

Blake slated interim presiding COGIC bishop

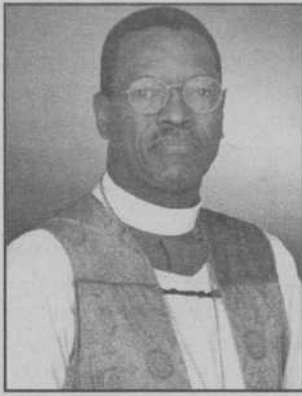
By Evan Barnes and Niele Anderson

Special to Sentinel-Voice

As reaction begins to pour in from the passing of Bishop Gilbert E. Patterson, Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ, the *Los Angeles Sentinel* has obtained an exclusive interview with Bishop Charles E. Blake of West Angeles Church of God in Christ.

In addition to presiding over his membership of over 24,000, Blake is the Prelate of the First Jurisdiction of Southern California, which oversees more than 250 churches, and knew Patterson for over 50 years.

"Bishop Patterson was a great man of God. He was an



Bishop Charles E. Blake anointed preacher, visionary leader, innovative in his organizational style and approach and he brought a season of positive vitality to the Church of God in Christ," Blake said.

Since November 2000, Patterson, who died Tuesday

from heart failure, has led COGIC, which at 6.5 million members is the largest Pentecostal congregation in the world.

With his death, many are assuming that Blake, the First Assistant Presiding Bishop, would be next in line to become the next Presiding Bishop. He has already received calls from all over the world from people looking to him for guidance.

Blake reluctantly confirmed to the Sentinel that he is indeed the interim Presiding Bishop, but he wanted to use this moment to focus and reflect on the legacy and fond memories of Patterson that started when they were teenagers.

"He and I were young

teenage preachers that conducted revivals together occasionally, and he was always a very serious young man focused on his ministry," he said.

He went on to relate one story about how Patterson gave him his high school graduation picture and wrote on the back "Bishop Patterson," although neither had been ordained yet.

"It gave an indication of his aspiration to ministry and to serve in the life of the church," he said.

Bishop Patterson served for over 30 years as the leader of Temple of Deliverance Church in Memphis, Tenn., and he also established Bountiful Blessing Ministries, a popular television

ministry that was frequently shown on BET.

"We have a lost a great leader, a man of great vision and motivation. He promised to take us to greater heights and we shall miss him dearly," said Bishop Wilbur Hamilton, the Secretary on the General Board of COGIC who is the Prelate of the Northwest Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of California.

It is unclear at this moment how COGIC, which had been planning its Centennial Celebration, will proceed in the near future. COGIC church will now have to pull itself together," said Hamilton.

"We've always responded with new leadership equal to the task, but we will miss

Gilbert E. Patterson greatly."

Blake, who will face the daunting task of presiding over COGIC for now, wants to remind all that no matter what, "God is still alive, and He still rules in the affairs of men."

"Whenever there is the loss of a leader, an organization is tremendously impacted. He [Patterson] was a spiritual father and pastor to all of us and we believe that with the Lord's help we will be able to move on," he said.

Evan Barnes and Niele Anderson write for the *Los Angeles Sentinel*.

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PUBLIC NOTICE FY 2007 ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A draft of the FY 2007 Action Plan for Housing and Community Development in Clark County will be available **March 26, 2007** for a 30-day public review and comment period. The FY 2007 Action Plan describes the federally funded affordable housing, emergency housing, public service, and community facility projects planned for 2007-2008 in Clark County, North Las Vegas, Boulder City, and Mesquite.

The FY 2007 Action Plan must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development by May 15, 2007 for review and approval. If you would like to receive a copy of the Draft Action Plan, please contact Clark County Community Resources Management at 455-5025 or email a request with name and address to:

krc@co.clark.nv.us or visit the Clark County website at www.accessclarkcounty.com/finance/crm/crm_index.htm. All comments on the FY 2007 Action Plan must be submitted in writing no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 26, 2007 to:

Kristin Cooper
Clark County Community Resources Mgmt.
P.O. Box 551212
500 South Grand Central Parkway - 5th Floor
Las Vegas, NV 89155-1212
krc@co.clark.nv.us

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