “things,” instead of “persons,” for scores of years.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

- ❖ Mrs. White felt that the entire country had benefitted from the life, energy, and labor of Black people, and it was time to restore something to them as a race for decades of loss, damage, and injury.
- ❖ Mrs. White reasoned that if one part of society is weak or needy, then it weakens the whole society.
- ❖ If Adventists ignored the Black race and did nothing to ameliorate the deplorable conditions in which they existed, Ellen White said they would answer for it in the judgment.

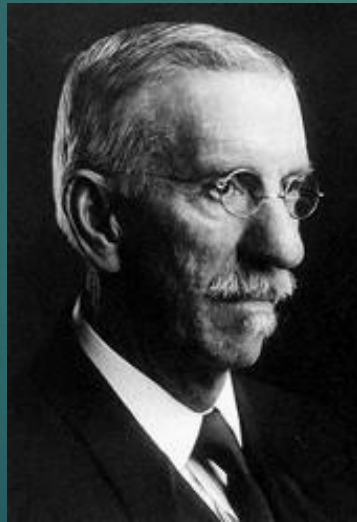


# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1894 - EDSON WHITE AND WILL PALMER BEGIN TO EVANGELIZE SOUTHERN BLACKS VIA THE STEAMSHIP *MORNING STAR*

- ❖ They landed in Vicksburg, Mississippi in 1895

Edson White



Will Palmer



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1895 - SOUTHERN MISSIONARY SOCIETY BEGUN;  
INCORPORATED IN 1898

- ❖ Devoted to working for Blacks in the South
- ❖ Headed by Edson White
- ❖ Becomes part of the Southern Union Conference in 1909

1896 - PLESSY VERSUS FERGUSON

- ❖ legal segregation law of the land
- ❖ separate but equal doctrine

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1896 - OAKWOOD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL BEGINS OPERATION

- ❖ Becomes junior college in 1927

1901 - **FIRSTS**

- ❖ Black Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting
  - ❖ Edgefield Junction, Tennessee
- ❖ Black Seventh-day Adventist medical facility
  - ❖ Nashville, Tennessee
  - ❖ Later expanded to Riverside Hospital in 1927
  - ❖ Under direction of Mrs. Nellie Druillard
  - ❖ Turned over to GC in 1935
  - ❖ Further expanded with purchase of 46 acres adjacent to property
  - ❖ Modern hospital building constructed in 1947
  - ❖ Sold in 1983



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1909 - *TESTIMONIES, VOL. 9* PUBLISHED

- ❖ Section “Among the Colored People,” included
- ❖ Negro department of GC directed by White leaders
  - J. W. Christian and A. J. Haysmer

1918 - W. H. GREEN - LAWYER - **FIRST** BLACK LEADER OF NEGRO DEPARTMENT



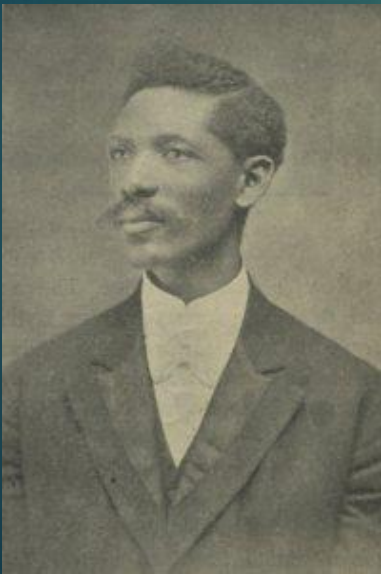
# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1926 - GENERAL CONFERENCE ACTION VOTED FOR THREE SOUTHERN UNIONS

- ❖ Black union and conference evangelists without administrative authority be members of Union Conference Committee

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1920 & 30S – BLACK SDAS ARE EXCLUDED FROM ALMOST ALL SDA COLLEGES AND SANITARIUM IN NORTH AMERICA, EVEN FROM R&H CAFETERIA



1929 – PROPOSAL OF BLACK LEADERS TO ORGANIZE COLORED CONFERENCES

- ❖ GC refused but did not reject outright
- ❖ Appointed committee to survey Black members
- ❖ James K. Humphrey, Black Baptist minister
- ❖ Black Camp meeting site

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1931 – OAKWOOD COLLEGE STUDENTS STRIKE FOR BLACK PRESIDENT AND BETTER LIVING AND LEARNING CONDITIONS

OCT 14<sup>TH</sup>.1944 – NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT FOR WORLDWIDE WORK AMONG COLORED SDAS

- ❖ In wake of Lucy Byard incident
- ❖ National Association for the Advancement of the Worldwide Work among Colored SDAs NAAWWCSDA
- ❖ Ignited the flames for organization of regional conference





# Autonomy and Maturity

1944 - PRESENT



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

## AUTONOMY AND MATURITY. 1944 - PRESENT

BLACK ADVENTISTS ACHIEVED A MAJOR MILESTONE WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL CONFERENCES. THIS DEVELOPMENT GAVE AUTONOMY TO THE BLACK WORK AND RESULTED IN A TREMENDOUS INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP AMONG BLACK ADVENTISTS.

# Significant Points in Black Adventist

## History

1944 – APRIL 10 – GC AUTHORIZES FORMATION OF COLORED CONFERENCES.

- ❖ Black membership in the SDA Church is 20,000

1945 – REGIONAL CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

- ❖ Lake Region, 2,320 members
- ❖ Northeastern, 2,400 members
- ❖ Allegheny, 4,000 members
- ❖ South Atlantic, 3,523 members
- ❖ South Central, 2,235 members

1954 – BROWN VERSUS BOARD OF EDUCATION DECISION

- ❖ Racial segregation outlawed in public schools but SDA continued segregation in schools and institutions

# Important Civil Rights Acts



- ▶ Civil Rights Act of 1964- outlawed all forms of discrimination against racial, ethnic, national and religious minorities and women
- ▶ Voting Rights Act of 1965- insure Black voting rights

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

- 1962 – AT THE GC SESSION IN SAN FRANCISCO, MORE THAN 1,000 BLACK ADVENTISTS DEMONSTRATED AGAINST THE CHURCH'S RACIAL POLICIES.
- ❖ Frank Peterson becomes **first** Black vice-president of GC
- 1965 – THE REVIEW CARRIES ACTIONS THAT CALL FOR THE ENDING OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE DENOMINATION'S SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, CHURCHES AND INSTITUTIONS

# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1967 – ALLEGHENY EAST CONFERENCE ORGANIZED WITH 7,264 MEMBERS

- ❖ W. A. Thompson elected first president



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1968 – SOUTHERN COLLEGE – TENNESSEE

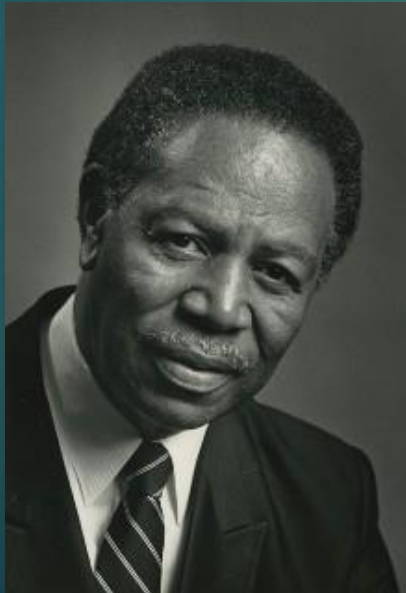
- ❖ Admits **first** Black student
- ❖ Five years after the last state university, Alabama, integrated its campus

1975 – G. RALPH THOMPSON BECOMES **FIRST** BLACK TO HOLD THE OFFICE OF GC SECRETARY



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1979 – CHARLES BRADFORD BECOMES FIRST BLACK PRESIDENT OF NAD



1980 – ROBERT CARTER ELECTED PRESIDENT OF LAKE UNION CONFERENCE

# Fight for Black Unions

1980s

- ▶ Protest and Progress-Calvin Rock
- ▶ Election of Bradford
- ▶ Division among Black leadership
- ▶ Black retirement -90s-2000s



# Significant Points in Black Adventist History

1989 – ROSA BANKS BECOMES FIRST WOMAN TO HOLD POSITION OF GC FIELD SECRETARY/NAD HUMAN RELATIONS DIRECTOR



First Female Vice President  
of the SDA Church.

Ella Simmons



# Books

- ▶ *Protest and Progress* by Calvin Rock
- ▶ *Seventh-day Adventist and the Civil Rights Movement* by Samuel London
- ▶ *White Too Long; The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity* by Robert Jones
- ▶ *Caste; Origins of our Discontent* by Isabel Wilkerson
- ▶ *Stamped from the Beginning: Definitive History of racists ideas in America.*by Ibram Kendi
- ▶ *How to be less stupid about race* by Crystal Fleming
- ▶ [https://works.bepress.com/trevor\\_oreggio/81/](https://works.bepress.com/trevor_oreggio/81/)