

# Bishop Nkenge Abi



**Bishop Nkenge Abi** was born Juanita Deloris Kristine Jones, and educated in Chicago Illinois. She began her participation in the struggle for social change early in life. Confronted by blatant racism in high school, she joined the Black Panther Party as a teen while also working in the campaign office of Anna R. Langford in her successful bid to become Chicago's first African-American Alderman. Later she became an active member of the Angela Davis Defense Committee and was chosen as a Chicago delegate to the Berrigan Brothers trial in Harrisburg Pennsylvania.

While attending college Bishop Abi was introduced to the Shrine of the Black Madonna by a fellow classmate and traveled to Detroit to visit the Shrine joining in December of 1972. Shortly afterward she was appointed as security officer for Chicago's College/Urban Cadre and was drafted into the Holy Order of the Maccabees. Throughout her "Nation career" Bishop Abi has been called to and has served in a number of specializations-Alkebulan Nursery, Mtoto House Parent, kitchen staff, Choir director (Shrine #2, 3 & 7), Worship leader (Shrine 1), ATG, BTG, STG & Congregation group leader, Bible Class instructor, History class instructor, and a full time Missionary to mention a few.

Bishop Abi has been commissioned into several Holy Orders in the Church, in addition to the Maccabees, the Order of Kuumba Performing Arts, which used drama during Worship as a means to educate the community to the seriousness of the Black condition, the Holy Order of Nzinga, and the Pan-African Liberation Corp expansion cadre serving in Kalamazoo MI.

Recognizing the need to build bridges and connections in the wider Black community Bishop Abi has worked to establish links between the PAOCC and other community groups through cultural programs, including the Detroit Public Library, the Links, Delta Sigma Theta, the University Musical Society (the Shrine held the most financially successful Love offering concert to date for the Children of Uganda), the Children's Museum, providing history, culture, and Kwanzaa workshops for Detroit Public School teachers, and Bishop Abi has sponsored a number of programs in partnership with the Charles H. Wright Museum (CHW) of African American History.

Bishop Abi has served as Past-Vice President (2 terms) and Past-President (2 terms) of the Detroit Association of Black Storytellers and completed the fundraising efforts of the group's \$10,000 pledge to the CHW Museum of African American History during her tenure. As a storyteller and lecturer Bishop Abi has performed in hundreds of Detroit primary and secondary schools.

Called into the ministry in 1993, and placed into the pulpit by our founder Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman, Bishop Abi was appointed as one of the Associate Pastors by Jaramogi Menelik Kimathi, serving at Shrine of the Black Madonna #1. Bishop Abi is currently the manager of the Shrine of the Black Madonna Cultural Center and Bookstore (the Church's Cultural Ministry) and has served the bookstore in a number of capacities since 1978. Additionally she has coordinated the Shrine's community Kwanzaa events for more than 25 years. She continues to use her skill as a writer, actor, and director and has created several performance pieces for the Shrine of the Black Madonna's African Holocaust Museum, regularly presenting these psycho-dramas for tour groups from the U.S. and Canada.