



The Reverend Raphael Gamaliel Warnock, Ph. D.

Senior Pastor
Ebenezer Baptist Church
Atlanta, Georgia

The Rev. Dr. Raphael Gamaliel Warnock has served, since 2005, as the Senior Pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, spiritual home of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Having responded to the call to ministry at a very early age, Dr. Warnock became, at age 35, the fifth and the youngest person ever called to the senior pastorate of this congregation, founded in 1886. Yet, before coming to Ebenezer, "America's Freedom Church," he was blessed to train and serve within the pastoral ranks of leading congregations also known for their deep spiritual roots and strong public witness. He began as an intern and licentiate at the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church of Birmingham, Alabama, a leading light during Dr. King's Birmingham Campaign. From there, he served for six years as the Youth Pastor and four years as the Assistant Pastor of the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church of New York City – also one of the nation's leading congregations, led by the likes of The Rev. Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., The Rev. Dr. Samuel Dewitt Proctor and now The Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts. Finally, before taking the helm of Ebenezer, Pastor Warnock immersed himself further in the challenges of urban ministry, in the 21st century, while serving for 4 ½ years as the Senior Pastor of Baltimore's Douglas Memorial Community Church, also a spiritual base of social activism.

The Rev. Dr. Warnock graduated from Morehouse College *cum laude* in 1991, receiving the B.A. degree in psychology. He also holds a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree from Union Theological Seminary, New York City, from which he graduated with honors and distinctions. Seeing his pastoral work as tied to the ministry of scholarship and the life of the mind, Rev. Warnock continued his graduate studies at Union, receiving a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) degree and a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in the field of systematic theology. His research interests and writing have included a distinguished Master's Thesis and on-going research on the activist ministries of two Twentieth Century Martyrs: The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Dietrich Bonhoeffer and their challenges to the church and the world in their time and ours. However, his primary research is focused in the area of investigating black religion and spirituality and interpreting the theological meaning and historical mission of black churches born fighting for freedom.

As a pastor, Rev. Warnock sees the whole community as his parish. Accordingly, he has defended voting rights in his own state of Georgia. And when, in 2006, the State of Louisiana failed to protect the voting rights of recent Katrina evacuees, he led a "Freedom Caravan" of citizens back to New Orleans to vote. Dr. Warnock has addressed his ministry to urban men through a barbershop ministry called "Cutting Thru Crisis" and through a series of Bible Studies held in a local car wash. Newsweek magazine covered this example of his unconventional approach to ministry in an article entitled, "For Those Who've Fallen, Salvation Amid the Suds." Dr. Warnock has taken on the contradictions in our criminal justice system through his preaching and through his fierce public advocacy. Along with many others, he stood up for Genarlow Wilson, a high school student ensnared by a poorly written law and sentenced to 10 years in prison. Wilson was released on appeal and is now a student at Morehouse College. His bold and visionary leadership has been further demonstrated through his public policy work with The National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS and his ongoing efforts to provide tuition support for young people pursuing post-secondary education. Dr. Warnock is a graduate of the Leadership Program sponsored by the Greater Baltimore Committee and a graduate of the Summer Leadership Institute of Harvard University.

Rev. Warnock has been listed by Ebony magazine as one of "Thirty Leaders of the Future," one of "Twenty to Watch" by The African American Pulpit journal, one of the "Top 25 Pastors in Metropolitan Atlanta" by Concerned Black Clergy, one of the "New Kingdom Voices" by Gospel Today magazine, one of "God's Trombones" by the Rainbow Push Coalition, a "Good Shepherd" by Associated Black Charities, one of the "Chosen Pastors" by The Gospel Choice Awards, one of the "Up and Comers -Forty Under Forty' leaders in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area" by the Atlanta Business Chronicle " and "A Man of Influence" by the Atlanta Business League. He is a National TRIO Achiever Award recipient and has been honored by induction into the Martin Luther King, Jr. Board of Preachers. As an opinion leader, his perspective has been sought out by electronic and print media, locally, nationally and internationally. He has been featured in the Atlanta Journal and Constitution and on the CBS Evening News.

Rev. Warnock has preached his message of salvation and liberation in such places as The National Cathedral, The Riverside Church of New York, the Chautauqua Institute, the International Festival of Homiletics - a global gathering of preachers to hear excellence in preaching and in college and university chapels across the nation. But he is just as comfortable in a small, country church or an urban storefront. Through it all, Dr. Warnock is seeking to be faithful to his calling through an abiding commitment to Christian ministry, disciplined scholarship and diligent struggle on behalf of the oppressed.

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