

# The Voyager

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## (Non)Fiction Meets Mount Helm

By Sister Angela Norwood

Kathryn Stockett's *The Help* is a novel that chronicles the lives of black maids employed by white households in Jackson during the 1960s. The women's stories are chronicled by a young, white college graduate, eager to display the whites' blatant racism toward blacks, yet hypocritical stance in hiring blacks as "the help", charged with keeping their homes and raising their children. The novel has been wildly popular and has been listed on numerous critics' choice and best-sellers lists.

The novel's story of social awareness during the Civil Rights era as witnessed by blacks and whites alike has obviously struck a nerve with millions of readers worldwide. What may not be apparent is that what also resonates with readers are the heart wrenching and harrowing stories of the three maids in the novel. Their stories, although fictionalized, closely resemble real life as experienced by people both familiar and unfamiliar to you and me: our neighbors, strangers in checkout lines, or even our very own church member.



Sister Alma Cousins,  
Mt. Helm Church member.

Alma Cousins has been a member of Mount Helm for approximately fifty years. Mount Helm knows her as a warm-hearted woman with a good-natured soul, as well as an excellent cook who is always willing to help with church events. Mount Helm may not know that for more than thirty years, Alma has washed dishes, ironed clothes and bed sheets, mopped floors, and polished silverware, in addition to other numerous tasks, in white homes. In one particular home, Alma and one child forged a bond, despite the prejudice and insensitiveness of the time.

Alma has been interviewed by NPR and, recently, ABC's primetime news magazine program *20/20* to discuss the correlations between *The Help* and her time as a housekeeper (Alma refused to be referred to as "my maid". Instead, she preferred "housekeeper.") in Jackson, as well as her relationship with a woman she helped raise during her employment named Elizabeth Hayes.

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### Gossip-Free Zone

In some offices, you can get fired for gossiping. According to a 2002 survey, the average employee gossips 65 hours a year. One Chicago firm decided to become a "gossip-free zone." They require that employees never talk badly about co-workers behind their backs. If you're caught, you lose your job.

A ministry for people in the entertainment industry takes a refreshing alternative to gossip. They combat it with prayer. Instead of putting down famous people who get in trouble with bad choices, they encourage people to pray for them.

Among God's commands to His people is "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex. 20:16). While this may be talking primarily about lying at judicial proceedings, gossip could also be included in the command because it violates the law of love toward our neighbor. Proverbs uses strong language to describe this use of our words. It's like "a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow" against others (25:18).

Gossip feeds into our natural desires to feel superior to others and to belong or fit in, so combating it in our personal lives can be a challenge. But if we choose to love through prayer, our lives can be a gossip-free zone.

Reprinted from *Our Daily Bread*, Nov. 10, 2008.

Study to shew  
thysself approved  
unto God, a  
workman that  
needeth not to be  
ashamed, rightly  
dividing the  
word of truth.

—2 Timothy 2:15  
King James Version

## Why Sunday School is Important

By Sister Arna Fuller

Historically, Sunday School began literally as well-schools! During the Industrial Revolution in England in the 1800s, children who worked in factories only had Sundays off. Therefore, that was the only day for any type of educational instruction. An Evangelical minister named Robert Raikes was a key promoter of this movement, which soon spread to America where denominational and non-denominational education was taught.

With the proliferation of various denominations and religious cultures that helped shape America, Sunday School became the primary resource tool for teaching the Bible and helping believers apply the Biblical principles to everyday life. In America, the first national Sunday School effort began in 1824. Its stated purpose was to organize, evangelize and civilize. The focus was intentionally evangelical.

(Continued on page 4.)



# Transformed Nonconformist

*Submitted By Pastor C. Edward Rhodes, II.*

## ***From Martin Luther King Jr.'s book of transcribed and edited sermons Strength to Love, Chapter 2, Transformed Nonconformist***

"...In spite of this prevailing tendency to conform, we as Christians have a mandate to be nonconformists. The Apostle Paul, who knew the inner realities of the Christian faith, counseled, "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." We are called to be people of conviction, not conformity; of moral nobility, not social respectability. We are commanded to live differently and according to higher loyalty.

"...We need to recapture the gospel glow of the early Christians, who were nonconformists in the truest sense of the word and refused to shape their witness according to the mundane patterns of the world. Willingly they sacrificed fame, fortune, and life itself in behalf of a cause they knew to be right. Quantitatively small, they were qualitatively giants."

"...Gradually, however, the church became so entrenched in wealth and prestige that it began to dilute the strong demands of the gospel and to conform to the ways of the world. And ever since the church has been a weak and ineffectual trumpet making uncertain sounds. If the church of Jesus Christ is to regain once more its power, message, and authentic ring, it must conform only to the demands of the gospel.

"This hour in history needs a dedicated circle of transformed nonconformists. Our planet teeters on the brink of atomic annihilation: dangerous passions of pride, hatred, and selfishness are enthroned in our lives: truth lies prostrate on the rugged hills of nameless calvaries: and men do reverence before false gods of nationalism and materialism. The saving of our world from pending doom will come, not through the complacent adjustment of the conforming majority, but through the creative maladjustment of a non-conforming minority."



## We Salute...

### MEMBER PROFILE:

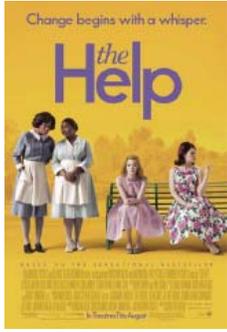


She is a life-long member of Mount Helm Baptist Church who —

- readily shares her wisdom with all ages, especially the youth of Mount Helm;
- receives and applies the Word of God;
- works hard for the sake of the kingdom while showing love to others with an attitude of thankfulness and peace;
- uses her God-given ability to minister to others in structured programs and through personal interaction with others.
- does not believe in being simply a spectator;
- is a dedicated servant sharing her gifts and creating a ministry that is essential for the church;
- willingly accepts any task she is asked to perform.

Yes, we proudly salute SISTER ARVA FULLER. She has served and continues to serve in many positions in the Church. These include, but are not limited to: Vacation Bible School leader, Sunday School and children's musician, Youth Choir Director, Youth Ministry Leader, Pastoral Search Committee, and History Committee.

OUR SINCEREST APPRECIATION TO SISTER ARVA FULLER FOR ALL THAT SHE DOES.



The movie, *The Help* opens August 10 in theaters nationwide.

The book is available at most bookstores, in retail outlets and online.

**Non-Fiction** (Continued from page 1.)

During the 20/20 interview, Elizabeth recounted how her relationship with Alma has grown. She related that when she was young, she was upset that Alma had replaced a previous housekeeper. She told Alma that she did not want her as the new housekeeper and Alma responded that she did not want to work there either. In spite of the rocky start, Alma and Elizabeth have remained close throughout the years, with Alma routinely visiting and vacationing with Elizabeth and her family.

Perhaps it is true that things in life happen for a reason. We know that the societal and state-sponsored racism during the

1960s, which included the outright trampling of civil rights and degradation of people based on tier color eventually culminated in the reversal of institutional inequality and the relaxing of racism. However, the personal experiences and relationships that evolved from that time are truly amazing and awe-inspiring to witness. Alma and Elizabeth were meant to find one another and their bond has made them into the women that they are today.

Alma is still smiling and can make a mean pound cake. Elizabeth is a wife and mother who is blessed that her passion for breeding horses is also an occupation. As Elizabeth concisely stated during the 20/20 interview, "I can't separate Alma from the course of my life. She is ingrained with who I am."

# Observations

By Brother Charles Holmes

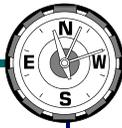
Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, one of the most perceptive scholars ever in the United States, observed at the beginning of the twentieth century that Blacks/African Americans contributed three gifts -- bravery, song, and spirit -- to this country. The latter gift is evident especially in Mississippi as well as in other states.

If one would reflect for a moment, there have been three significant movements in this state ushered in (though not entirely) by Blacks. These movements have resulted in important trends. They are the Civil Rights Movement; the movement to provide health care for those formerly shut out -- (The community health care center/clinic movement was started in Mississippi.) -the Jackson Medical Mall being a prime example; and the Voice of Calvary missions -- an outgrowth of the Mendenhall Ministries.

Promoters of cross-racial Christian outreach, Mission Mississippi touches base throughout the state.

One may note the large number of mostly Caucasian college students visiting our Wednesday Bible Study and Prayer Meeting; and a few visiting during Sunday services. This involvement is also an outgrowth of the Voice of Calvary.

There are three books -- two old and one relatively new -- which vividly manifest this spiritual outreach. *Let Justice Roll Down* (1976) by John Perkins, *I Ain't Comin' Back* (1997) by Dolphus Weary and *Coming Out from the Shadow* (2011) by Rosie Weary, Dolphus Weary's wife, emphasize the spiritual thrust. This spirit is ongoing despite Klan activity and other satanic inspired demons.



## Sunday School (Continued from page 1.)

Mount Helm's Sunday School ministry has been also by the attention her pastors have given it. Growing up, I remember I could never beat Reverend T.B. Brown to church on Sundays. He was there before anyone arrived, and he was the last to leave. Former Pastor Charles Spann was a big proponent of Sunday School. He regularly implored the congregation to not only support but also attend Sunday School.

Why should Sunday School be important to believers? The study and appreciation of the Word is essential to help us "press toward the mark of the high calling". The classes help foster a feeling of community and fellowship among believers. Also, early training and discipleship allow youngsters to become more involved and productive in their church.

Another benefit of Sunday School is evangelism. If we are implored to "go out into all the world and preach the gospel", shouldn't we know what we are preaching/teaching? Religious instruction prepares the believer to know the importance of salvation and how to spread the Word to non-believers.

Finally, Sunday School is the spiritual bridge to our Sunday worship service. Invigorated by our lesson, relationally connected to our fellow believers, and equipped to evangelize, we can truly be open to worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth.

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The *Mt. Helm Voyager* newsletter will be available to our members on the first Sunday of each month. Members are encouraged to visit [www.mthelm.org](http://www.mthelm.org) to access a downloadable pdf on the Monday following the first Sunday of each month.

Articles, photographs and notices of special events may be submitted to Sister Barbara Hilliard. We thank you for your support.

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# ON THE HORIZON: AUGUST EVENTS

**3, 10, 17, 24, 31**

**Odyssey of Life Institute (6 p.m.)**

**Youth Meeting (6 p.m.)**

**Prayer Service (7 p.m.)**

**7 Communion Sunday**

**12 JPS Students Report for Class  
2011-2012 School Year**

**13 JPS First Day Event: 3-6 p.m., Jackson  
Convention Center**

**Features: entertainment, games and prizes,  
Health screenings and activities for students  
of all ages and their parents**

**For more information or to volunteer, call  
Greg Grimes at 601-960-1084**

**"We plan on sending our JPS students back  
to school with a citywide celebration that not  
only signals that we support them but that we  
also wish them success in the upcoming year."**

**---Mayor Harvey Johnson**

**15 Brotherhood Bible Class Monthly Meeting**

**17 W.W. Colley Missionary Society Meeting**

**21 Youth Sunday**

**25 Trustee Board Meeting**

**28 Mission Day Observance, 3:30 p.m.**

**Speaker: Sister Mary Coleman, Executive  
Director of the Women's Auxiliary, General  
Missionary Baptist Convention of Mississippi**



[www.mthelm.org](http://www.mthelm.org)