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Lucie E. Campbell-Williams: A Legacy of Leadership through the Gospel

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One Sunday during this summer of research, I arrived at church to find that the program for the morning worship service listed the hymn “Touch Me, Lord Jesus” by Lucie Eddie Campbell as the opening selection. It was my first time ever hearing this song. Although I did not know the words, older members of the congregation knew every single one and sang it with feeling. “Touch Me, Lord Jesus” was published in 1941 for Baptist congregations, but was being sung in 2008 by a Disciples of Christ (DOC) congregation. It was then that I realized how Lucie Campbell truly transcended the boundary of time and how her music affected and continues to affect the church.

When I tell friends and family who I am researching they say, “Who is that?” I asked my grandmother, a very musically informed person, if she had heard of Lucie Campbell, and her answer was “No.” Then I began to name titles of songs that Lucie Campbell wrote: “Touch Me, Lord Jesus,” “He Understands; He’ll Say Well Done,” and “Something Within.” Those were songs on which my grandmother was brought up. Although Lucie Campbell may not be a household name today, she spread the gospel through her songs. An important aspect that sets gospel music apart from any other genre is that the music does not promote a person or business. A listener does not automatically associate a song with a particular composer or artist as in other genres. Lucie Campbell was a strong woman whose music was solely for the advancement of her ministry. Teaching was her job, but gospel music was done from her heart without the

purpose of financial gain. The gospel is about creating praise and worship music to honor Jesus Christ. That is the good news; that is the gospel.

The beginning of the Twentieth Century was a moment in history when gospel music began to blossom. Lucie Campbell was a composer whose innovations, will to publish, and “no-half-steppin” attitude influenced the affect gospel music had on the lives of people within the Memphis area and throughout the United States. It is important to note that gospel music was not just religious verse set to a simple four count beat. Gospel music is soul reaching and life changing. Whether it was a gospel ballad, a spiritual, or a jubilee, Lucie Campbell composed it. Her contributions to gospel music were like a gleam of light in darkness.

The events in the life of Lucie Campbell shaped her journey towards becoming one of gospel music’s greatest composers. Lucie Eddie Campbell was born to Burrell and Isabella Campbell on a train in 1885 in Duck Hill, Mississippi.¹ Lucie Campbell was not yet two years of age when the family moved to the little house on Vance Street in Memphis.² She was introduced to church at a very young age. Her mother, Isabella, was a very religious person, and immediately joined the Beale Street Baptist Church.³ Not only did Lucie Campbell have a religious upbringing, but a musical one as well. Campbell was not given music lessons at a young age, but that did not stop her inquisitive nature and willingness to learn. According to Charles Walker, author of *Miss Lucie*, Campbell’s interest in music began when she started to learn piano as a child by listening to her sister’s piano lessons in Memphis during the late 1890s.⁴ Not only was she talented in music, but she took her academic talent very seriously. She was

¹ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 6.

² Walker, *Ibid*, 21.

³ Walker, *Ibid*.

⁴ Horace Clarence Boyer, “Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 82.

valedictorian of her graduating class at Kortrecht High School, later named Booker T. Washington High School.⁵ She basically was self-taught, and although her college records show that she studied music, she graduated with a major in liberal arts from Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1927.⁶ After excelling in education, she knew that she had a higher calling to help young people tap into their academic potential. Miss Lucie began teaching in the public schools of Memphis at the age of fourteen, during a period when one could teach without a college degree or even a high school diploma.⁷

Throughout her life, Campbell took on many leadership roles: President of the National Baptist Choral Society of the National Baptist Convention, Woman's Convention of America, charter member of the National Song Leaders' Convention, and vice-president of the National Baptist Music Convention auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.⁸ In 1916, a call was sent out by the "new" National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., for a meeting to be held in Memphis, and Lucie E. Campbell was asked to be one of nine organizers because of her reputation as an outstanding Christian worker and singer.⁹ She was just beginning her journey as a pioneer for women leaders everywhere. Campbell served as a member of the committee that chose the music for *Gospel Pearls*, one of the first hymnals to include African American composers.¹⁰

Miss Lucie never had any children, and didn't have much of a love life until after her golden years. During the Twentieth Century there was a law in Tennessee that prohibited

⁵ Walker, *Ibid*, 39.

⁶ Horace Clarence Boyer, "Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 82.

⁷ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 24.

⁸ Walker, *Ibid*, 154.

⁹ Luvenia A. George, "Lucie E. Campbell: Her Nurturing and Expansion of Gospel Music in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 113.

¹⁰ Boyer, *Ibid*, 82.

schoolteachers from marrying. The one and perhaps only romance in the life of Miss Lucie was Rev. C.R. Williams whom she married after a friendship and business relationship that lasted more than fifty years.¹¹ Shortly thereafter on January 3, 1963 her journey ended, and she ascended to her heavenly home.

From the early Twentieth Century to today, the black church has remained a powerful institution for change within the black community. Not only is it a place for religious worship, but it is a social vehicle that mobilized members to be involved in the community. The period between 1880 and 1920 was called the black Nadir, a period of high social and political strain for blacks, but also a period when significant strides toward advancement were being made.¹² It was the period after the Emancipation when the strain of discrimination was becoming heavier. This burden of fighting to be treated as an American citizen continued into the Twentieth Century. Lucie Campbell was writing at a time that needed a ray of hope.

But 1893-1921 was also a period of radical and successful transition in traditional Black sacred music from the beloved antebellum spiritual of the rural Black Christian to the modern-era gospel music of the urban Black Christian.¹³ Publishing changed the way urban gospel music was sung. Publishing made it easier to spread gospel music to different churches. Instead of guessing the melody of a certain song, it was written down making it easier for congregations across the United States to share hymnal knowledge. It brought about unity and preserved the repertoire of gospel music. Before Lucie Campbell came onto the gospel scene there were three black male composers who were already publishing books and hymns. These men were William

¹¹ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 127.

¹² Roxanne Regina Reed, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women's Voice in African-American Gospel* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2003), 177.

¹³ Horace Clarence Boyer, "Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 81.

Henry Sherwood, Reverend R. H. Boyd, and Reverend Charles Albert Tindley.¹⁴ They began publishing hymnals for African-American congregations. In 1893 William Henry Sherwood, composer, published a book in Petersburg, VA, called *Harp of Zion*, the first book to include gospel music by Black composers.¹⁵ In 1919 Campbell was the first woman to join the ranks of performing composers.¹⁶

Lucie Campbell was paving the way for both women and Blacks at the same time. There were not very many leadership roles for women during Campbell's time. Even if there were strong women speakers, writers, and musicians, their voices were considered inferior to those of men. Leadership has been limited to males in the church and evidence of this imbalance can be found in the Bible. The kings, most prophets, strong, and intelligent leaders are male. The problem with the success of women in the area of composing was that none of their work was being published. Lucie Campbell was a woman who was not afraid of this challenge of sexism posed by the Baptist church.

Then as today women make up the majority of the congregations and often have roles in education. Not only was Campbell a teacher and music leader, but she was a catalyst for change. Her ideas and ideals about Christian womanhood as related to beauty, power, social standing, and behavior represented principles that Black women in church and educational circles stood firmly upon.¹⁷ She put in hard work and really changed the perception of the role of women, the myths of racism, and the lives of young people. In the Baptist tradition women were not invited

¹⁴ Boyer, *Ibid*, 84.

¹⁵ Horace Clarence Boyer, "Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 81.

¹⁶ Boyer, *Ibid*.

¹⁷ Charles Walker, "Lucie E. Campbell Williams: A Cultural Biography," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 125.

or even allowed to speak in the pulpit area, but this rule did not prevent Lucie Campbell from speaking about being a Christian woman and a leader.

The reason that Lucie Campbell became a leader and activist was because she spoke up, and people knew that she meant business. She was in great demand as a Women's Day speaker and a conference speaker, and the texts of her addresses dramatically document her views on Christian womanhood.¹⁸ Women's Day is held annually in the Baptist church. That day the entire Sunday Service is run by women, but women are still not permitted to preach from the pulpit. Lucie Campbell's confidence in herself was amazing, and she made other people believe in her abilities as well. In one of her addresses, she said:

“From whatever viewpoint you evaluate a woman, she is the most influential being in the world. She can lead a man to the highest pinnacle of beauty, of purity, nobility and usefulness; or to the lowest depths of shame and infamy. Woman was behind the fall of Adam, the first man; behind the fall of Samson, the strongest man; behind the fall of Solomon, the wisest man. Despite man's boasted strength, courage, and intellect, he will follow a woman anywhere. Someone boastfully remarked that man is the head. A quick-witted woman replied, ‘Then woman is the neck – the head cannot turn without the neck.’”¹⁹

Miss Lucie had an unstoppable faith and energy. Her speeches were full of wit, wisdom, values, and most of all exemplified the strong faith she had in God and in herself. Her words were moving.

Lucie Campbell's efforts in music produced real results. Her concurrent roles as both composer and facilitator of new talent demonstrate her effort to preserve black religious music, and also demonstrate her interest in the training of younger generations.²⁰ Campbell often described her profession as an educator, and her role as a composer as something she did for

¹⁸ Charles Walker, “Lucie E. Campbell Williams: A Cultural Biography,” In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 125.

¹⁹ Walker, *Ibid*, 126.

²⁰ Roxanne Regina Reed, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women's Voice in African-American Gospel* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2003), 172.

pleasure. In both Campbell's roles she was able to influence the lives of people. As a composer Campbell was able to reach the masses, and as a school teacher she was able to reach the individual student. Miss Lucie held a number of leadership positions especially those that dealt with the African American woman. One organization that few recognized was the Federation of Colored Women Musicians, whose credo was: "Lifting As We Climb."²¹ As Campbell rose to success, she pulled people up with her. When she was only 19-years-old, under this organization, Lucie founded a group of Beale Street Musicians in Memphis and called them the Music Club.²² Her idea of music stretched from the doors of the church to one of the most secular places in Memphis at that time. She used Beale Street Musicians to sing gospel songs in the classical tradition that she loved. Campbell had a great deal of courage and faith for many of the bridges she built.

Although there are many sources that describe Miss Lucie's life, there are not many that describe who she was as a person. Lucie Campbell's passion and attitude about life greatly affected her work as a composer. Miss Lucie lived in the time period when politeness, manners, decorum, and deference to elders were emphasized.²³ Religion was the dominant influence in the lives of people, and formality and gracefulness were the order of the day.²⁴

Miss Lucie also had the ability to see into the lives of others. Miss Lucie had a sixth sense about what was going on in the lives of her students:

"One of her former students describes a graduation rehearsal which turned out to be not so pleasant for one young lady: As the student pianist struck the opening chords and the processional rehearsal began, you could feel the excitement and happiness among us. Then from the rear of the hall the familiar voice of Miss Lucie's booming out, 'Just a moment, come here!' Everyone froze with fear for

²¹ Roxanne Regina Reed, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women's Voice in African-American Gospel* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2003), 190.

²² Reed, *Ibid*, 190.

²³ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 37.

²⁴ Walker, *Ibid*.

Miss Lucie had that commanding presence which struck fear in the hearts of anyone who thought that they might be guilty of some infraction of the rules be they ever so minor. This command, ‘come here,’ was directed to one of the young ladies in the line, who stood there stunned and frightened. ‘You’ll never disgrace this school with two of you in line. Both of you can’t march in this line, baby sit down! I’ll mail your diploma, get out of line!’”²⁵

Miss Lucie knew the young woman was pregnant even before she began to show. This perhaps, seems rather harsh and cruel from today’s vantage point, but if one understands the milieu out of which Miss Lucie came, and the spiritual, as well as the moral climate which prevailed in that day, her actions could well be understood, even if not approved.²⁶ Her ideas about life may have seemed old-fashioned, but she felt she had a calling to do what was morally right.

Not only was she particular about order, but she was always humble. Her humility was important to the success of her music, rather than the success of herself. Even as a child, Lucie Campbell was impressed with a humble personality, John Binford, treasurer of the Mississippi Central Railroad.²⁷ At the railroad’s inception the people wanted to name the station ‘Binford,’ but he disapproved. This kind of modesty and selfless service impressed Miss Lucie.²⁸ She received most of her recognition after she passed away.

Campbell had more of a desire to push her students rather than push herself. In an interview by Bernice Johnson Reagon, two of Campbell’s former students provide insight: “[Campbell] never performed too much at school...She never broadcast the fact that she was a composer...She never bothered with the school chorus and she never told the lady in the school chorus to sing her songs.”²⁹

²⁵ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 36.

²⁶ Walker, *Ibid*, 36.

²⁷ Walker, *Ibid* 11.

²⁸ Walker, *Ibid*.

²⁹Roxanne Regina Reed, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women’s Voice in African-American Gospel* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2003), 184.

However, Campbell was a composer with many published works. Some of her songs, which were written for the National Baptist Convention are included in the *Baptist Standard Hymnal*, *Gospel Pearls* (1921), *Spirituals Triumphant Old and New* (1927), *Inspirational Melodies No. 2* (n.d.), and others.³⁰ It was important for hymnals in Black congregations to meet the needs of its members. *Gospel Pearls*, although not specifically called a hymnal, is different from the typical gospel collection of its time, and must be seen as a real advancement for black congregations.³¹ “He Understands; He’ll Say Well Done” was the only Lucie Campbell song included in *Gospel Pearls*. The hymnal had to be reflective of the culture and worship service of its members. *Gospel Pearls* was important because of its inclusion of spirituals and for the number of black authors and composers in its compilations.³² *Spirituals Triumphant* was compiled after *Gospel Pearls*. It was important due to its inclusion of African- American spirituals. Prior to this, they had been passed down through generations without being written down, and it was important to print them in order to preserve the history.

Some of her songs can be found in a Church of God in Christ (C.O.G.I.C.) collection called *Spiritual Songs and Hymns* compiled by Bishop M.L.Tate and edited by Bishop M.F.L. Keith. In her own denomination, there was a collection of songs called *Awakening Echoes: a Collection of Gospel Songs*, published by the National Baptist Young People’s Union Board, E.W.D. Isaac, Corresponding Secretary.³³ Another interesting collection of hymns was the *Ideal Pew Hymnal*, published by the Baptist Young People’s Union Board.³⁴

³⁰Luvenia A. George, “Lucie E. Campbell: Her Nurturing and Expansion of Gospel Music in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 114.

³¹ George Barker, “An Historical Survey of Black Baptist Hymnody in America” (Thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981), 31.

³² Barker, *Ibid*.

³³ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 155.

³⁴ Walker, *Ibid*, 157.

Unfortunately not all of Campbell's songs were published. The reason for that has not been determined. Various sources report that she wrote over one hundred songs but, unfortunately, only forty-six of her songs are in print.³⁵ From 1930 to 1962, she introduced a new song each year at the National Baptist Convention.³⁶ Baptists from all over looked forward to her leading the songs, and teaching a new song at the Convention for them to take back to their local churches. The Sunday School Publishing Board in Nashville, that was once her primary publishing source, no longer has a collection of her songs.

In the table below, I have documented some of Campbell's best-known songs and the hymnals in which they are found:

Song Title	Copyright Date	Published
"Footprints of Jesus"	1977	<i>The New National Baptist Hymnal</i> , 113. -21 st Century Edition, 230.
"He Understands, He'll Say Well Done"	1951 1977	-100 Favorite Gospel Songs, pgs. 96-98. -The New National Baptist Hymnal, 428. -National Baptist Song Special for Service and Devotion, pg. 12. -21 st Century Edition, 466. -African American Heritage Hymnal, 413.
"In the Upper Room with Jesus"	1946	100 Favorite Gospel Songs, pgs. 122-123.
"Is He Yours?"	1977	<i>The New National Baptist Hymnal</i> , 291. -21 st Century Edition, 379.
"Just to Behold His Face" (Arranged by Lucie Campbell)	1977	-The New National Baptist Hymnal, 439. -National Baptist Song Special for Service and Devotion, pgs. 3-4. -21 st Century Edition, 539.
"Something Within"	1977	-The New National Baptist Hymnal, 275.

³⁵ Horace Clarence Boyer, "Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 84.

³⁶ Boyer, *Ibid*, 82.

		- <i>National Baptist Song Special for Service and Devotion</i> , pg. 23. - <i>21st Century Edition</i> , 382. - <i>African American Heritage Hymnal</i> , 493.
“The Lord is My Shepherd”	1977	<i>The New National Baptist Hymnal</i> , 289. <i>21st Century Edition</i> , 237. - <i>Gospel Pearls</i> , 140.
“Touch Me Lord Jesus”	1941 1977	- <i>100 Favorite Gospel Songs</i> , pgs. 204-205. - <i>The New National Baptist Hymnal</i> , 336. - <i>21st Century Edition</i> , 201. - <i>African American Heritage Hymnal</i> , 274.

Lucie Campbell was a fine composer, so that is the obvious reason that the National Baptist Convention chose a woman of her caliber in 1916 to serve as Music Director. There was no question that the National Baptist Convention, the largest denomination of African American Christians in the world, would sing what she and her colleagues preferred.³⁷ Lucie Campbell understood the power that music had to heal and save, and so she took her role as Music Director of the Convention very seriously. What kinds of songs did Lucie E. Campbell want the National Baptist Convention to sing? The answer is simple: the songs she wrote and the songs and singing of the new pioneers of gospel who came to this music with the same conviction she possessed.³⁸ Campbell’s personality was reflected in the passionate songs she wrote. Campbell possessed passion and strong conviction and was a woman who required all others to bow to her wishes.³⁹ She was so powerful that anyone who wanted to sing on the program had to audition for her, singing the same song he or she planned to sing on the program.⁴⁰

³⁷ Horace Clarence Boyer, “Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 82.

³⁸ Boyer, *Ibid.*

³⁹ Boyer, *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Boyer, *Ibid.*, 83.

The National Baptist Convention was primarily managed and supported by African Americans. Prior to the National Baptist Convention there were many struggles for African Americans within the Southern Baptist Convention. The Southern Baptists did much to discourage Negro Baptists in their move to independence and self-reliance.⁴¹ It was their feeling that Negro Baptists would be best served by remaining allied in a dependent relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention.⁴² The Southern Baptists truly believed that their opinion was in the best interest of Blacks. Southern Baptists believed that without their help, a Black institution would fail. Blacks wanted the opportunity to sing and compose songs that they saw fit for the Convention. Some people saw the split as being anti-white. Lucie Campbell believed that Negroes could organize and maintain their own institutions.⁴³ Often the programming and music for the “white” convention would not give opportunity for Blacks to show their talents. Lucie Campbell believed that the artistic creations by Blacks could stand the same critical scrutiny as any other race’s artistic innovations.

Black Baptists broke away from the Southern Baptist Convention and formed the National Baptist Convention, Inc in 1886.⁴⁴ It is the Nation’s oldest and largest African-American religious convention. Their mission is to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ which teaches them to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to obey everything that Jesus Christ has commanded. Miss Lucie was selected as Music Director of the Convention in 1916, and plunged into writing songs with great energy and drive.⁴⁵ Miss Lucie was not only a composer for the Convention, but she utilized every talent she had, especially when it came to supporting young people. She organized great Convention choruses, mammoth

⁴¹ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 65.

⁴² Walker, *Ibid.*

⁴³ Walker, *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴⁴ Walker, *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Walker, *Ibid.*, 80.

musicals, and wrote pageants which had a missionary call, always encouraging young people to give their lives in Christian service.

Lucie Campbell had an incredible eye for talent even before other people did. Twenty years before Marian Anderson blessed the world with her contralto voice at the Lincoln Memorial, she had been introduced to the National Baptist Convention by “Miss Lucie” who also served as her accompanist when Marian Anderson sang before the National Baptist Sunday School and Baptist Training Union Congress.⁴⁶ Lucie Campbell had discovered Marian Anderson, a legend to be. Miss Lucie used the triumph of Marian Anderson to encourage the young people under her tutelage to be prepared at all times to fully exploit every opportunity.⁴⁷ It was at that same session of the Congress that Miss Lucie introduced the blind singer Connie Rosemond and the song which he inspired – “Something Within.”⁴⁸

Publishing was a very important aspect of Lucie Campbell’s life as a composer. Having a way to publish was essential in preserving and showcasing to the world the wonderful efforts that African Americans were making in music and literature. The National Baptist Publishing Board was founded in 1897, and was ultimately named the Sunday School Publishing Board.⁴⁹

The Sunday School Publishing Board was the cornerstone for publishing African-American composers. President E.C. Morris of the National Baptist Convention had pride in his people and in their ability to control their own destinies.⁵⁰ The Sunday School Publishing Board was very important to the success of Lucie Campbell as a composer. All of Campbell’s hymns were copyrighted by and dedicated to the National B.Y.P.U. (Baptist Young People’s Union) Board,

⁴⁶Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 83.

⁴⁷ Walker, *Ibid*, 85.

⁴⁸ Walker, *Ibid*, 83.

⁴⁹ Walker, *Ibid*, 68.

⁵⁰ Walker, *Ibid*, 70.

409 Gay Street, Nashville.⁵¹ Campbell also paved the way in getting her music published in “white” hymnals. It was very common to find white composers in “black” hymnals, but the reverse was rare.

Although Campbell published her music, making a profit was not the intended goal. It was not about making money, but about service. According to Thomas A. Dorsey, Campbell disapproved of composers of religious music who, like him, sold their music to the public for profit.⁵² If Campbell did not publish her songs through the National Baptist Convention’s Sunday School Publishing Board in Nashville and the B.Y.P.U., she published them herself or with her longtime business partner and later husband, Reverend C.R. Williams.⁵³ She formed a publishing company solely to publish her songs, and after 1945 she and Williams began to publish from their home.⁵⁴ She published from her homes on 711 Saxon Avenue and 388 South Orleans Street, both in Memphis, TN.

Although Campbell is not remembered as a playwright or prolific writer as much as a composer, she wrote many pageants for the National Baptist Convention. In Roxanne Reed’s book, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women’s Voice in African-American Gospel*, she analyzes the pageants that Campbell wrote: “Campbell used the pageant in both her teaching capacity and within the National Baptist Convention, giving validity to its multi-faceted purpose

⁵¹ Luvenia A. George, “Lucie E. Campbell: Her Nurturing and Expansion of Gospel Music in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 114.

⁵² Luvenia A. George, “Lucie E. Campbell: Her Nurturing and Expansion of Gospel Music in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 114.

⁵³ Horace Clarence Boyer, “Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 84.

⁵⁴ Roxanne Regina Reed, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women’s Voice in African-American Gospel* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2003), 179.

as part of the informal to formalized progression.”⁵⁵ In other words, it paved the way for a creative use of commentary on both social and religious situations during her time period.

Lucie Campbell contributed tremendously to the phenomenon that is gospel music. It is the toe-tappin’, thigh-slapin’, hand-clappin’ sound that can make you cry, dance, pray, smile, and shout. From the moment that Campbell joined the National Baptist Convention, gospel music became the voice of the masses of Black Christians as they sought to express their hopes and dreams, as well as their joys and sorrows on their Christian journey.⁵⁶ Campbell has the distinction of having composed the second most popular song in all Black Gospel Music after Thomas A. Dorsey’s song “Precious Lord,” which is, “He Understands; He’ll Say ‘Well Done.’”⁵⁷ If Thomas A. Dorsey is the “Father of Gospel Music,” then certainly Lucie E. Campbell is the “Mother of Gospel Music.”⁵⁸

Gospel music plays an essential part in black church worship services all over the United States. In *Miss Lucie*, author Charles Walker traces gospel music to the bosom of the Black Church, throbbing with the pulse of freedom, liberation, and triumph.⁵⁹ The form of the music was usually the “blues form,” it was music which expressed the full expanse of life.⁶⁰ The blues form is a 12 bar pattern of chord changes. It has three four bar sections with a sequence of I, IV, and V chords. Lucie Campbell used the “blues form” in her compositions, but ultimately she used time signatures and harmonies that were different from any other sound ever heard. The

⁵⁵Reed, *Ibid*, 176.

⁵⁶ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 1.

⁵⁷ Horace Clarence Boyer, “Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 82.

⁵⁸ Walker, *Ibid*.

⁵⁹Walker, *Ibid*.

⁶⁰ Walker, *Ibid*.

groups who helped to popularize her songs include the Angelic Gospel Singers, the Ward Singers, the Davis Sisters, and Brother Joe May.⁶¹

Many of Campbell's songs were written as a result of her being inspired by someone or some situation. Campbell found a lot of her inspiration in political and social situations. Not only was Lucie Campbell a religious woman, but she was a woman who believed in equality of race and gender. She believed in equal opportunity, and was a strong advocate for ending racism.

"Please Let Your Light Shine on Me (1919)" and "Are They Equal in the Eyes of the Law? (1919)" were the only secular songs Campbell was associated with in her long career.⁶² The lyrics for the two songs were written by Sergeant A.R. Griggs, and Campbell supplied the music.⁶³ Both songs reflect the anger of African American members of the armed forces at the prejudice and discrimination remaining in America after World War I.⁶⁴ The two songs carried the copyright of the Campbell-Griggs Publishing Company of Memphis and are the only songs of her early period that were not published in hymnals.⁶⁵

Another one of Campbell's best known songs is an arrangement of the prayer taken from Psalm 23. It is one of Campbell's most famous gospel ballads. Campbell dedicated "The Lord is My Shepherd (1919)" to her mother, Mrs. Isabella Campbell, who was ill at the time and soon thereafter passed away.⁶⁶ Campbell's relationship with her mother was very close, and like a shepherd looks after his sheep, Isabella looked after Lucie.

⁶¹ Roxanne Regina Reed, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women's Voice in African-American Gospel* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2003), 215.

⁶² Luvenia A. George, "Lucie E. Campbell: Her Nurturing and Expansion of Gospel Music in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 114.

⁶³ George, *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ George, *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ George, *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 156.

The songs “Something Within (1919),” “Heavenly Sunshine (1923)” and “The King’s Highway (1923),” were copyrighted by the Baptist Young People’s Board of the National Baptist Convention.⁶⁷ The most interesting story lies behind the song, “Something Within.” Charles Walker told the story as he heard it:

“Miss Lucie went to buy groceries on Beale one day where there was a blind singer named Connie Rosemond who stood in front of the store and sang spirituals for small change. One day it was raining, and despite his feet being exposed Connie continued to sing great melodies. Some white men came out of a bar and offered to give Connie five dollars to sing the blues. He said no, even when they offered him fifteen dollars. Miss Lucie heard the entire exchange as she left the store. When she asked Connie, why not sing the blues, he answered it was just something within.”⁶⁸

The opening verse of “Something Within” begins by citing two of the most highly respected members of the African American community in 1919, “Preachers and teachers.”⁶⁹ Preachers and teachers were two figures that Campbell was surrounded by all her life. The words “Fighting as soldiers” would remind listeners of World War I, which had ended only two years before.⁷⁰ It tells every African American that life is a struggle, but we have something within us that tells us we are more than what is seen on the outside.⁷¹ “Something Within” remains a great favorite today and was recorded by the popular group Take 6.

The song “He Understands; He’ll Say ‘Well Done’ (1933)” comes from a point in Campbell’s life when she was at odds with her home church, Beale Street Baptist Church. After organizing resistance towards a new minister and hitting two other ministers with her umbrella, her church no longer accepted her.⁷² A resolution was written that expressed the church’s

⁶⁷Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 156.

⁶⁸ Walker, *Ibid*, 157.

⁶⁹ Luvenia A. George, “Lucie E. Campbell: Her Nurturing and Expansion of Gospel Music in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 115.

⁷⁰George, *Ibid*.

⁷¹George, *Ibid*.

⁷²Walker, *Ibid*, 105.

disapproval of her behavior and expelled her from the church. Miss Campbell believed in fighting for what she believed in, literally, and because she disagreed with the installation of the new minister she stood up for what she thought was right. Out of her pain and sadness came one of the jewels of her creative life:⁷³ Although her church members did not understand how she felt, she knew that God understood, and would not want her to become weary in well doing: “If when you give the best of your service, telling the world that the Savior is come; be not dismayed when men don’t believe you; He understands, he’ll say “Well done.”⁷⁴ Johnny Cash has recorded this song as well as other artists such as Hank Snow and Pat Boone. Two of her most popular songs that were introduced at the National Baptist Convention were “Touch Me Lord Jesus (1923)” dedicated to Reverend Roy D. Morrison of Central Baptist Church and “Just to Behold His Face (1941)” dedicated to J. Robert Bradley and published in the same collection.⁷⁵

The very day that Lucie Campbell was told she was stricken with a terminal illness, she wrote the song, “This Is the Day that the Lord Hath Made (1947).”⁷⁶ Her strength and endurance was unceasing, because even in poor health she praised the Lord. Her faith was in control of her life, and even though her situation was depressing she still acknowledged God as the one in control. She lived another 16 years.

Miss Lucie was a prayer warrior, meaning that she believed in the power of prayer. She spent many hours in prayer, meditation, and deep devotion.⁷⁷ She wrote the song “In the Upper

⁷³Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 157.

⁷⁴Walker, *Ibid*, 156.

⁷⁴ Walker, *Ibid*, 167.

⁷⁵ Walker, *Ibid*, 158.

⁷⁶ Walker, *Ibid*.

⁷⁷ Walker, *Ibid*, 166.

Room with Jesus (1946)” and dedicated it to “All Christians who pray.”⁷⁸ Miss Lucie wrote of this song:

“This sweet song came to me after teaching the Woman’s Bible Class on Easter Sunday. Jesus having risen as He said and appeared to his disciples as they sat in the Upper Room lamenting his death and having lost all hope were at sea as to what to do and where to go. How happy were they when Jesus appeared. We, too, are made to rejoice when we go into the Upper Room of our hearts to commune with our Lord.”⁷⁹

An interesting item related to this song is that Miss Lucie’s name is printed two different ways: Lucie E. Campbell is at the top and Lucy Campbell-Williams is on the bottom.⁸⁰ The song has the copyright year of 1946, but Lucie was not married until 14 years later.⁸¹

Campbell wrote “Even a Child Can Open the Gate (1952)” as a result J. Robert Bradley’s performance at the National Baptist Convention.⁸² Bradley was only 13-years-old when Campbell placed him before the Convention in 1933, and shocked the gathering with his mature singing.⁸³ Thus proving that faith has no age requirement. Even a child, can do tremendous things with God’s favor. Jones comments in his book, *In the Hands of God*, that Bradley was “hailed a child prodigy.”⁸⁴ Dr. J. Robert Bradley was the protégé of Miss Lucie, and is perhaps the greatest exponent of the “Lucie Campbell Tradition” because he began in poverty in Memphis, but went on to study music in New York and performed in London, England, Brazil, and all around the world.⁸⁵

⁷⁸ Walker, Ibid.

⁷⁹ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 156.

⁸⁰ Walker, Ibid, 157.

⁸¹ Walker, Ibid.

⁸² Walker, Ibid, 161.

⁸³ Amos Jones, *In the Hands of God: An Autobiography of the Life of Dr. J. Robert Bradley* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 41.

⁸⁴ Jones, Ibid.

⁸⁵ Walker, Ibid, 152.

The final song “Sometime Soon (1962),” was completed after Miss Campbell’s death by Robert L. Holmes, Jr., one of the young people whose life was touched by Miss Lucie.⁸⁶ When Miss Lucie wrote “Sometime Soon” she knew that life was slowly ebbing away from her, and the sickness which had invaded her body was terminal.⁸⁷ She knew that sometime soon, she was going to meet the Lord in Heaven.

Because Lucie experienced spiritual mountains and valleys in her life, even the form of songs she composed differed from one another. Lucie Campbell composed gospel songs with different forms. She wrote hymns that were four-part, homophonic (a single melody line with accompaniment) compositions published in shape-note notation, a system that assigns a different shape to each note of the scale.⁸⁸ This method helped illiterate musicians learn to read music and was preferred in the rural South from the turn of the century until the late 1930s.⁸⁹ Most of her published works were hymns. Campbell wrote gospel music, but she wanted it sung in a classical style.⁹⁰ She wanted the songs sung lightly and clearly. She placed emphasis on the grace of the melody, balance, control, and wanted every note to be polished.

Campbell had a passion for the gospel ballad, a slow song in which one singer thinks out loud about joy or sorrow.⁹¹ It is different from a hymn, because it is not normally sung in four parts, but rather a solo voice. One of her loveliest gospel ballads is a song called “Heavenly Sunshine (1923),” which unfortunately is not well known.⁹² This song describes how the

⁸⁶Walker, *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 156.

⁸⁸Luvenia A. George, “Lucie E. Campbell: Her Nurturing and Expansion of Gospel Music in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 114.

⁸⁹ George, *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Horace Clarence Boyer, “Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 81.

⁹¹ Boyer, *Ibid.*, 85.

⁹² Boyer, *Ibid.*

heavenly sunshine floods the singer's soul. She then rejoices and knows that Jesus is near because of the warmth of the sunshine. Many of Campbell's songs fall in the gospel ballad category, including "The Lord Is My Shepherd" and "A Sinner Like Me."⁹³ These songs become very personal to whoever is singing the words, giving him or her an outlet to express themselves.

Another of her favorite styles was the anthem. In 1946, she published an anthem called "Praise Ye the Lord."⁹⁴ An anthem is a song of allegiance. It is a song that declares praise for something, and declares faithfulness to that something. An anthem is also a song of celebration. It can be for a solo or group. It is symbolic for a certain group of people; in Lucie Campbell's case it is symbolic of Christians, and Christ's victory through his death. Two of her songs that are anthems include arrangements of "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood" and "Just As I Am, Without One Plea."⁹⁵ In these songs, the singer declares his love to Christ, because he has saved him by dying for his sins.

Campbell also wrote in the form of a jubilee, performed in a moderately fast tempo, it has a bit of syncopation, and is written in the call-and-response tradition.⁹⁶ A jubilee is a song of rejoicing and joyful celebration. "I'm a Soldier" and "When I Get Home" are two examples of the jubilee songs.⁹⁷ "When I Get Home" celebrates the idea of going to Heaven on the glorious day when the singer begins an eternity with God.

Miss Lucie's greatest contribution to gospel music is the so-called gospel waltz, which is a kind of composition in which three beats are established in the left hand, or in the bass, and

⁹³ Boyer, *Ibid*, 82.

⁹⁴ Horace Clarence Boyer, "Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention," In *We'll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 82.

⁹⁵ Boyer, *Ibid*, 95.

⁹⁶ Boyer, *Ibid*.

⁹⁷ Boyer, *Ibid*, 82.

then a contrasting theme is given in the treble, or in the right hand.⁹⁸ The gospel waltz became so popular that by 1950 this gospel rhythm, an innovation of Miss Lucie, was standardized.⁹⁹ The gospel rhythm had become so pervasive in the 1950s that when Ray Charles decided to create a new kind of music called soul, he borrowed the gospel waltz form for his rendition of “I’m a Fool for You.”¹⁰⁰

The following is a table of the songs published by Lucie Campbell.¹⁰¹

Copyright Date	Title
1919	“Are They Equal in the Eyes of the Law?” “Something Within” “The Lord is My Shepherd” “Please Let Your Light Shine On Me”
1923	“Heavenly Sunshine” “Just to Behold His Face” “The King’s Highway” “Welcome Chorus”
1931	“Nobody Else but Jesus”
1932	“My Savior”
1933	“He Understands; He’ll Say, ‘Well Done’” “Is He Yours?”
1936	“Is He Yours?” “Room! Room!”
1940	“I Want to Be Ready to Put on My Gospel Shoes” “Spiritual Medley: Tramping, Wanna Be Ready, Walk Children”
1941	“Touch Me, Lord Jesus”
1946	“Jesus Gave Me Water” “Praise Ye the Lord”
1947	“Holy Three in One” “In the Upper Room” “Just As I am” (arr.) “The Lord’s Prayer” “My Lord and I (On the Heavenly Road)” “Not Yours but You” “Offertory Prayer”

⁹⁸ Boyer, *Ibid*, 103.

⁹⁹ Boyer, *Ibid*, 81.

¹⁰⁰ Horace Clarence Boyer, “Lucie E. Campbell: Composer for the National Baptist Convention,” In *We’ll Understand it Better By and By*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 81

¹⁰¹ Boyer, *Ibid*, 83.

	“This Is the Day the Lord Has Made” “When I Get Home”
1948	“I Need Thee, Precious Lord” (arr.)
1949	“Awake! for Thy God Reigneth” “There Is a Fountain” (arr.) “Footprints of Jesus”
1950	“Looking to Jesus”
1952	“A Sinner Like Me” “Even a Child Can Open the Gate” “They that Wait Upon the Lord”
1956	“His Grace Is Sufficient for Me”
1958	“Come Ye Blessed of My Father” “The Path through the Valley Leads Home”
1959	“God’s Long Reach of Salvation”
1960	“Love Not Nails Held Him There” “The Story of Salvation Must Be Told (in Africa, China, and the Isles of the Sea)” “Unto Thee, Thou Holy One”
1962	“Signed and Sealed with His Blood” “Sometime Soon”
1963	“Come, Lord Jesus, Abide with Me”
no copyright date	“Hail, Ye Baptist Leaders” “I Know I Won’t Stop Singing” “I Thank Thee” “In the End” “Jesus, Keep Me Humble” “Lucie E. Campbell’s Soul Stirring Songs for All Religious Occasions” (Hymnal/collections)-published by Isaac and Campbell ¹⁰² “No Sorrow, Too Light” “Praise the Lord, Ye Heavens”

Music has the ability to lift one’s spirits, make one cry, or make one satisfied. Campbell once said, “Gospel songs, of course, are inspired by some Bible passage. They come from conditions, from the hope of getting out from under handicaps and depressions. They’re inspired by seeing through a cloud, by seeing the sunshine above.”¹⁰³ Music relates to life and people,

¹⁰²Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 149.

¹⁰³ Perre Magness, “Campbell’s Legacy Heard in Hymns,” *Commercial Appeal*, January 20, 2000.

like a close friend. Music was like the very breath of Lucie Campbell's being.¹⁰⁴ She sang all the time, always composed little ditties for her own enjoyment, and she absorbed music like a sponge.¹⁰⁵ Through music Lucie Campbell gave glory to God. Her passion for music also gave her the determination to express her love for the Lord through this medium.¹⁰⁶

During one morning worship service when J. Robert Bradley sang "He Understands and He'll Say Well Done," ninety-one persons came forward to join the church.¹⁰⁷ Lucie Campbell's objective was to spread the gospel, the good news, and what better evidence than nearly 100 people coming to Christ. In Ellis Auditorium during a meeting of the National Baptist Convention, Bradley sang "Nobody Else but Jesus."¹⁰⁸ It is a song that demands conviction, because it whole-heartedly accepts that Jesus is the only one that can do it all, and that through Him anything is possible. In *Miss Lucie*, Walker describes the auditorium as "being filled with the Spirit of the Lord, as pandemonium broke out that had an order unrecognized by the uninitiated eye."¹⁰⁹

Three of many peoples' favorite songs by Lucie Campbell are "Something Within," He Understands; He'll Say Well Done," and "Touch Me, Lord Jesus."

The story behind "Something Within" is a powerful yet simple one. In fact it describes what gospel music is. It is a powerful tool, but not a complicated one. A blind boy loved gospel so much that he refused to sing anything else for money, even though the shoes on his feet were at their end. Gospel music returns in its purest form, not for show or for profit, but because the music is for the glory of God. Two very important aspects of the song "Something Within" are

¹⁰⁴ Walker, *Ibid*, 22.

¹⁰⁵ Walker, *Ibid*, 149.

¹⁰⁶ Walker, *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁷ Charles Walker, *Miss Lucie* (Nashville: Townsend Press, 1993), 151.

¹⁰⁸ Walker, *Ibid*, 160.

¹⁰⁹ Walker, *Ibid*.

the lyrics and the melody. The lyrics are what truly make the song. Today it is easy to record thumping bass lines, add instruments with a button, and create harmonies. During the beginning of the Twentieth Century most songs were heard with a piano, maybe some form of percussion, choir, solo, or *a cappella*. That is why lyrics were so important. It is truly the words in the songs that Lucie Campbell wrote that make her compositions memorable.

“Something within me, Lord that holdeth the reins,
 Something within me that banishes pain,
 Something within me, Lord that I can’t explain.
 All I know I thank my God, I’ve got something within me”

In most gospel music God is seen as omnipotent and in control of everything. Reins are normally associated with animals, but in this context God is acting more as a guide and keeping his people from rushing through situations. Giving God control is being reassured that he will take care of his people.

God accepts the role as healer. Again we see that he is in control of the person. He has power to take away any and every inch of pain. Faith gives a person a sense of optimism. The way that things are now, is not necessarily the way that they are supposed to be. Gwendolyn Cooper-Lightener, accompanist, shared her thoughts on the ministerial function of the song:

“Something Within is one of the first songs that I played as a child. And when I heard it, I was so inspired by the words and the music, and what inspired her to write her life...When you think about the words...few songs like that carried the message. That’s what the song means to me. I’ll never stop singing that song.”¹¹⁰

This something within, is a phenomenon that brings joy, peace, love, and can give one more than they can imagine. It is not easy to explain, it just is. Campbell is not concerned with

¹¹⁰ Roxanne Regina Reed, *Preaching and Piety: The Politics of Women’s Voice in African-American Gospel* (Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2003), 221.

answering the question of why there is something within, or how it is. She is just grateful that there is something, because without it, life would not be the same.

In the song “He Understands; He’ll Say ‘Well Done’,” Campbell describes the nature of the journey that she was on her entire life. Her purpose was not to win awards or gain fame all around the world. Everything that she did was in order that God would be pleased with her life. All she needed was his approval, and no one else’s. If no one else understands, God does.

“If when you give Him the best of your service,
Telling the world that the Saviour has come.
Be not dismayed if men don’t believe you,
He’ll Understand and say, ‘Well Done’.”

Miss Lucie was a perfectionist. She believed in doing everything the “right way,” and the best way it could be done. There was no in-between, either it was going to be the best or she would not be a part of it. She writes that we should not worry about what other people say or if they do not believe, the important question is, “What does God have to Say?”

“Misunderstood the Saviour of sinners,
Died on the cross, He was God’s only son.
But he knew well that His father in heaven,
Would understand and say well done.”

“Touch Me, Lord Jesus” is another one of Campbell’s more recognized songs. Lucie Campbell used the Bible and her teachings within the church to compose many of her songs. “Touch Me, Lord Jesus” is closely related to the Bible story of the woman who was ill in the book of Matthew. She knew that if she could just touch the hem of Jesus’ garment, she would be made whole. The words in this particular song are powerful. With just one touch the singer believes that Jesus can guide, heal, lead, and cleanse the person.

“Touch, touch me Lord Jesus.
With thy hand of mercy
Make each throbbing heartbeat

Feel thy power divine.”

The world continues to remember Lucie Campbell. She has a musical note inlaid in her honor on Beale Street in Memphis. As noted in the *Memphis World* article about her funeral on January 12, 1963, Memphians and out-of-towners paid high tribute to Lucie Campbell at Mt. Nebo Baptist Church. National Leaders came from far and near to sing Campbell’s praises.¹¹¹ As Kimberly N. Alleyne noted in the *Tri-State Defender* article on May 15, 2004 that Dr. Lee Brown, minister of Springdale Baptist Church, long had a vision to see the erection of Lucie E. Campbell Elementary School. His vision came to pass in August 2003.¹¹² In an interview with Charles Walker, author of *Miss Lucie*, he recalled that the National Baptist Convention continues to remember Lucie Campbell’s style of singing through the Lucie Campbell Workshop Choir that sings songs in the traditional gospel sound that she taught.¹¹³ The Goodstreet Baptist Church in Dallas, TX has a Lucie Campbell Sunday worship service. In it they sing her songs the entire service in a program that has been going on for 30 or 40 years.¹¹⁴ In 1980, combined choirs of Beulah Baptist Church presented a program in memory of Lucie E. Campbell. In 1983, the National Baptist Convention laid a commemorative stone at her grave. Also, in 1983, an Easter Memorial Concert was held in her honor at Columbus Baptist Church. Campbell’s commitment to ministry is what makes her legacy worth remembering and revisiting time and time again.

Lucie Campbell’s legacy lives on. Gospel is a genre that continues to evolve and grow. Black gospel is introspective and personal. With the exception of heaven, the gospel’s concern is with the challenges faced today. The gospel instills the idea that with Christ, any challenge here on earth can be named a victory. Lucie Campbell lived her life through this idea. Life is

¹¹¹ “Ministers in Tribute to Miss Campbell,” *Memphis World*, January 12, 1963.

¹¹² Kimberly N. Alleyne, “School Names Library for Dr. Lee R. Brown,” *Tri-State Defender*, May 15, 2004.

¹¹³ Charles Walker, interview by Pamela Palmer, phone, 22 July 2008.

¹¹⁴ Walker, *Ibid.*

full of battles to be fought, but all challenges can be met through the grace of God. Today the cultural component of gospel has changed but the relevance and importance of the message is the same as it was when Campbell published her first song in 1916. Lucie Campbell spread this message of good news through her music. Even though some of her music is lost, the influence of her work cannot be diminished.

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