15th Annual Scholarship Concert

“Give Thanks To The Lord”
I Chronicles 16:8

Saturday, June 12, 2010 - 6:30 PM
Mt. Vernon Baptist Church
351 Joseph Avenue - Rochester, New York

AKOMA
Rochester's African American Women's Gospel Choir
AKOMA is Rochester’s African American Women’s Gospel Choir whose West African Akan name means patience, endurance, consistency and faithfulness. AKOMA’s adinkra symbol, the heart, indicates compassion, tenderness and charity. AKOMA’s vocal and spoken word ministry is rooted in the African American sacred song and oral traditions.

After a debut performance in August of 1995 for Woman Fest—a day-long celebration of the 75th Anniversary of Women’s Right to vote—the group of thirty-five women decided to embrace a musical ministry that encompassed their diverse faith traditions and their love for gospel music. Under the direction of Janet Rugless-Poles, executive music director; Cheryl Holloway, conductor/soloist; and Arlette Miller Smith, founder/executive director, the group adopted the name AKOMA because it symbolized their African heritage while highlighting their strong spiritual roots and their desire to serve the Rochester community. It was Dr. David A. Anderson/ Sankofa who recommended the name AKOMA, based on his research and knowledge of the group’s mission. Some twenty-five Rochester area churches are represented on AKOMA’s 2010 roster of more than 45 active sister-members.

In her first year, AKOMA was featured at numerous local programs and concerts. On June 22, 1996, AKOMA made her debut concert and established the Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship in honor of her elder member and adopted mother. Three recipients received the Mother Nona Scholarship in its first year. Since that time and including the 2010 recipients, AKOMA has awarded seventy college-bound young women of African descent, a portion of the $48,000 given out as a part of the Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship fund.

Since her 1995 inception year, AKOMA has been privileged to sing with Grammy Award winner Larnelle Harris; to appear on a number of local television shows; to provide music for a program featuring Seattle poet laureate Mona Lake Jones who wrote the poem, “A Room Full of Sisters” which AKOMA uses as her spoken word anthem; to provide the music for a programs honoring Bishop Desmond Tutu; to sing with the Penfield Symphony at several of their annual holiday concerts; and to be featured at the National Black Catholic Congress Conference. Early in her spiritual life, AKOMA also was blessed to present a commissioned docudrama, “Stirring the Waters, Tending the Pots,” written by her founder, Arlette Miller Smith. “Stirring,” the suffrage-related drama, was performed at GeVa Theatre as a part of the 150th anniversary of the women’s rights convention at Seneca Falls.

From July through March of 2009, we brought gospel music to the Greater Rochester community in six concerts: On July 31, we were featured at the River City Rhythms Concert at Corn Hill Landing where we invited the Nat Turner Drum Circle and the Immaculate Conception Liturgical Dancers to join us; On August 15, 2009, the sisters sang at the annual Clarissa Street Reunion; then on November 1, we traveled to the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Fairport; Less than two weeks later, we provided an evening concert at St. John’s Church in Spencerport; On February 20, we joined our brothers---the Voices of Thunder-- for the Annual Heritage Concert held at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church; and finally on March 24, we ended our outside engagements with a full concert at Keuka College. Then we hosted our 14th Annual Scholarship Concert. Early in 2009, AKOMA added to her wonderful store of memorable experiences. January of 2009 found the Sisters at SUNY-Geneseo where they presented the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Program. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Arlette Miller Smith, followed by the concert: “Lifting Weary Voices, Raising Freedom’s Song: Black Sacred Music as Resistance in the Civil Rights Movement.” On April 23, 2009, AKOMA and their adopted brothers- in- Christ group, the Voices of Thunder, joined the Rochester Philharmonic, under the direction of Jeff Tyzik, at the Eastman School of Music for TOTAL PRAISE, a gospel concert that celebrated the City’s 175th anniversary. A diverse and enthusiastic audience of more than 2,200 supported the collaboration between AKOMA, the RPO and the Voices of Thunder.

(Continued on page 3)
In September, we said “Hello” to several new members and a teary, heartfelt yet jubilant “Goodbye” to our president Nancy Walters, who went to her heavenly home in September, 2009. We honor Nancy as a dedicated, faith-filled leader of AKOMA whose example of Christian living and sisterly love blessed us and who will be in our heart forever. And in October, AKOMA also lost her first videographer, Bro. Ben Pinkston—son-in-law of Mother Nona & husband of former sister-member Esther Pinkston.

In January, 2008 AKOMA created a herstorical concert called “Women Voicing in the Dream” at Hobart William Smith Colleges for their Annual Martin Luther King address. The keynote address, “Armed Resistors: African American Women in the Modern Civil Rights Movement,” was delivered by AKOMA’s founder and executive director, Dr. Arlette Miller Smith. The Sisters also joined the Voices of Thunder again for the Annual Heritage Gospel Concert, which was held in February at Mt Olivet Baptist Church.

In 2006-2007, AKOMA’s ministry schedule expanded with a number of new outreach venues including singing at St. John’s Catholic Church in Brockport and at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Fairport. In February, the Sisters joined the Brothers of the Voices of Thunder in a combined concert as a part of the heritage celebration. Even the summer of 2007 was filled with AKOMA’s music and cultural messages as she traveled to Buffalo to provide a music ministry for the National Black Catholic Congress, in addition to two other summer engagements. The most significance change in the life of AKOMA during 2006-2007 was the home-going of four dedicated long-time members who are now “Sisters on the Other Side”: Brenda Robinson, Martha Davis-Wilcox, Sharon Williams, and Eula Bostick.

During 2005-2006, AKOMA’s ministry included the following engagements: the annual Pennington-Moye VFW Post concert; the Penfield Symphony Annual Christmas Concert; the William Warfield Scholarship Concert; Memorial Art Gallery’s & the Arts & Cultural Council’s Women’s Voices: African American Gospel Singers Program in honor of National Women’s History Month (Sacred Songs of the Sisterhood); and the Alpha Phi Alpha 74th Eastern Regional Conference Sunday Worship Service.

In 2004, at the Strong Museum AKOMA participated in a major production titled, “From Struggle to Strength: Gospel Then and Now,” in which the group chronicled in song the evolution of gospel music as a means of strength through the struggle for freedom. As a part of Strong Museum’s, “Creating American Music,” Series Struggle was written and arranged by AKOMA’s executive director, Dr. Arlette Miller Smith with assistance from sister-member Ramona Moore.

AKOMA’s current executive music director is Karen Summers; the executive music conductor is Dr. Cheryl McGruder-Holloway; the Scholarship Commission chair is Musette Castle; the director of bookings and concert confirmation is Ruth Anderson. The founder and executive director is Dr. Arlette Miller Smith.

The herstory of AKOMA’s evolution as an organization is the title of the unpublished dissertation: Speaking the Song, Spreading the Word, Lifting the People---The Reimagination of Community Through Vocal Music Activism (2005) by Dr. Arlette Miller Smith.

For AKOMA concert bookings or other information, please email us at akomagc@gmail.com; visit our website at www.akoma.org.

View pictures on our website from various venues including the 2009 Total Praise Concert with AKOMA, the RPO and the Voices of Thunder. RPO Photos courtesy of Geer Photography.

And with my song... will I praise Him. (Ps. 28:7)
If you plan for a year, sow a seed;
If you plan for a decade, plant a tree;
If you plan for a century, educate the people.
- Dr. Addie Mitchell

Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship

The Nona Patterson Chambers Scholarship was named in honor of our AKOMA mother, Nona Patterson Chambers. Mother Nona’s life exemplifies the meaning of the word AKOMA. She demonstrates patience, endurance, consistency and faithfulness. As Mother Nona celebrates her 100th year this June, we recognize her as our oldest and most beloved member. As the Mother of Faith Covenant National Church of God in Christ, she is an encouragement to all of the youth. She has served as an example of what it really means to be a dedicated and humble Christian mother. Mother Nona received a third grade education but returned to school as an adult to complete her education. Her quiet manner, Christian beliefs, and steadfast loyalty to her family and choir make it fitting that this scholarship be named in her honor.

Happy 100th, Mother Nona! (June 30, 2010)

2009-2010 AKOMA Scholarship Commission

Musette Castle - Chairperson
Ruth Anderson
Rita Mitchell
Carole Castle
Rose Stokes

Ministry Through Music: An AKOMA Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Bible Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Give Thanks to The Lord</td>
<td>I Chronicles 16:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Rest in Him</td>
<td>Matthew 11:28</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Love One Another</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>From Struggle to Strength: Sacred Songs of the Sisterhood</td>
<td>2 Corinthians 12:10</td>
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<td>...And With My Song Will I Praise Him</td>
<td>Psalm 28:7</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Let Everything That Hath Breath Praise The Lord</td>
<td>Psalms 150, Psalms 138:1</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>With My Whole Heart</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Constant Blessings</td>
<td>Ephesians 1:3</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>More Than Enough</td>
<td>Isaiah 12:2</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>We Give You Praise</td>
<td>Psalms 63:3-4, Psalms 34:8-10</td>
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<td>Better Than Blessed</td>
<td>Psalms 34:1</td>
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<td>Perpetual Praise</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>I Have Hope</td>
<td>Psalms 28:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Come Let Us Sing</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
2010 AKOMA Scholarship Recipients

**Tiffany Bakou**
Tiffany is the daughter of Francois and Monica Bakou. She will graduate from Pittsford Sutherland High School and plans to attend Saint John’s University where she will study Actuarial Science. Her extra curricular activities include tennis, track, the Urban League Engineering Program and the Harvard Model Congress. She is an active member of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church where she has served in the youth ministry, the choir and has ushered. She served a term as President of the American Baptist Girls.

**Robertha Barnes**
Robertha is the daughter of Carol Barnes. She is a senior at Irondequoit High School and plans to attend Northeastern University where she will major in Biochemistry. Her desire is to perform stem cell and cancer research. Robertha’s extracurricular activities include student council, tennis, volunteer work at the Red Cross and performing in school musicals. She has served on the usher board, the choir and as Vice-Chair of American Baptist Girls at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church.

**Renada Bertram**
Renada’s parents are Dudley and Jenell Bertram. She will graduate from Fairport High School and has been accepted at Seton Hall University School of International Relations and Diplomacy. When she completes her studies there she intends to become a diplomat with the United Nations. She has participated in community service activities with the SWAN Association, Clean Sweep and the Plymouth Exchange Association. She is a member of Save Our Sisters in addition to serving on the Student Council of her school. Renada also participated in the Model UN program and the Summer Page Academy. At her church, End Time Deliverance Miracle Ministry, she served on the Prayer Team and helped feed the homeless.

**Dominique Donadelle**
Dominique is the daughter of Donna Dyer. After graduating from Our Lady of Mercy High School, she will attend Brenau College and study International Relations and French with the hope of becoming a Foreign Service Officer. Her passion is dance and she performs with Garth Fagan Dance. She runs indoor and outdoor track and sings in the school choir. At the Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word, Dominique sings with the choir and participates as a Liturgical Dancer.

**Donielle Kelly**
Donielle’s mother is Carolyn Stuckey. After she graduates from Charlotte High School she will attend the University of Buffalo. She intends to become a psychiatrist. Donielle participates in extracurricular activities such as student government, volleyball, track and cheerleading. At Goodwill Baptist Church she serves in the youth choir and the nursery.

**Maya Smith**
Maya’s parents are Virginia and Charles Smith. When she graduates from School of the Arts, Maya will attend Hampton University and major is Business and Marketing. Maya is a member of the National Honor Society and participated in the Black Youth Leadership Development program at the American Red Cross. Presently, she is a member of the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council. She has played on her school’s basketball and volleyball teams. At Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church she is a member of the Willing Workers Ministry.

**Chantelle White**
Chantelle is the daughter of Andrea and Dunston White. She will graduate from Northstar Christian Academy and attend the University of Rochester to major in Biochemistry and become a pediatric neonatal surgeon. Her extracurricular activities include student council, the Christian Honor Society, show choir, chamber singers, soccer and cheerleading. As a member of Jefferson Ave. Seventh Day Adventist Church she participates in Pathfinders, the music committee and the Adventist Youth Society.

The 2010 recipients have been awarded scholarships by the AKOMA Scholarship Committee based on their grade point averages; written essay; school and community activities; letters of reference and personal interviews. The recipients’ biographical information provided by Commissioner Ruth Anderson.
2009 Scholarship Recipients
Meghan Cornwall    Britney Johnson
Isis Mounts        Deneshia Samuda
Jocelyn Williams

2008 Scholarship Recipients
Michelle Fletcher   Courtney Green
Angela Ketterer    Tara McCracken
            Eboni Robinson

2007 Scholarship Recipients
            Brittney Hills
Danielle Richardson
Sherrita Wilkins

2006 Scholarship Recipients
Porsha Coaxm        Katrina Griffith
Alyshia Thomas

2005 Scholarship Recipients
Ashley Brass        Angelica Davis
Tiffany Ellis

2004 Scholarship Recipients
Krystal Crawford
Desiree Israel
Leslie Pierre-Philippe

2003 Scholarship Recipients
Kierstyn Blair
Kari McCree
Lauryn Minter

2010 AKOMA Scholarship Recipients
Tiffany Bakou       Robertha Barnes
Renada Bertram     Dominique Donadelle
Donielle Kelly     Maya Smith
                Chantelle White

2002 Scholarship Recipients
Kekeria Achola Bitek Porcia Nicole Hartzog
Tiffany Nicole Jackson Tyra Victoria Kelly
Starr Celeste Myers
Nathalie Martin Pierre-Philippe
Angela Yvonne Stockdale Yolanda Renee Uter

2001 Scholarship Recipients
Peta-Gae Andrade    Shemeka Davis
LaTia Dukes         Takara Gray
Aja Houston          Brandi Howard
Shakira Nelson      Natasha Nichole Stevens
Delora Nicole Turner Kirkshinta Turnipseed
            Uwem Udofa

2000 Scholarship Recipients
Tyanisha Brown     Margaret Neal Enis
Lindsey Green      Deidre Hill
Brandy Rosier      Sherell Scott
Leah Thompson      Re’shawna Turner
            Naomi Woffard

1999 Scholarship Recipients
Johnique Ter’esa Billups
Erica Michelle Bryant
Kimberly Alecia Thurman
Sonia Elizabeth Uter

1998 Scholarship Recipients
La-Toya Dukes
Katrina Louise Jones
Tamisha N. Smith
Melody Terese Williams

1997 Scholarship Recipients
Tameka Avant      Danielle Gaston
Yuressa Hubbard    Rashida Moore

1996 Scholarship Recipients
April N. Anderson Donnye Graham
            Shalewa Hardaway
AKOMA Accolades: Former Scholarship Recipients

2009 – Brittney Johnson
Brittney, a graduate of Churchville Chili high School, has completed one year at Daemen College with a concentration in neonatal nursing.

2008 – Courtney Green
Courtney is a third year Dean’s list student at Clarkson University. Courtney will spend spring semester in Australia. She is majoring in Digital Arts and Computer Science with a minor in Software Engineering and Math.

2004 – Desirée Israel
Desirée is a graduate of Morgan State University. She is currently working as a Family Service Case Worker for the Department of Social Services in Baltimore Maryland. Desiree is working on her Masters Degree and was just inducted into the Phi Alpha Social Work honor Society. She resides in Baltimore, MD.

2003 – Lauryn Minter
Lauryn is a magnum cum laude graduate of Fisk University. She received her Masters from Tulane University and is presently working on her Ph D at the University of New Orleans.

2001 – Delora Nicole
Delora is a cum laude graduate of Johnson C. Smith University where she majored in Graphic Arts and Journalism. She is currently employed with Bank of America, Charlotte, NC.

1999 – Sonia Elizabeth Uter
Sonia is a graduate of Savannah State College with a degree in Art and Design. She is employed as an Associate Fashion Designer for American Eagle Children’s Wear in Manhattan, NY.

1999 – Kimberly Alecia Thurman
Kimberly is a graduate of Cornell University where she majored in business law. She is a manager at Macy’s Department Store, 34th Street New York City.

1998 – Tamisha N. Smith
Tamisha is a 2002 graduate of St. John Fisher College with a BS degree in Business Management with a concentration in Management Systems. In 2004 she graduated from University of Buffalo with her Masters in Business Administration. Tamisha is currently employed as a Project Manager Business Analyst with Blue Cross/Blue Shield Association in Chicago, IL.

1997 – Donnye Graham
Donnye is a graduate of SUNY Brockport where she majored in Sociology and minored in Criminal Justice. She is currently employed with Hillside as a Work Scholarship Connection in Rochester, NY.

1997 – Shalewa Hardaway
Shalewa received her BS degree in Education from Albany State, Albany NY. She received her Masters in Counseling at Bowie State, Baltimore MD. She is currently teaching in Baltimore, MD.
Give Thanks to the Lord
AKOMA’s 15th Annual Scholarship Concert Programme

1 Chronicles 16:8  I Give thanks unto the Lord, call on His name; make known among the nations what He has done. NIV

♥♥♥ Praise, Prayer, Preparation ♥♥♥

Processional
Introit
Opening Prayer
Welcome

“We Are the Drum”
Dr. David A. Anderson & Officers

“Funga Alafiya”
Rev. Dr. Linda Hickmon Evans

♥♥♥ Selections Part I ♥♥♥

Selections
- Hold on
- Get Your House in Order
- Rosa Sat
- Good News (Signature Song)

Soloist: Georgia Prescott
Soloist: Maggie Moore-Holley
Soloist: Karen Summers

♥♥♥ Scholarship Recognition ♥♥♥

Scholarship Presentations
Rita Mitchell, Scholarship Commissioner

♥♥♥ Offering: Men of AKOMA ♥♥♥

Instrumental Music
Dr. William Watson, Sr

♥♥♥ Selections Part II (A/B) ♥♥♥

Special Musical Guest
Nat Turner Drum Circle (NTDC)

♥♥♥ Selections Part III ♥♥♥

Selections
- Great is the Lord
- Spiritual Medley

with Immaculate Conception Dancers

Acknowledgements
Rita Mitchell

Selections
- For Every Mountain*
- Oh, How Precious

Soloist: Karen Summers
Pianist: William Watson, Sr
Soloist: Shelley Fowler

*Sign Interpretation
Evelyn Greenwade-Boltwood

♥♥♥ AKOMA, A personal Herstory/Section Roll Call ♥♥♥

- All is Well
- Worth It All

Dr. Cheryl McGruder Holloway
Commentary: Phyllis Griffin
Soloist: Dr. Cheryl McGruder Holloway

Invitation/Benediction
Rev. Dr. Harmon Stockdale, Sr

♥♥♥ Special Thanks to Rev. Dr. Harmon Stockdale, Sr. and the Mt. Vernon Family. ♥♥♥

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SAVE THE DATE: Upcoming AKOMA Calendar

Sat. August 21, 2010 TBA Concert Clarissa St. Reunion
Sun. October 24, 2010 3:00 p.m. Concert First Presbyterian Church of Avon
Wed. March 16, 2011 7:30 p.m. Making America Music Strong Museum

“Music of the Movement” Strong Museum Making American Music Concert Series
Listen to the songs of solidarity, freedom, hope and faith…. The “keep on keeping on” songs--- spirituals, anthems, hymns and more--- of the modern civil rights movement. Join AKOMA as they sing the songs raised from southern sacred roots by foot soldiers, freedom riders and fiery leaders who weren’t gonna let injustice turn them ‘round.

Spring 2011 - Date/Time TBA Concert Hilbert College - Buffalo
Sat. June 11, 2011 6:30 p.m. 16th Annual Concert TBD

David A. Anderson, Ph.D.
David Anderson is the Visiting Scholar in the College of Arts and Sciences and School of Education at Nazareth College. In 1975, David earned a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the Union Institute and University in Cincinnati, Ohio. Much of his present work involves crafting living history reenactments that recall both the freedom struggle that ended slavery and the twentieth century civil rights struggles.

Nat Turner Drum Circle (NTDC)
The Nat Turner Drum Circle formed in the summer of 2006 as a way of spiritually healing ourselves and sharing our love of drum music with others. NTDC consists of Opio bin Yamin on congas; Yahya Abdullah on bongos; Musa el Amin on saxophones/flutes; Hosea Taylor on saxophones/flute/clarinet; and Djed Snead on djembe. NTDC strives for spiritual, physical, and emotional healing through entertaining, educating and uplifting ourselves and our audiences. By encouraging freedom of expression by playing the music from our hearts, the Nat Turner Drum Circle promotes the spirit and substance of the Nguzo Saba (the Seven Principles).

Immaculate Conception Liturgical Dancers
The Immaculate Conception Liturgical Dancers are a group of young people who have a love for praising the Lord through music and dance. Currently there are 12 youth and young adults, including 3 males, all ranging from age 7 to 29 years. Immaculate Conception is located in the Corn Hill section of Rochester. Carmen Torres is the choreographer; Joanne Gordon and Harry Pierre-Philippe are the Ministry Coordinators. Fr. Paul Gitau is the pastor of Immaculate Conception/St. Bridget's Church.

William Watson, Sr. Ph.D.
William Watson is a native Rochesterian. He has served as Minister of Music for more than 40 years at three churches in the Rochester area. Those churches include Genesee Baptist Church, Mt. Olivet Baptist Church and Trinity Emmanuel Presbyterian Church where he currently serves. Watson also has directed the St. John Fisher College Gospel Choir for the past three years.

Anthony “Tony” Payne
Anthony (Tony) Payne, Jr. is a member of the New Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Buffalo, where Dr. John W. Williams is his pastor. Anthony began playing drums for his church at the age of six and currently is an active member of the church’s youth choir. Anthony is a tenth grader at the Maritime School in Buffalo, New York. Tony is the grandson of Mr. & Mrs. Lonny Kimble and Mr. & Mrs. Eddie Payne.
**The Occasion:** An all-day celebration called Woman Fest held on Saturday, August 26, 1995 at the Memorial Art Gallery in honor of 95/75—the 75th anniversary of some women’s right to vote. Events included music, arts and crafts, vendors, speeches etc by women from every ethnic, racial, service, and religious group that could be assembled throughout the day-long celebration. A hurriedly formed gospel concert would end the day’s celebration at 8:30 pm.

**The Name:** AKOMA: The West African name for the Adinkra symbol known as the heart is AKOMA, an Akan word that means patience, endurance, consistency and faithfulness.

**The Griot:** Dr. David A. Anderson/Sankofa, award-winning author, storyteller and cultural historian, presented the name AKOMA to Arlette Miller Smith for use by the WomanFest choir. Anderson listened to the description of the founding group: strong-willed, determined, proud above God-fearing: women from a number of faith traditions. Women guided by the past but moving through the present into the promise of our future.

**The Fabric:** A black and gold African fabric was selected from a group of Afrocentric fabrics. Each singer was given one yard to be worn in any way the singer chose. The fabric represented the sankofa* link that would meld the then ’95 present to the ’75 past. Those ties although remained woven together within the African fabric tied with new thread to a proud and glorious herstory.


By the October meeting: Katrina Hubbard, Ruth Heath-Settles, Cheryl Snead, Linda Cummings, Candie Price, Jennifer Nelson, Brenda Robinson, Myla Wright, Myrtle Day, Carmen Camacho, Shelley Lucas-Rice, Arlene Williams, Macki Rollock, Cathy Garfield, Zula Bostic, Carolyn Butts, Melody Forbes, Mary Wingo…

**The Rehearsals:** Church of the Covenant; 159 Alexander Street; Rev. Joel Tolliver, pastor; Louise Walker Washington, CC choir president & AKOMA member

**The Founder-The Director-The Conductor:** Arlette Miller Smith, founder; Janet Forbes, director; Cheryl Holloway, conductor with support from Dr. Armenta Hummings. Drummer: Arlo Rollock; Lamont Raynor, bass guitarist & Philip Saulsbury, pianist.

**The Historical Figures Committee /Participants:** Marie Rivers, Theresa Jackson & Ruth Harris. Participants: Faith Prather (Harriet Tubman); Cheryl Thompson (Sojourner Truth); Earleen DeLaPerriere (Ida B. Wells); Lela Gibbons (Nurse);
Connie Cresswell (Maid); Carol Adams (Mary Church Terrell); Joan Beale (Fannie Lou Hamer); Angie Anderson (60’s activist); Asilee Chess (Ethnic contemporary); Joyce Smith (Ethnic contemporary); & Jocqlynn Ross (Ethnic Youth)

The Plow: A plow was chosen to be the appropriate representation of past struggles and triumphs and when the plow was placed strategically on center stage before the voices of the chorus were heard, the concert was no longer simply about music but its meaning moved into rememory, becoming melodies with a message about women Black! Second Baptist members Richard Phillips and Jack Cottom located and brought the plow (which was owned by Paul Andrews) to the concert.

The Concert Songs:
When the Lord Save me; We Shall Wear a Crown; I Will Sing Praises; Order my Steps; Keep us Together; The Battle is Not Yours; & Walk in the Light

The Mission: Use our talent as singers; dedication to “uplifting,” the community; and, most importantly, our steadfast belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ to launch a musical and spoken word ministry that forwards our CULTURAL, CIVIC and SPIRITUAL ROOTS.

The Scripture Ps. 28:7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

The Signature Song: We are Soldiers

The Poem: “A Room Full of Sisters” by then Seattle poet laureate, Mona Lake Jones. The words to the poem spoke to the heart and to the spiritual soul of AKOMA.
It’s a room full of sisters, like jewels in a crown
Vanilla cinnamon and dark chocolate brown….
We are wearing black, accented with gold and nutmeg brown
And on top of our heads some of us are wearing open crowns!
But, it’s not about how we fashionably appear
Our beauty is in the values we revere
We are smart, articulate and well-read.
With all kinds of history stored in our heads…

The ministry called AKOMA has soared in churches, schools, colleges, conferences, yards, festivals and on local and national television programs, as well as in magazines and newspapers, but growing a group and launching a light have not been without its challenges. Personnel changes, death, the economy, illness, educational leaves, relocation--- are just some of changes AKOMA has faced and survived. As the theme from one of her annual June concerts states: We are still “Better than Blest,” So praise the Lord!

Sankofa: The adinkra symbol that means to go back and fetch that which is good and bring into the present.
“Give Thanks To The Lord” Supporters

I Chronicles 16:8

**BENEFACTORS - $300**
- Randy L. Ellison (Cambridge Tax Service, LLC, Atl, Ga.)

**BENEFACTORS - $100 & UP**
- David & Ruth Anderson
- William H. Castle
- New Bethel CME Church
- First Church of God
- Nina Jackson
- Nina Johnson
- Millard E. Latimer & Son
- Harriett Nuciola
- Letha Ridley
- William & Ruth Scott
- Art & Dr. Arlette Miller Smith
- Rose B. Stokes
- Karen Summers
- Dr. & Mrs. Darryl Trimiew & Family
- Annie Walker
- Dr. Benjamin & Mrs. Saundra Wallace
- Daniel Walters
- Eunice White
- Olive Williams

**Sponsors - $50 - $99**
- Cathi Balonek
- Antoinette Burr
- Mrs. Susan Caselli
- Shirley Catalan (MD)
- Mt. Olivet Baptist Church
- Second Baptist Church
- Juliette R. Cummings
- Kevin & Kathy Damann
- Henderson & Marcelle Davis
- Montgomery Senior Club Crocheting Divas
- The Booker Family
- B. Gamory
- Betty Garner
- Jordan Neuringer/US Greek
- Ernest Lawson/Lawson Travel
- John & Gloria McCullough
- Pennington Moye Post #9251 VFW
- Clarissa Street Reunion
- Stephen H. & T Shaw
- Lucy Sprouts
- Sandy & Richard Stein
- Wm & Linda Stroud
- Wm & Carrie Thomas
- Robert Turner (In Memory of Delores Turner)
- Wade & Thelma Uter
- James & Carol Walker
- Luvert & Linda Walker (In Memory of Nancy Walters)
- Willard & Isabella Walters
- Clay & Stella Wiley
- Agnes Wright
- Roy Young

**Sponsors - $25 - $49**
- Leona Booth
- Martin M. Hall Flora Boutique
- Larry & Melva Brown
- Robert & Mildred Burgess
- Alton & Joan Burns (Ga.)
- Abraham & Carolyn Butts
- Rose Carey
- Rev. Dr. John Cedarleaf
- Immaculate Conception Church
- Syl & V. Clarke (Del.)
- Lorraine Clement
- Myra Cuff Agent, (State Farm Insurance)
- Lola Dilauro
- Dorothy Dobson
- Glenn & Carolyn Edwards
- Michele Ellison
- Wilhelmina & Donald Glover
- Evelyn Greenwade-Boltwood
- Rev. & Mrs. John Hardaway
- Edna K. Harrington (Fla.)
- Dr. Ruth Harris
- Lovell & Cassandra Herbert
- Velma Hiler
- Sue Hoffman
- Mr. & Mrs. David Hunke
- Lonnie Day (In Memory of Kenneth Day Sr.)
- Lonnie Day (In Memory of Paul Perdue Sr.)
- J. D. Jackson
- Cheryl & Ty Johnson
- Mary Johnson
- Delorias Jones
- Pat Jones
- Penny Jones
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In MEMORIAM

The Heart of AKOMA — Our Sisters on the Other Side

Edna Rice, Brenda Robinson, Martha Davis-Wilcox, Sharon Williams, Zula Bostic & Nancy Walters

You are gone from our presence, but the treasured memories of you will always remain strong.
So many times we have rejoiced together with you, lifting our voices to God in song.

You epitomized AKOMA and everything for which we stood,
Patience, endurance, consistency, faithfulness...the traits you lovingly shared with the sisterhood.

God has called you to Him, and now in His heavenly choir you sing
With your beautiful voices, praising our magnificent Savior and King.

Written by Kathy Damann, May 2008

♥ Nancy Walters, AKOMA President
January 4, 1947— September 8, 2009
Memorial AME Zion Church

♥ Edna Mae Lattimore Rice
September 23, 1933 — December 29, 2000
Second Baptist Church-Mumford

♥ Brenda Denise Fields Robinson
December 16, 1951 — August 17, 2006
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♥ Martha Davis-Wilcox
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♥ Sharon Louise Hurst Williams
March 10, 1941 — April 16, 2007
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♥ Zula Bostic
September 23, 1926 — September 26, 2007
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