Katie G. Cannon: Calling for the Order of the Day

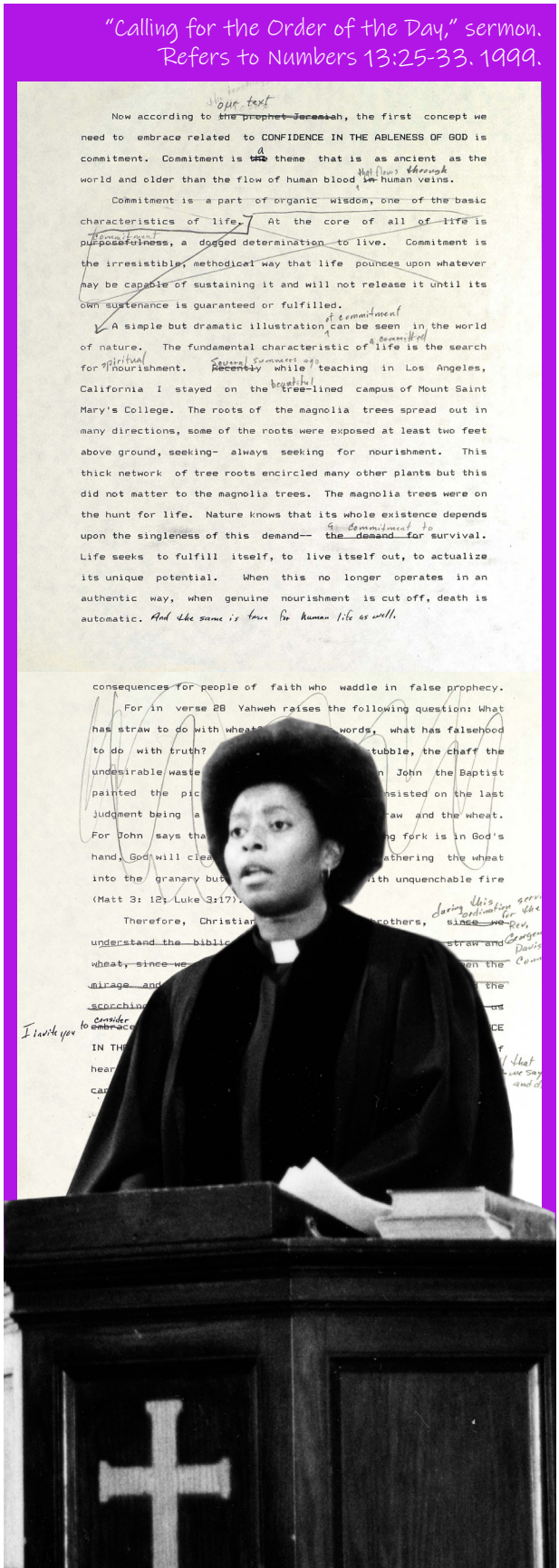
Rev. Dr. Katie G. Cannon was a leading voice in womanist theology; a theology which centers the perspective of African American women in the Christian world.

In her sermon, “Calling for the Order of the Day,” Cannon uses a womanist perspective to challenge the way Presbyterians view their history. In this sermon she questions how we frame figures in history: how the subject is viewed, who their ancestors are, and what they can teach us.

Cannon carries these questions throughout the sermon as she focuses on the life of African American poet, Phyllis Wheatley, also spelled Phillis. She details Wheatley’s life, specifically when Wheatley was tested by several white men to prove her intellect and ability to create literature. Cannon ends this section by boldly asking how the world would change if the words of women like Phyllis Wheatley were taken seriously and studied theologically.

Cannon ends with a call to action “We must study the words of our sisters and brothers who have been silenced, who are absent in our classrooms and in our congregations. To not strive for genuine inclusivity means that our ministries will be unbalanced, that our knowledge will be incomplete, and our worldview will be distorted.” Rev. Cannon thus demonstrates through womanist thinking that the centering of African American lives and works ensures a better, more complete future for congregations and the Church.

Learn more about Katie Geneva Cannon at:
www.history.pcusa.org/kgc



“Calling for the Order of the Day,” sermon. Refers to Numbers 13:25-33. 1999.

Now according to ~~the prophet Jeremiah~~ our text, the first concept we need to embrace related to CONFIDENCE IN THE ABLENESS OF GOD is commitment. Commitment is ~~the~~ a theme that is as ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood ~~in~~ that flows through human veins.

Commitment is a part of organic wisdom, one of the basic characteristics of life. At the core of all of life is ~~purposefulness~~ commitment, a dogged determination to live. Commitment is the irresistible, methodical way that life pounces upon whatever may be capable of sustaining it and will not release it until its own sustenance is guaranteed or fulfilled.

A simple but dramatic illustration of commitment can be seen in the world of nature. The fundamental characteristic of a commitment life is the search for spiritual nourishment. ~~Recently~~ several summers ago while teaching in Los Angeles, California I stayed on the beautiful ~~tree~~-lined campus of Mount Saint Mary's College. The roots of the magnolia trees spread out in many directions, some of the roots were exposed at least two feet above ground, seeking- always seeking for nourishment. This thick network of tree roots encircled many other plants but this did not matter to the magnolia trees. The magnolia trees were on the hunt for life. Nature knows that its whole existence depends upon the singleness of this demand-- ~~the demand for~~ a commitment to survival. Life seeks to fulfill itself, to live itself out, to actualize its unique potential. When this no longer operates in an authentic way, when genuine nourishment is cut off, death is automatic. And the same is true for human life as well.

consequences for people of faith who waddle in false prophecy.

For in verse 28 Yahweh raises the following question: What has straw to do with wheat? [illegible] words, what has falsehood to do with truth? [illegible] tubble, the chaff the undesirable waste [illegible] John the Baptist painted the pic[illegible] insisted on the last judgment being a [illegible] raw and the wheat. For John says tha[illegible] winnowing fork is in God's hand, God will clea[illegible] gathering the wheat into the granary but [illegible] with unquenchable fire (Matt 3: 12; Luke 3:17).

Therefore, Christian [illegible] brothers, ~~since we~~ during this ordination service for the Rev. Gregory Davis [illegible] understand the biblic[illegible] straw and wheat, since we [illegible] on the mirage and [illegible] the scorching [illegible] IN TH[illegible] I invite you to ~~embrace~~ consider [illegible] hear[illegible] ca[illegible]

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