

# ***ROBIN BROWN-HAITHCO'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH FOR THE NOMINATION OF ACPE PRESIDENT***

**Friday, April 23, 2010**

Several weeks ago in a conversation with Tim, he asked me a question that I have not been able to get out of my head – Where is your passion? I have spent a significant amount of time living with that question and here is where it led me. When my paternal grandmother was 84 years old she was diagnosed with colon cancer – the only option at that time was surgery. She had that surgery at the University of Virginia Hospital in Charlottesville, VA. At the time her chances of survival were very slim. But my grandmother was a woman who always beat the odds. She had the surgery, recovered in my terms miraculously and lived another 14 years. While recuperating in the hospital, I visited her – she wanted me to read scripture to her – I neglected to bring my Bible so I went to the nurses' station to ask for one and lo and behold they had one there. I went back into my grandmother's room and read to her from the Psalms – the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm was her favorite (truth be told, my theology comes from the Psalms). After reading to my grandmother, I looked around, saw people lying in their beds, some without family present, and some who appeared to be lonely and afraid – a voice within me spoke and invited me to visit those persons. I found myself walking the halls that day going door-to-door visiting with patients, praying with them and reading to them from the Bible (of course I was the worst nightmare of the chaplains I am sure – I really have very little tolerance today of those who come into our hospital and go door-to-door). But it was that day that sealed for me my destiny and my vocation and my calling. It would take me many years to get back to the hospital, to answer the call I believe God put on my life as a teenager, but eventually I found my way back to the hospital as a CPE student. And it was CPE that invited me to go deep within myself to find that place where heart speaks to heart.

So you may be asking what does this have to do with where my passion is – my heart has been and always will be drawn to that which is deeply spiritual – it will always be drawn to the great cloud of witnesses in my history who called me to that deep spiritual place (my grandmothers, my grandfathers, my mom and dad, the elders in my church, my pastor who blessed my calling, and to the supervisors who nurtured me in the vocation of CPE Supervision), and it will always be drawn to the sacred and holy space I call education and learning. ACPE represents that space for me. I love this organization. It has nurtured and challenged me. It has invited me to spaces in my life I didn't think I could go. It continues to call me to transformative learning. My work with students is shaped and informed by my deep love for God and theology, my love of learning, and my desire to see students grow even beyond their wildest imaginations.

And so I stand here today being informed by my passion and my love for this organization to accept the nomination to run for President of ACPE. I know I do this at a time in our history when we stand on the edge of new beginnings (evidenced in the recent purchase of property for a new building to house our National Office, as well as the ACPE Academy) even as we seek to hold sacred our past story. My desire is to be a part of this movement into a greater future. In a letter I sent to my region in February I named these three goals which I hope will help to clarify what I would like to bring to the Presidency: 1) to help restore the financial stability of our organization by working collaboratively and in partnership with the membership, the Board of

Representatives and the FCPE; 2) work to continue to facilitate the organization's movement towards embracing our rich diversity in a more integrated fashion by working to have a diverse representation at every level of our organization; and finally 3) continue to bless and honor the core mission of our organization to train students, certify supervisors, and accredit CPE programs while also expanding our horizons beyond healthcare which has for some time now been tenuous venues for CPE training.

As I close I want to share another brief story. I work as the Director of Staff Support at Emory University. One of the reasons I was drawn to the position was because it would challenge me to do something different, to learn new skills, to push me to even greater depths regarding my own understanding of self. One of my greatest learnings in this job has been what I am learning about my own diversity as well as how difficult it is to call us in our embodied difference into dialogue and conversation with each other. Our natural tendency seems to be to congregate with those who are like us, who look like us, who speak like us, who share the same cultural values and beliefs. It has been my task to invite this very diverse group of staff at Emory into dialogue. Emory University has developed a program to facilitate this dialogue – they call it “Transforming Community”. If there is anything I have learned from my family of origin and the community in which I grew up and was nurtured emotionally, spiritually and psychologically, it is that it is our moral responsibility and God's expectation that we open our “borders to invite the other in.” I borrow this phrase from Howard Thurman who was clear that our greatest sin is our inability to be in community – to expand our boundaries so that the other who is outside of us may come in and find community.

ACPE, the place which I have called home for over 20 years now, is the place that continually calls me to embrace my diversity in community. As we move forward in our future it is my hope that all who come to CPE will find that same hospitality.

And may it be so....

# ***THE REVEREND ROBIN C. BROWN-HAITHCO***

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**EDUCATION:** Orange County High School, Orange, VA  
HS Diploma, 1975

Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA  
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, 1979

Virginia Union University, School of Theology, Richmond, VA  
Master of Divinity, 1988, Graduated Summa Cum Laude

Medical College of Virginia  
Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA  
1987-88, 1 Unit of Level I ACPE CPE

University of Virginia Health Sciences Center, Charlottesville, VA  
1989-1991, 8 Units, Level II ACPE CPE

Emory Center for Pastoral Services, Atlanta, GA  
1991-1994, 12 Units, Supervisory ACPE CPE

## **ORDINATION AND ENDORSEMENT:**

American Baptist Churches, USA  
Ordained, 1993  
Endorsed, 1994

**CERTIFICATION:** Certified ACPE CPE Supervisor, April, 1997

## **WORK EXPERIENCE:**

**6/06-Present**     **Director, Staff Support, Emory University Hospital and ACPE CPE Supervisor, Emory Center for Pastoral Services, 1364 Clifton Road NE, C-204, Atlanta, GA 30322:** Responsible for providing spiritual, emotional and psychological support to all staff – provide individual counseling, mediation, staff support groups, and education in-services on grief and loss, conflict resolution, teambuilding, cross-cultural communication, cultural diversity, compassion fatigue, moral distress and ethics in critical care. Responsible for supervising CPE residents within ECPS. Serve on the Care Transformation Team, Community Covenant Committee for Surgical Services, Patient Services Orientation, Cultural Competency and Diversity Committee, Recruitment and Retention Committee, Flu Vaccine Committee. Conduct memorial services and worship services.

**9/97-5/2006**

**Director, Chaplaincy Services and CPE, Grady Health System/Care and Counseling Center of Georgia, 1814 Clairmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30033:** Responsible for the administrative oversight of the Chaplaincy Department at Grady Health System (Level I Trauma Center), supervision of 6 staff chaplains, CPE training for 6 Chaplain Residents and 6 Chaplain Interns a year, supervision of 15 seminarians participating in contextual ministry programs at two local seminaries in the city, and supervision of office secretary. Member of hospital medical ethics committee, palliative care committee, cancer committee, and staff education committee for the Cancer Center. Provide meditation for bimonthly Board of Trustees meeting, and ensure that chaplaincy staff is meeting the spiritual needs of patients, families and staff in an effective and timely manner, including recording of spiritual assessments in medical records.

**11/94-8/97**

**Director of Pastoral Education, Wesley Woods Geriatric Center at Emory, 1817 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329:** Responsible for providing pastoral care and support to the residents in the long-term care facility, assisted living facility, independent living facility and Geriatric Hospital (neuropsychiatry and ventilator-dependent units). Supervised CPE residents assigned to Wesley Woods through the Emory Center for Pastoral Services CPE Program and responsible for developing curriculum for CPE program at Wesley Woods. Served as chair of the Diversity Program at Wesley Woods and provided training for staff in diversity. Conducted worship services on the campus.

**PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL ACPE:**

Member of Professional Ethics Commission  
Southeast Regional Representative, 2003-2005  
Chair-Elect, 2006  
Chair, 2007-2009

National Certification Commission  
Co-opted Member, 2001-03

Member of Standards Committee, 1999-2002

Member of Multicultural Task Force, 2001-04

Member of Substance Abuse Competencies Task Force, '05

Member of Network Task Force (appointed by Board of Representatives of ACPE to determine ACPE's relationship with affiliate networks), 2004-05

Southeast Region Racial Ethnic Multicultural Network, 1993-99  
Chair, 1995-99

SER REM Task Force, 1999-2000 (hosted REM Invitational in 2000)

At Large Member of the Personnel Committee, 1998-2002

Member of Southeast Region RANC, 1996 and 2007

Member of Southeast Region Certification Committee, 1999-01, 06-09

Member of Southeast Region Annual Conference, 2007-2011

Member of Southeast Region Denominational Relations Committee, 1993-96

At Large Member of the SER Administrative Board, 2005

**PUBLICATIONS/ARTICLES:**

“Standing on Holy Ground: The Vocation of Pastoral Supervision,”  
*Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*, Vol. 20, 2000.

“Cultural and Religious Resource Manual,” Grady Health System, 2003.

“Decisions at the End of Life: A CPE Supervisor’s Personal Reflection,”  
*Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling*, Vol. 59, No. 3, Fall 2005.

“Effective Pastoral Care in HIV/AIDS Contexts”: Presented at McAfee School of Theology—HIV/AIDS Faith Based Forum Project, 2007; and New Baptist Covenant Celebration, 2008

Emory 100 Community Builders Award, 2010