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For Immediate Release



**The President's Chapel Hour presents
Dr. Oswald P. Bronson and Dr. Melva Wilson Costen**

(October 10, 2007, Atlanta) - - The Interdenominational Theological Center's (ITC) half century of ecumenical cooperation, will be celebrated as ITC's 50th anniversary of "Ecumenism in Action" continues on October 23, 2007 at 11 a.m. during the President's Chapel. The service, which will feature ITC's second president, **Dr. Oswald P. Bronson** and **Dr. Melva Wilson Costen**, former Helmar Emil Nielsen Professor of Music and Worship at the ITC and widow of fifth president, **Dr. James H. Costen Sr.**, offers an opportunity for students to gain insight about the rich heritage that is ITC. Both Drs. Bronson and Costen will have the opportunity to share memories and historical highlights of their time here at the ITC.

Prior to academia, Dr. Oswald P. Bronson held pastorates for 16 years in Florida, Georgia and the Illinois Conferences of the United Methodist Church. He received his B.S. from Bethune Cookman College, his B.D. from **Gammon Theological Seminary**, one of the six constituent seminaries of the ITC, and his Ph.D. from Northwestern University. Dr. Bronson served as a lecturer and teacher in Methodist Missions and Leadership Schools and was director of field education at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) from 1964-68. In 1966, Dr. Bronson became vice president of ITC, and on September 30, 1968 was elected as the second president and served in that capacity until April 8, 1975. He then went on to hold the position of president at Bethune Cookman College until retiring in August of 2004. Dr. Bronson returned to academia briefly as interim president for Edward Waters College in Jacksonville, Florida in 2005.

Dr. Melva Wilson Costen, an Elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), has been the representative from the South Atlantic Synod on the General Assembly Nominating Committee (G.A.N.C), where she served as Vice Moderator. Her contributions to the music and liturgical life of the Presbyterian Church began in 1977 when she was elected to serve on the Board of the Joint Office of Worship, which initiated a series of Supplementary Liturgical Resources, and subsequently published the *Book of Common Worship* in 1993. Other publications include three books on worship, numerous articles in

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American and international journals, chapters in books and encyclopedia entries on worship and music. Dr. Costen served as the Helmar Emil Nielsen Professor of Music and Worship at ITC from 1988 until she retired in 2005. Shortly after her retirement, she served as the Distinguished Professor of Liturgical Studies for the fall of 2005 at Yale University Institute of Sacred Music and Yale Divinity School. Her late husband of fifty years, Dr. James Hutten Costen, Sr., was former Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and former Dean of Johnson C. Smith Seminary at ITC before becoming the ITC's fifth president.

Located in the Atlanta University Center, the world's largest center of African American higher education, ITC is the only theological seminary of the United Negro College Fund, and is a member of the Atlanta Regional Consortium for Higher Education (ARCHE). ITC is one of the fully accredited Historically Black Theological Seminaries of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

The community is invited to share in this and other upcoming events celebrating the 50th anniversary of the ITC. For dates and times of other activities, call 404-614-6394 or log on to www.itc.edu

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