

Pastor leads Victory through outreach

By Erin Greer
DeKalb Neighbor Staff Writer

2/15/06

Dr. Kenneth Lee Samuel of Victory for the World Church in Stone Mountain is always in a hurry.

"I feel like I'm racing the clock a lot of the time. I just have this sense that I've got a lot to do and only a little time to get it done. I have to complete my assignments on time and in time," Samuel said.

From presiding over meetings of the DeKalb NAACP to his work with the United Way of metro Atlanta, Samuel must remain on the go to complete the assignments he's been handed from above and provide a living example of his message of service.

"I have an assignment to serve people—to build a network of relationship where people can feel valued and affirmed and to empower those people in the process," Samuel said.

Born in South Carolina 49 years ago, Samuel always knew he had a calling to the ministry. However, much like Jonah and his struggle with the whale, Samuel needed a bit of stiff guidance to follow God's plan for his life.

Denying what he called "God's anointing," Samuel decided life might be easier for a lawyer than a preacher, and attended Emory University for law despite a full



Lawson Wright/Staff

Dr. Kenneth L. Samuel reflects in the sanctuary of Victory for the World Church, a church he founded after following his calling.

scholarship offer to divinity school. But when Samuel heard guest speaker Dr. James Forbes preach on God's calling, Samuel could no longer deny his future.

"We go through life on the verge of doing something significant for God, but we don't get around to it because of our fixation with our own agendas," Samuel said.

After being ordained at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church on his 23rd birthday, Samuel went to work, building his "network of relationship" through community service with Leadership DeKalb, the DeKalb County Council on Literacy and as President of the DeKalb NAACP.

In addition, Dr. Samuel keeps busy with his ministry through Victory Church, which he founded in 1987, and spending time with his wife, Sherry, and daughter, Kendall. Samuel also donates time as a Georgia delegate to the Democratic National Conventions and raising funds for the United Negro College Fund.

"We are empowered to reach beyond ourselves and connect to others—and we are particularly called to reach out to the dejected and disparaged. That's what my life is about," Samuel said.

But the pastor's greatest accomplishments also present his greatest challenges, keeping him too busy to slow down and enjoy the ride.

"I need to learn to be more patient. I'm trying to learn to be patient and enjoy the wait," he said.