

In 1994, Damali Najuma Smith accepted her call to ministry, while serving under the phenomenal tutelage of Dr. Cecil L. "Chip" Murray, her father in ministry. Dr. Najuma says, *"Going into ministry was just the next level of service for me."* She was ordained as a Deacon in 1996 and as an Itinerant Elder in 2000. Since that time, Dr. Najuma has served as Assistant Pastor and Pastor of Family Ministries at Christ Our Redeemer AME Church in Irvine, California; Pastor of A.K. Quinn AME Church in Moreno Valley, California; Pastor of St. James AME Church, in Los Angeles, California and in 2014 launched Word of Encouragement Community Church, in Los Angeles, Ca. (WOECC.ORG). Dr. Najuma is a frequent speaker at churches and conferences, and welcomes the opportunity to share the good news of the Gospel, her gifts, time and talent with ministries abroad and secular events. In line with her call to ministry, Dr. Najuma, leads the **'...And She Can Preach!'** gathering, a network committed to supporting emerging preaching women.

In addition, Dr. Najuma is Program Manager for the USC Cecil Murray Center for Community Engagement at USC, and for six years was the Dean and Executive Director for the Southern California School of Ministry. Dr. Najuma works closely with the vast Faith community in Los Angeles, in the area of community development and civic engagement. In 2013, Dr. Najuma founded a Sexual Violence Awareness & Training Program, named **"It's Not Okay"** [www.itsnotokay.org]. The purpose of this program is to equip faith leaders with the tools to engage and address the issue of sexual violence within the local church and community.

Dr. Najuma is a certified as a Speaker, Trainer and Coach with the John Maxwell Team; her core message is, *"We are created for the purpose of fulfilling a Godly assignment and must be unapologetic about Living On Assignment!"* She loves serving and helping people overcome their barriers to personal success and live fully into their Life Assignment. Following the launch of her business **LivingOnAssignment.com**, friends named her a **Purpose Pusher!** You can tune-in to her weekly broadcast, Living On Assignment Radio Show, for on-air inspiration and free live coaching, each Sunday at 9:00 pm PST, on www.acceleratedradio.net. Dr. Najuma has the drive and spirit of an entrepreneur, which fuels her budding urban apparel company, **Chocolate Tee's**.

As a writer, Dr. Najuma has authored five books, with many more to come. Her three favorites are **The Prayer Makeover: Developing a Prayer Life That Avails Much; More Than a Sermon and Sunday Hymn** (*Practical Tools for Singles Saved*); and her latest release **Breaking Broke: Change Ur mind flow, U can change Ur Cash Flow!** Her other books can be found on her website.

In terms of education, Dr. Najuma holds a Bachelor of Science in Management from Pepperdine University, a Bachelor of Theology from the Southern California School of Ministry, a Masters of Business Administration from Woodbury University and a Doctorate in Ministry, from United Theological Seminary. In addition, she has received Certification in Civic Engagement from the "Passing the Mantle" Civic Engagement and Community Development Institute from USC.

The best advice Dr. Najuma ever received came from her mother, who told her: "You can do anything you want to!" This invaluable advice always guides her as she strives to complete each task, knowing that all things are possible through Christ.

On the lighter side, she is affectionately known as "Rev Juju", has several hobbies including reading, going to movies, skiing, snowboarding, and writing and traveling. Her travels outside of the country have taken her to Canada, Spain, Morocco, Turkey, Belgium, France, St. Lucia, Lesotho (South Africa), China, Egypt and Israel.

She is wonderfully married to Felix Pollard and they have three sons and a daughter: Daniel, Dillon, Dorian and Zuri