

Biography

Fortress Fire



From the walls of St. John "The Mighty Fortress" comes an aggregation of young adults who have spread throughout the coast like wildfire. Brought together under the pastoral leadership of Dr. George Lee, III, this group has garnered the attention of the gospel music industry both in the states and abroad. In 2007, a spark ignited within the praise and worship experience of "The Mighty Fortress" creating a blaze for youthful worshippers to unite and reach out to globally set the world on fire for Christ. They have become the premier young adult chorale the southeast coast, receiving the 2010 Youth and Young Adult Choir of the Year by WSOK Radio in Savannah, GA.

Frequently becoming a fixture on the landscape of gospel music, they have become a mainstay of venues such as the Savannah Music Arts Festival, Coastal Cultural Arts Festival, Ebony Fashion Fair Gala, Joy 100.1 FM Gospel Artists Showcase, and local worship and praise conferences. In 2009, Fortress Fire began ministering abroad through foreign mission work in Matamoros, Mexico. Through this effort of spreading God's fire of love, doors became open to minister in Liberia, Costa Rica in 2010. Their passionate worship style ignited a revivalist wildfire that propelled Fortress Fire to minister along with Pastor Lee in their first evangelistic crusade with La Iglesia Evangelica Metodista Fuente de Gracia, throughout the entire country of Costa Rica in 2011 and 2012. They have taken their desire of worship and returned it to the hands of the young, engulfing those with an experience of adoration that allows the nations to realize that "our God is a consuming fire!"

Rev. George P. Lee, III, Ph.D.

A native of Toledo, Ohio, George P. Lee, III, is the elder of two children of George P. Lee, Jr., and the late Estell Lee. The love of music impacted him at the early age of 10 when he starting directing the choir at Calvary Baptist Church in Toledo. A well sought after and respected youth motivational speaker, it was at Calvary Baptist Church that Rev Lee received his calling from God to minister to the people of God. The passion for music grew the more with the likes of Shirley Murdock, Keith Dobbins, and Minister of Music Jessie Hicks as mentors. Calvary Baptist afforded him the opportunity to be in the company of gospel music greats such as James Cleveland, The Clark Sisters, Donald Vails, and Thomas Whitfield, who would leave an edible mark on him. In 1995, he graduated with departmental

honors from Fisk University, Nashville, TN, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Religion/Philosophy. There he would further his interest in radio and broadcasting by working as a DJ at the radio station WFSK, while singing with the world renowned Fisk Jubilee Singers. He further matriculated at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, where he studied Homiletics and received a Master of Divinity degree in 1998. In December 2008, Rev. Lee was one of over 200 graduates at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) where he received the Ph.D. degree in African American Church Studies. His dissertation, Thomas A. Dorsey's Influence on African-American Worship, was dedicated to his mother, the late Mrs. Estell Lee, and his grandmother, the late Mrs. Rosie M. Issac. Rev. Lee is the first to earn a Ph.D. in African American Religious History and the 12th African American to earn a Ph.D. degree from SBTS in its 150-year history.



In 1996, God called Rev. Lee to the pastorate of First Baptist Church of Campbellsville, Kentucky. Under his leadership, phenomenal exponential and spiritual growth was experienced by the entire church and community. He established the first African American owned and operated daycare center, First Hope Child Developmental Center. As his ministry began to expand internationally, Rev. Lee led and ministered evangelistically in missionary crusades, in the countries of Mexico, Brazil, Portugal, and Kenya. During his administration, Rev. Lee led First Baptist in building the first African American Family Life Center in the region, The Imani Community Center. This center sponsors youth and young activities, within a safe Christian environment.

On December 19, 2005, Rev. Lee commenced his official duties as pastor of St. John Baptist Church, "The Mighty Fortress." The love for this young man of God quick grew as he affectionately became "Pastor Lee." As a foundation for the vision of his ministry at St. John, Pastor Lee uses the words of Paul as written in 1 Corinthians 2:9, "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared to them that love Him." Pastor Lee's love for gospel music has spilled over into the ministry at St. John Baptist Church. Under his direction their 1st CD release "***I Have No Doubt***" came into fruition. This project encompasses the essence of worship shown at St. John Baptist every Sunday. Pastor Lee believes "Light attracts light". And we must let our light shine so that the world might see the glory of God.

During Pastor Lee's short tenure at St. John, "The Mighty Fortress" has become the largest predominately African-American Baptist congregation in the Coastal Empire. over 2000 souls have surrendered their lives to Christ. The weekly Bible study, known to Savannah and surrounding counties as "The Mighty Fortress Hour" has grown in attendance from less than 50 persons to hundreds every Tuesday evening. We have formulated a partnership with the Interfaith Hospitality Network, expanded the Media Ministry, revamped the Sunday School Ministry, and much much more.

As Pastor Lee continues to chart the course for St. John Baptist Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, St. John has been blessed by Pastor Lee's ministry. His vision and his words of wisdom are ever present reminders of the blessings of our Father - "All that I am, is because of Thee; all that I am NOT is because of me."