O Give Thanks Women's Concert kicks off Pastor Larry W. Howard's Anniversary

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By JAMES W. WADE III
Staff Reporter

The Pastor’s Anniversary Committee of the Historic Greater Friendship Baptist Church held its

8th annual “O Give Thanks” Women’s Concert on Sunday, Feb. 24, at the church located at12305 Arlington Avenue.

The Women’s choir is under the direction of Minister Earl McElrath and is comprised of women from all overCleveland, who participate to make the concert uplifting. This year’s concert featured Carolyn Kirkwood, Phyllis Oliver, Roshalle Woods, and Teresa Sutton as the special soloists.

The service was great. They praised their pastor, Rev. Dr. Larry W. Howard, who has been there forty years. Chair person Valerie Benson encouraged her pastor with a poem she wrote.

Howard came to Cleveland by way of his friend and mentor Rev. O. M. Hoover, then pastor of the Olivet Institutional Baptist Church, who recommended Howard to preach for a service at GFBC even before the church started looking for a pastor due to the passing of Rev. C. T. Nelson.

Over the years, Howard has been a tremendous blessing to the church and various people. He is highly regarded among colleagues and in the community. He is one of the great men of God.

In 2011, Rev. Howard was honored at Morehouse College when inducted into the Morehouse College Board of International Preachers on April 5, 2011. This event was well attended by many including Rev. Otis Moss Jr.

Even with God being at the helm of his life, Rev. Howard has always acknowledged the love of his life, the first Lady Gwendolyn Howard.

“She is truly a blessing in my life each and every day. I thank God for her,” said Rev. Howard.

The committee consisted of Valerie Benson, Serita Williams, Cynthia Agnew, Louise Burress, Ted Gin Sr., Joanne Landers, Martha Mason, Gwendolyn McCloud, Juanita Owens, Betty

Seals, Phyllis Underwood, and Lantanya Williams.

Helping Minister McElrath with the music was Timothy Halton on the organ.