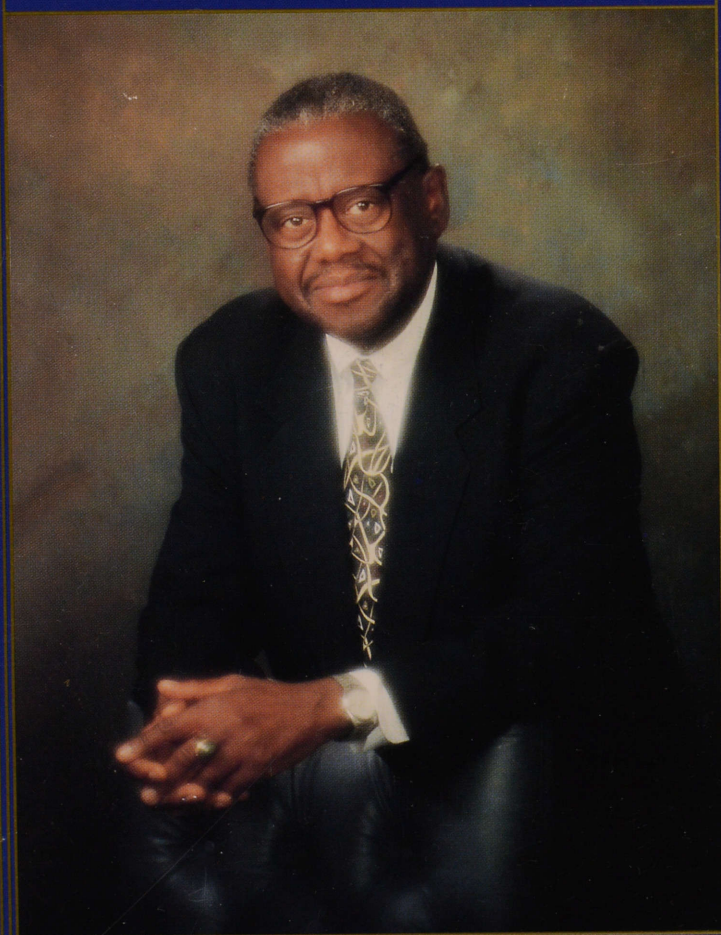


The Costen Legacy



1983-1997

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The Costen Legacy
1983 - 1997

John C. Diamond
Joseph E. Troutman
Editors

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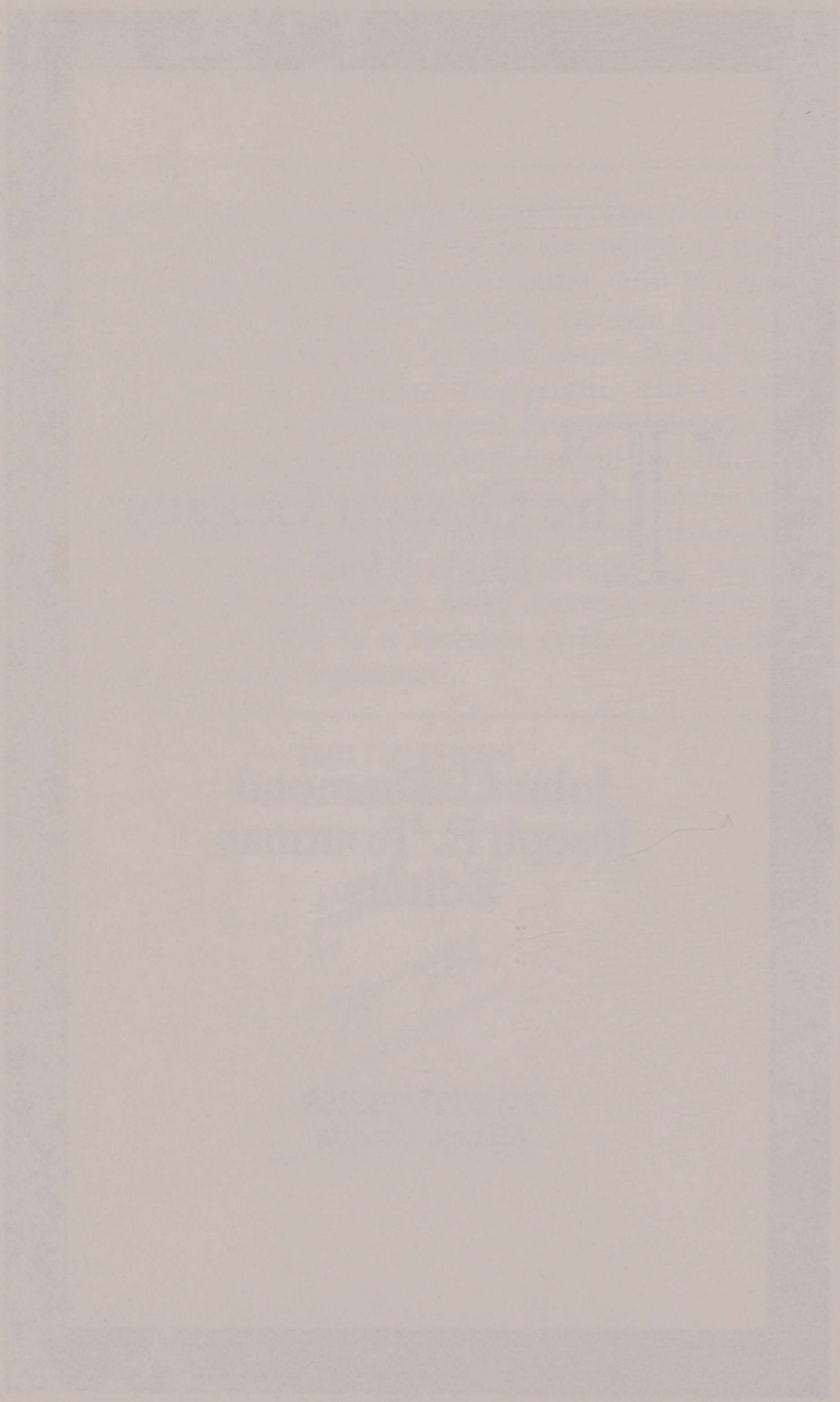


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1996-1997

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Robert Michael Franklin*

Preface

As President-Elect of Interdenominational Theological Center, I am one of many who is appreciative of President James H. Costen's countless efforts on behalf of the Center and the Black Church. Reflecting upon his exemplary legacy, it is one of progress and promise—a veritable study of the "art of the possible."

With courage and conviction, Dr. Costen has enhanced ITC's curriculum and facilities, ensuring the education of a new generation in the finest tradition of the Black Church. By increasing salaries to those of comparable institutions throughout the nation, he has provided ITC with the competitive edge to attract the best available faculty. Instituting non-traditional educational opportunities has globalized the Center's mission and message. Moreover, he has worked diligently to increase the Institution's endowment to a record \$7.4 million, stabilizing its financial base, thereby creating a bridge to future success.

Dr. Costen, with the heart and soul of a true pastor, has nurtured the Center into one of the world's most hopeful expressions of Christian ecumenism. Here, like no other place of which I know, six strong expressions of African-American spirituality and prophetic energy interact like one large extended family, one village, one body in Christ. That the spirit of solidarity, despite differences, can thrive in our time is a most marvelous experience. It is an achievement of

*Robert Michael Franklin is President-Elect of Interdenominational Theological Center.

which every person affiliated with the Center can be godly proud.

As I prepare for the Presidency of ITC, I dare not presume to fill Dr. Costen's mighty shoes, but rather to commit myself to walk in his footsteps—to follow his lead in taking ITC to its next level of greatness. With the grace of God, the guidance of a dedicated Board of Trustees, the support of talented and energetic faculty and staff, and the faith and generous charity of our alumni family and student body, we shall, together, continue in the tradition of the Costen Legacy—fulfilling the promise of excellence in all that we do and in all that we are.

Presenting the Issue

We are privileged to serve as editors of this commemorative volume documenting the legacy of James Hutten Costen, President, Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, 1983-1997. This tribute seeks to reflect a heritage bequeathed, not only to our ecumenical community, but also to ecumenism in its global context.

The majority of the manuscripts have been written by Dr. Costen, and are categorized as Lectures, Speeches and Sermons. We have included the President's extensive documentation of the Lectures, while deciding not to document Speeches and Sermons. This process required judicious selectivity from an abundance of sources; we trust that our critique will enhance readers' appreciation.

In addition to the writings of President Costen, the editors acknowledge the contributions of Clinton M. Marsh, Maxine Allen and Reta L. Bigham, all of whom have demonstrated their perseverance in bringing this volume to fruition. Clinton Marsh's article, "The President's Legacy," focuses upon the varied achievements of Dr. Costen as an administrator—businessperson, conciliator, fundraiser, innovator. . . . Reta Bigham's work is a "Biographical Portrait" reflecting his personal aspects—childhood, marriage, education, pastor. . . . The essay by Maxine Allen presents the Costen Legacy in a visual mode, offering an appraisal of Jim as father, husband, builder, preacher, educator. . . . Additionally, we thank Dr. Melva Costen, Helmar Emil Nielsen Professor of Music and Worship, ITC, for her consultative service concerning the photo-

graphic essay and Dr. Carolyn Ann Knight, ITC Assistant Professor of Homiletics, for her careful first reading of the Lectures, Speeches and Sermons.

As editors, we are honored to participate in this celebration. We have no doubt that the legacy of James H. Costen is the staunch pillar upon which ITC continues to build her future.

The Editors



Lectures

