

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Thurston, Stephen John, 1952-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston,
Dates:	March 2, 2022
Bulk Dates:	2022
Physical Description:	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:52:31).
Abstract:	Reverend Stephen J. Thurston (1952 -) served as president of the National Baptist Convention of America International, Inc. (NBCA), and the Illinois National Baptist State Convention and has pastored New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago for over fifty years. Thurston was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 2, 2022, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2022_017
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Reverend Stephen J. Thurston was born on July 20, 1952, in Chicago, Illinois, to John L. and Ruth E. (Hall) Thurston. He received his B.A. degree in religion from Bishop College, in Dallas, Texas, in 1975, and his Master of Divinity degree from Payne Theological Seminary, in Wilberforce, Ohio, in 2013. He also completed post-graduate studies at Wheaton College, in Wheaton, Illinois, and attended the Master of Divinity degree program at Shaw University, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

In 1971, Thurston preached his first sermon at New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois, which was founded by his grandfather, Elijah Thurston, in 1954, with the succession of pastoral leadership being passed on to his father, John, in 1968. Thurston was ordained in 1974 by his father and appointed co-pastor of New Covenant in 1975. Upon the death of his father in 1979, Thurston became pastor. From 1986 to 1989, Thurston served as corresponding secretary of the National Baptist Convention of America International, Inc. (NBCA). Thurston served as third vice president of the NBCA from 1989 to 2003. In 1992, he was elected president of the Illinois National Baptist State Convention, serving until 2003, when he was elected president of the NBCA, a position he held until 2014. Thurston published his first book, *ATTITUDE: The Paint Brush of the Mind*, in 2007. Under his leadership, New Covenant completed construction of a new worship center in 2008. In 2021, he celebrated fifty years of preaching.

Thurston has served as a trustee and chairman of finance at Chicago Baptist Institute, as a member of the Broadcast Ministers Alliance of Chicago and Vicinity, on the board of NAACP, as co-chairman of the Religious Affairs Division of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, on the board of directors of the National Alumni Association of Bishop College, as an officer of the Illinois Ethics Board, as a commissioner of the Illinois Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission, as a member of the Economic Empowerment Forum, as a board member of the Arise and Build National Church Building Conference, as a member of the Baptist Pastors Conference of Chicago, and as executive

board member of trustees at Florida Memorial University, among other positions.

Thurston was named one of *Ebony* magazine's "100+ Most Influential Black Americans" in 2004 and was listed among the "Ebony Power 150" in the religious category in 2007. He received the Campbellsville Universities Leadership Award in 2014 and the Ministerial Pioneer Award from the Baptist Minister's Conference in Chicago. Thurston has received honorary doctorate degrees from Temple Bible College and Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio; Chicago Baptist Institute, Chicago, Illinois (1986); St. Thomas Christian College, Jacksonville, Florida; and Richmond Virginia Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

Thurston and his wife, Joyce (Hand) Thurston, live in Chicago. They have four children: Nicole, Teniece, Christon, and Stephen II, who was appointed co-pastor of New Covenant in 2004.

Reverend Stephen J. Thurston was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 2, 2022.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 2, 2022, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Reverend Stephen J. Thurston (1952 -) served as president of the National Baptist Convention of America International, Inc. (NBCA), and the Illinois National Baptist State Convention and has pastored New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago for over fifty years.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Thurston, Stephen John, 1952-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Thurston, Stephen John, 1952---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Pastor

HistoryMakers® Category:

ReligionMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, March 2, 2022. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the

interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_001, TRT: 1:29:38 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_002, TRT: 2:29:25 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_003, TRT: 3:29:07 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_004, TRT: 4:29:24 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_005, TRT: 5:30:01 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_006, TRT: 6:29:56 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_007, TRT: 7:28:55 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Reverend Stephen J. Thurston, Section A2022_017_001_008, TRT: 8:26:05 ?