August 14

**Blessings Forever**

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” Matthew 25:35

On Friday, August 9, all the Rust College Employees gathered to meet, greet, and exchange summer stories. After catching up on the latest campus programs and innovations, reviewing the process of reaffirmation of SACS, and remembering the precious loved ones we lost, we welcomed new colleagues.

On the grounds of the home of the Rust College President, Airliewood, we sat in the cool breeze under the beautiful majestic trees. There I pondered. When slaves worked in the house and lived on the grounds, what was life like? Were they gracious to the strangers who thought the African slave was less than human? Here, today, the sons and daughters of former slaves own the house. A son and daughter of former slaves now live in the house. What a blessing to know that the slaves who once welcomed strangers, as our Lord taught us, now have sons and daughters who graciously welcome with dignity all people regardless to race, religion, gender, ethnicity, or national origin.

**Prayer:** God of our weary years, God of our silent tears. Lord, you are our hope in ages past, present, and future. We give thanks for the faithfulness of our ancestors and their willingness to serve graciously in the midst of oppression. May we forever remember the sacrifices they made. Oh God, help us to be gracious and welcome the stranger. Who knows how the tides of time may change. All life is in the hand of the Great Holy Spirit. Let us be found faithful so that our children will be blessed forever. In the name of Jesus we pray.

Submitted by Rev. Annie Travis