



Rev. Karen Migozo Taylor

Rev. Karen (Migozo) Taylor first came to the Shrine of the Black Madonna the summer of 1970, quickly becoming part of the Student Movement, joined the choir, and began clerking at the Cultural Center Bookstore. After graduating from high school the summer of 1971, she began Fall classes at Eastern Michigan University. She served as the Church's College Cadre leader, recruiting new members on campus and organizing a forum at which our Founder, Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman spoke to EMU students on the role of the Black Church in their lives.

The summer of 1972, Sis. Migozo was selected and completed the Churches' Ministerial Training program. That Fall, feeling restless in her academic pursuits at EMU, decided not to return at the end of her third semester. In 1973, hearing the announcement of plans for the Shrine to expand to other regions; she signed up with the Expansion Cadre Training program. Upon completion of her training in 1974, she was **ordained as a Fundi (Specialist)** and assigned to the Atlanta Expansion Cadre. Fundi Migozo managed Shrine #9 Cultural Center from 1975-1977.

Upon her return to Detroit in 1977, she continued to work at the Cultural Center in a new capacity. Filling numerous requests for someone who could braid hair, Fundi Migozo realized this was her **calling**. She was mentored by Cardinal Nandi (Barbara Martin), who encouraged her to take her talent and skills into a professional setting. Fd. Migozo went to Virginia Farrell Cosmetology School, graduated, and received a cosmetology license in May 1979.

In 1984, under the guidance of then State Representative Carolyn (Nataki) Cheeks Kilpatrick, Fd. Migozo, along with three other Braiders and an Attorney, worked on Michigan Legislation, to recognize Natural Hair Care as a specialization outside of Cosmetology. Ultimately, these actions helped to move Braiding from a "cottage industry" into Beauty and Braid Salons across the State.

She opened her own salon in 1994 and has mentored numerous Braiders. She has lead by example in offering creative alternative hairstyles that reflects OUR culture and appreciation of OUR natural beauty. Over the past 35 years, Fd. Migozo has done Career Days for DPS, styled hair for Charity Fashion Shows, done workshops on Natural Hair Care at the Charles Wright Museum, Southfield Civic Center, Marygrove College, and was a participant in a panel discussion on "The Politics of Hair" held at the Congressional Black Caucus Convention in Washington, DC.

The year 2005 was a time of reflection. Rededicating her life, this time focusing her attention on the young. Fd. Migozo joined the Youth Development Committee and served as Chair; working as a summer camp counselor, helping organize a children's festival at Cultural Center #1, and baking countless dozens of cookies for youth fundraisers. In 2010, she attended a comprehensive study program of the United Church of Christ, held at the Ecumenical Theological Seminary. Upon completion, Migozo became **certified as a lay minister**, qualified to teach Sunday School, which she has currently done every Sunday-except-when she's in New York visiting her son, Siwatu and granddaughter, Nzo!