

# Soul Sisters Women's Ministry

Spring 2009

## Saluting President Marye Barnett and the SARAH ALLEN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Rev. Sylvia Smith

Purpose: As individuals called to discipleship to grow in knowledge and experience of God through Jesus Christ, committed to support the mission of the church and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are challenged to help one another engage in ministry and action and grow and respond in faith to God's redemptive plan for the church, the society and the world.

Mission Statement: We are called to strengthen our faith and sent to continue the ministry of Jesus Christ by service and witness in the world.

First AME Church is home to one of the largest missionary societies of the Southern California Conference. It and the church were organized in 1872 in the home of Mrs. Biddy Mason on Spring Street, which is now in the heart of downtown Los Angeles and is graced with a monument

at that location. 12 ladies attended the first missionary society meeting in Mason's home. The group was named after Sarah Allen, who was the wife of our first Bishop, Richard Allen. Mrs. Allen was an ardent Missionary worker who was deeply interested in the welfare of all people.

Today the group is made up of women and a few men, who are all members of a congregation widely recognized as being devoted to service. Missionaries provide food to the hungry and clothing to the naked. They also offer emotional, moral and material support to many, including those who are physically challenged, elderly and incarcerated. Group members instruct church youth through the Young People and Children's Division (YPD). The Handy-Simmons Scholarship Project provides financial assistance to our young adults pursuing a college

education.

SAWMS activities also include providing a monthly food give-away where groceries and clothing are supplied to more than 600 families. Meals are delivered to home-bound seniors and others who are disabled. SAWMS has adopted two convalescent homes in the Los Angeles area, Longwood Convalescent Home and Westside Convalescent Home, where visitations are held monthly. Members hold a praise service that includes singing, testimonials, and a sermon given by one of FAME's ministerial staff. The society's senior unit supports a women's shelter providing aid to women who are working to elevate their lives. Missionaries serve lunch on a monthly basis at the King/Drew Oasis Clinic, an out-patient facility for individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.



## FAME Celebrates Women's Month

Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis

2009 marks First AME Church's first Women's Month. The celebration includes Women's Day with guest preacher Rev. Renita Weems, the revival of our Women's Choir, workshops for married and single women, and a discussion of the Church book of the

month, "If it wasn't for the women" by Cheryl Townsend Gilkes. All month long pastor has preached inspiring words based on the lives of women in the Bible. Stop by the media department for your CDs or DVDs today. In addition the Women's Bible Study

under the leadership of 1st Lady Denise Hunter and Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis hosted a March empowerment day with distribution of clothes, shoes, cosmetics, and food. Most importantly souls were saved and our sisters of FAME and the community were blessed.



# Another Historical “First” for FAME

Victoria Randall

First AME Church has a lengthy, prestigious record of “firsts.” Among them; first African American Church in Los Angeles and our slogan “First to Serve;” a motto that encompasses a multitude of responses to a variety of situations both in our community and the world. A recent and universally significant “First” is our own Rev. Rosie Medina, who is the first Latina Minister to be ordained within the AME Church.

The youngest of seven children, Rev. Rosie spent her formative years in the Province of Veracruz in Mexico. Her deep appreciation for paintings, music and literature is an integral product of her DNA, inherited from and inspired by both of Rev. Medina’s parents who were art teachers. Their profound advice “Do not be ignorant, always seek knowledge and never give up,” is engraved in her soul and constantly reflected in her behavior.

She says Christ became a center figure in her life at the age of 15, “I attended a revolutionary Catholic service; it was different...in the sense that in our worship service, we made a joyful noise unto the Lord. In those days I spent my weekends evangelizing young people like myself.”

Rev. Medina received a degree in Dietetics from the National Institute of Dietetics in Mexico City. As a Registered Dietitian, she became supervisor of a staff of 90 that included cooks and dietitians who fed more than two thousand grade school children until she migrated to California in 1996.

Her first encounter with FAME came when she attended Sunday services with her sister Jenny. Medina returned for a Wednesday night prayer meeting with her youngsters in 1997 and says after that, nothing could keep her away; “I did not understand a single word but God, Hallelujah and Amen; that band of believers that night opened up their hearts and arms to welcome me and my children; I felt in my spirit that I was at home!”

As the first ordained Latina Minister within the AME Church, Rev. Rosie brings a new diverse dynamic to the pulpit and the community. Some of her duties include visiting the sick and shut in, acting as a liaison to the Latino community and Ministering to Latino patients at Longwood Nursing Home along with the Missionaries on 1<sup>st</sup> Saturdays. She regards her ordination as an honor and privilege; “It carries a responsibility to encourage those who look different but in reality have much in common, because we are all God’s children.” Along those lines, she has strong feelings about the negative

stereotypes of so-called tensions and racial strife between Latinos and Blacks,” It comes partially from ignorance and unwillingness to accept and respect differences to see the humanity in each other.”

So what are some of Rev Rosie’s favorite things about FAME? “The enthusiastic spiritual worship, the monthly food give away and Lovejoy Christmas. But the most compelling is communicating with people of various races and ethnicities in a simple, humble and spiritual way.” She has fond memories of her first experiences at this church; “I couldn’t understand a word. I clearly remember the sweet feeling of the Holy Spirit among us and I’m convinced the Holy Spirit has a universal language; when I pray he allows me to use it to God’s glory.”

Rev. Medina has a bit of biblical advice for anyone actively considering life in Ministry within the AME Church; “Present yourself, your talents, and your gifts as a personal sacrifice to Christ, which is a reasonable expectation, because all that we have and all that we are is a gift from God.” (1 Cor 12: 1 – 31)

So does she envision becoming a Senior Pastor of an AME Church of her own one day? Well, her answer is neither yes nor no. “My vision is to continue being a servant until I die and to serve wherever the Spirit leads.” Amen, Rev. Rosie, Amen.



# President Barack Obama Puts Women First

Victoria Randall



Weeks before his historical inauguration, President Barack Obama vowed to “hit the ground running” as he took over the Oval Office. His sprint toward repairing this nation’s horrifically shattered economy began on January 29, 2009, the day he signed his first bill into law. That move transformed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into desperately needed equal-

pay law, which President Obama declared “sends a clear message that making our economy work means making sure it works for everybody.”

The new law is named for Lilly Ledbetter, an Alabama woman who at the end of a 19-year career as a supervisor in a tire factory complained that she had been paid much less than men. A

jury initially found her employer, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, guilty of pay discrimination. But in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court threw out the case, ruling Ms. Ledbetter should have filed suit within 180 days of the date that Goodyear first paid her less than her peers. Congress successfully staged an end run around the high court by approving legislation expanding workers’ rights to sue in this kind of case, relaxing the statute of limitations.

Ms. Ledbetter will not see any money as a result of the new law. But she expressed gratitude for receiving personal satisfaction. “Goodyear will never have to pay me what it cheated me out of,” she said. “But with the President’s signature I have an even richer reward.”

The President told Ms. Ledbetter’s story over and over again during his campaign for the White House; she spoke frequently as an advocate for him during his campaign and made an appearance at the Democratic National Convention in Denver.

President Obama acknowledged that signing the bill marked a watershed moment in the history of this nation as well as within his own life. He described the measure as honoring Ms. Ledbetter and his Grandmother, “who worked in a bank all her life, and even after she hit that glass ceiling, kept getting up again” and for his daughters, “because I want them to grow up in a nation that values their contributions, where there are no limits to their dreams.”

## Friendship Tea

**Submitted by Mrs. Kathi Arnold**

2 cups TANG mix  
 1/2 cup unsweet-  
 ened TEA  
 1 & 1/2 cups sweetened  
 lemon flavored TEA  
 1/2 cup SUGAR  
 1 teaspoon ground  
 CINNAMON  
 1 teaspoon ALL-  
 SPICE

1 teaspoon ground  
 GINGER  
 1 & 1/2 teaspoons ground  
 CLOVES

MIX WELL & Store in an  
 air-tight container.

"Make a lifetime friend by  
 serving either hot or cold."

Use 1 heaping TBSP to 8 oz.  
 cup/mug HOT water or

2 heaping TBSP to a large  
 glass of COLD water

add ice & lemon & alter to  
 taste!!

**A FRIEND is someone  
 who not only accepts you  
 for what you ARE,**

**But makes you feel good  
 about being YOURSELF!!!**



## About the Editor



Victoria Easley-Randall is a former news writer and reporter whose career spanned more than 15 years at KFWB News Radio in Los Angeles and two years at WBBM (CBS) in Chicago. She received several broadcasting awards, including five Golden Mikes, several Associated Press awards and an Edward R. Murrow award for her work on the Los Angeles Riot, the second Rodney King Verdict, and the Northridge Earthquake. She is also remembered for producing a Celebration of Black History Month on the air by profiling African Americans in Southern California (among them several FAME members) who made significant contributions to the community, but were not usually in the limelight. Their bios were read by celebrities including James Earl Jones, Ed Bradley, Ernie Banks and Victoria produced an award winning documentary on drug addicted newborns and subsequently helped to create the "Cuddler Program" to benefit babies in the Neo-natal unit at Children's Hospital in L.A. She is a long time FAME member and currently employed in management with Human Resources at three Macy's locations.

Victoria is married to Alan Randall. They have three adult daughters, live in Phillips Ranch, CA and have been attending FAME for more than 12 years.

(If you would like to submit poetry, recipes, or article suggestions to Victoria, please send them to [victoriaeasleyrandall@msn.com](mailto:victoriaeasleyrandall@msn.com).)



## Poetry Corner Time to Shine by Dr. Thema

To my sisters who have become dusty with the residue of racism, the stains of low self esteem, and the pollution of poverty  
To my grandmothers who have known bruises, burdens, and break downs  
To my mothers who have suffered set-backs, sexism, and loss of sanctuary  
To my daughters who have sinned against themselves by forgetting who they are  
The alarm bell is ringing and it is time – past time – for you to be washed in the healing waters of your destiny, washed in the holiness of your sacredness, washed in the memory of your possibility  
This is the day – a day not like any other  
This is the season – a season that the universe has not known  
For yesterday is gone and you must take off the heavy coat of regret  
Yesterday is gone and you need to put down the luggage of limitation  
Clear your mind with the anointing of the One who really knows you – the One who created you  
Bathe yourself in integrity and dress yourself for the divine appointment  
For this is the time for you to shine  
You are right on time for the miracle that is you  
The miracle that God is working in you and through you and for you  
You are more radiant than the sun, your wings span mountain tops, your gifts are deep as the Atlantic, your wisdom is beyond your years, and your victory is guaranteed  
It is time for you to shine

