From Samuel D. Proctor

From H. Edward Whitaker
Dear Mike,

For quite a long while I have been trying to get around to replying to your letter which you were so kind to respond to immediately upon my previous writing. We are getting along somehow and our work here is progressing nicely in so far as it pertains to our building program, but the situation is still ver precarious. I really don't know what to expect in the next six months, but I am sure that at least I have this year to continue my ministry here. It may well be that after that time things will straighten themselves out fairly well. I would like to have things to end here very satisfactory.

In the meantime I am counting on you keeping your eyes open in those parts for anything that you think I might be able to fit in, and of course I shall be glad to do everything I can to hold up the standards.

One of the chief difficulties involved in many of the churches in this part of the country is that as it relates to the newness of the community. During the war, many persons migrated from other sections of the country with varied background, and here we find them involved in the program of the same church, promoting the ideas from their various areas from which they have come. They have certain loyalties, and they find themselves seeking to work only with certain groups, especially those persons who have come from their particular locale. This brings about a great deal of confusion sometimes. Rather than to seek to cooperate on the basis of something being right or wrong, good or bad, many support issues or reject them merely because we did not do this at home.

But aside from the many problems, something has been accomplished here for which of course I cannot begin to take credit for, although it did not happen until I came. I am confident that it has been the hand of God, and I am grateful that I have had some small part to play in it. Our program here has involved people of all the races and nationalities and faiths. It is a community wide effort and yet this is a Baptist church in the truest sense. I certainly would like to have you come up and see the development. So I am going to renew the invitation to have you come in the first week in November to give a series of sermons in connection with our mass evangelistic program. With our mortgage obligations we will be in a position to do only part of what we would like to do, but if you could afford to come and give us a hand, I am sure we can make it worth your while. Of course we would be very happy to have you to bring the Madam since we have not met her.

I do hope that your work is going well there and that everything is turning out the way you planned it. I was talking the other day with Dr. Sandy Ray and he mentioned you. We were discussing your program which you submitted to the church last year, and agreed that you were really going out after it. We are pulling for you and hope that everything will work out satisfactory. I am sure that what many of the churches need in the south is a program that will in effect be a shot in the arm. Dr. Ray is the President of our State Convention and was in our area speaking in connection with that work.

We have one or two fellows coming in our area now who will be quite an asset to the religious life of Western New York.
2 May 1955

Well take it easy Mike and let me hear from you sometime when you are not too busy. Hope to see you before long. Kind regards and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely,
[signed] Whit
H. Edw. Whitaker

TLS. MLKP-MBU: Box 117.

From H. Councill Trenholm

2 May 1955
Montgomery, Ala.

Trenholm, president of Alabama State College and a deacon at Dexter, invites King to give the baccalaureate sermon at Alabama State's commencement.\(^1\) King accepted the invitation.\(^2\)

Dr. M. L. King, Jr.
303 S. Jackson Street
Montgomery, Alabama

IN RE: Sunday Afternoon, May 15

Dear Dr. King:

I herewith extend to you the invitation to serve as the baccalaureate minister for our 1955 May commencement on Sunday afternoon, May 15, at 3:30 at the College Gymnasium.

At that time we will have approximately 300 candidates for the baccalaureate degree and possibly 8 candidates for the master of education degree. The nineteen candidates for the senior high school diploma also share that baccalaureate service although their graduation is not until May 27.

From the enclosed copy of the program of last year, you will note the organization of the program. We have just the brief "atmosphere program" preceding your message. We also "introduce you" through the statement on the program for which we will ask Mr. Brooks to obtain the necessary information. It is our pleasure to have our baccalaureate minister to share the recep-

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1. Harper Councill Trenholm (1900–1963) received his A.B. from Morehouse in 1920 and his baccalaureate in philosophy from the University of Chicago in 1921. He was president of Alabama State College from 1925 to 1960.

2. Trenholm to King, Jr., 15 May 1955, MLKP-MBU: Box 117, confirms participation.