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Speaker challenges Paine students to appreciate education

By Lisa Kaylor
Staff Writer
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When Paine College started in 1882 as a means of educating newly freed slaves, its founders knew the importance of education.

“Our founders knew education would and could open doors, so they sacrificed for it,” said Dr. Cynthia Bond Hopson, who gave the address at the Founders Day Celebration on Friday.

“Children were sent to school even when it was a great inconvenience to their parents. Parents made untold sacrifices to secure the learning for their children they had been denied,” she said.

The school has grown to a 64.4-acre campus with 66 full-time faculty members and a \$12 million endowment, she said.

Hopson challenged students to appreciate the education they have been afforded and to accept responsibility for moving the institution forward.

“I challenge and encourage you to ACT to keep the momentum going,” she said.

She used the acronym – in which each letter stood for several attributes, such as attitude, change and take time to be creative – to remind them to take responsibility for themselves, their education and their school so that all three would become successful.

Hopson is the assistant general secretary for the Black College Fund and ethnic concerns for the United Methodist Church’s general board of higher education and ministry. In that role, she manages funding for 11 historically black United Methodist colleges and universities, including Paine.

She has written seven books and founded Touched By Grace Ministry, which offers consulting and training in diversity, women’s empowerment retreats and workshops and vocal performances.



MICHAEL HOLAHAN/STAFF

Dr. Cynthia Bond Hopson speaks during the Founders Day Convocation at Gilbert-Lambuth Memorial Chapel at Paine College.

After her address, Hopson received a special recognition that included a plaque commemorating her appearance.

The convocation was part of homecoming week, which continues with a homecoming parade, alumni meeting, basketball games and a cookout Saturday and a worship service and gospel explosion Sunday.



MICHAEL HOLAHAN/STAFF

People sing the hymn O Rapturous Scenes during the Founders Day Convocation at Gilbert-Lambuth Memorial Chapel at Paine College. The event began the celebration of the anniversary of the school's founding in 1882.