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St. John A.M.E.N.

St. John A.M.E. Church

Huntsville, Alabama



Volume 2 Issue 4

April 1997

Bishop Z. L. & Mother Carrie R. Grady

at St. John for Easter



Bishop Z. L. and Mother Carrie R. Grady blessed St. John with their visit on Easter Week-end.

They took time to share with the youth on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday morning during the Easter Program. Mother Grady greeted the church school and the church during morning worship.

During the Easter Service, Bishop Grady and Pastor McCall, offered prayers for Alabama A&M University President, Dr. John T. Gibson, and family.

Both the Sanctuary Choir and Youth-Children's Choir rendered music for the service.

Bishop Grady preached from the text, I Corinthians 15:3-4. He emphasized, "The resurrection happened! It happened to Jesus. It happened to Richard Allen! It happened to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.! It happened to us!"

We were happy to have Bishop & Mother Grady visit St. John and look forward to future visits.

Letter from Pastor McCall

"Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you." John 16:7

As we continue to celebrate each day the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we remain grateful for the prayers, support and contributions of all the officers and members of St. John. We appreciate not only your commitment to your own families, but also your dedication toward the advancement of God's kingdom in the community and abroad through spreading the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone through word and deed.

It is a joy to claim faithfully with each of you the power of binding Satan's evil influence from our lives through the Blood of the Covenant of Jesus Christ our Savior. It is a privilege to share with each of you the power of claiming faithfully the promise of Christ, the Holy Spirit.

Let us continue mightily in intercessory prayer and community cooperation for the enhancement of our youth, elderly, churches, schools, communities, the poor, homeless, hungry, hopeless and helpless. Let us continue to claim by faithful prayer the power of the Blood of Jesus to bind Satan's influence from our lives and to also claim by prayer the

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April 21, 1997
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St. John Hosts District Conference

St. John will host the **South Birmingham-Huntsville District** on **April 25-26**. The conference will begin with opening worship service on Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. Workshops and business sessions will be held throughout the day. The conference will conclude on Saturday morning. Presiding Elder E. L. Blankenship will preside. Members of the **Fifty+ Club** will serve as host and hostesses.

District Conference is one of five conferences held in the AME Church. The District Conference is comprised of ministers, evangelists, presidents of missionary societies and one steward from each Quarterly Conference within a presiding elder's district. The conference shall meet once each year at a time to be set by the presiding elder and the place to be set at the Annual Planning Meeting of the presiding elder. Business of the conference includes: 1) provide for the presiding elder's support, should the Annual Conference fail to do so, 2) examine applicants for admission into the connection and make recommendations to the Annual Conference, 3) make committee reports and 4) observe religious services.

Plan now to attend the conference, especially the Friday evening worship service at 7 p.m.

Candlelight March

"Brighten The Corner Where You Are" was the theme for the **Annual Stewardess Candlelight Service** on Sunday, March 16 at 4:00 p.m. **Rev. Herbert Cartwright** and the choir from First Missionary Baptist Church, Decatur, joined us for the service. Representatives from Stewardess/Deaconess and Steward/Deacon Boards from churches throughout the area were present. We were challenged in "The Occasion" by **Ms. Doris Outlaw**, as well as in the sermon by **Rev. Cartwright**. A reception was held following the service in the S. S. Hereford Fellowship Hall. **Ms. Kathlyn Dulaney** is the Stewardess Board president.

Church School Easter Program

By Sherry Patton

The Annual Church School Easter Program was held during the Church School hour on Easter Sunday. The program began with an Easter parade of the children of St. John, adorned in Easter outfits and bearing pastel colored balloons.

Participants recited speeches, rendered instrumental selections, and presented a skit.

Meagan Speight gave the morning prayer. Mariah Wilkins recited "Easter," Courtney Burwell recited "Easter Lives," Domonique and Monique Fitchard recited "Happy Easter Day," and Michaela Brown recited "Why." Phoebe Bowser played a piano selection. Adriana Sconiers recited "Easter," Devante Brooks recited "I'm Thankful," Darryl Gaines recited "Happy Easter," Larry Davis recited "Some Day," and Brandon Wallace recited "My Friend." Aleya Henry played a saxophone selection, accompanied by her father, Mr. Karl Henry on the organ. Ken Burwell recited "Keep Jesus," Felicia Burwell recited "Easter Time," Amber Davis recited "I Would Know It's Easter," Kyle Burwell recited "Light in the Tomb," Wesley Henry recited "Beneath the Cross," Bobby Rice recited "Great Way to Start the Day," and Sheena Bowser played a piano selection.

Meagan Speight, Geoffrey Brown, Bobby Rice, Brandon Wallace, Christina Sanders, Michael Goggans and Mrs. Thalia Love-Brown presented an Easter skit entitled "The Easter Miracle Through the Eyes of Children."

The program concluded with a closing poem by Elany Washington.

We appreciate the work of **Mrs. Ellen Washington, Mrs. Zelda Goggans and Mrs. Rose Bell**. Thanks to **Mrs. Wilkins and Mrs. Jill Burwell** for props.

You did a great job!

Children & Youth Enjoy Easter Egg Hunt & Pizza

By Gale McCall

March 29, 1997 was a day filled with fun and fellowship. To start off the day, we received a message from the first lady of the Ninth Episcopal District, **Mother Carrie R. Grady**. She talked about Christ's death on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter morning. After being blessed by her presence along with our 111th bishop, **Bishop Z. L. Grady**, the twelve and younger group enjoyed the **Easter Egg Hunt** which took place outside. **Meagan Speight, Ken Burwell and Michaela Brown** won Easter baskets.

Finally, to end the day full of activities, we enjoyed a meal of pizza.

What a way to celebrate Christ's crucifixion and resurrection!

Mr. Rufus Gilmore III Honored

St. John honored **Mr. Rufus Gilmore III** for his dedicated service as Director of Music at St. John A.M.E. Church on Easter Sunday, March 30. Bishop Z. L. Grady presented a plaque to Mr. Gilmore for outstanding service and dedication from Pastor & Mrs. McCall, Choirs, Officers and members of St. John.

Mr. Gilmore has served as musician and Director of Music at St. John for 19 years.

Pastor's Message

(continued)

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liberating power of the Holy Spirit in us. "We have not because we ask not."

Thank you for using His power in you "to bind" and "to loose" in our warfare with Satan and to fight courageously against drugs, violence, sexual promiscuity, and illiteracy.

Easter Cantata

The combined choirs of St. John A.M.E. Church, Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Phillips C.M.E. Church presented an Easter Cantata, "**The Christ, The Cross, The Crown**" on Palm Sunday, March 23, 1997 at 4:00 p.m. at St. John A.M.E. Church.

There was a joyful noise in the church. The program began with a Prelude, "I Will Glory In The Cross." The air was then filled with the voices of the choirs. Not only did the voices fill the air with pretty sounds, but the instruments added to the joyful sound.

The songs were sung with excitement and they told a message. The message was highlighted by narration. If you listened carefully to the story and the songs, they told the whole story of Jesus.

The songs sung were: "O Lamb of GOD", "Hosanna, Hosanna!", "No One Ever Spoke as the Man", "Thanks Be to God", "Nothing Less Than A Miracle", "The Lord's Prayer", "The Christ, The Cross, The Crown", "He Obeyed Unto Death" and "We Remembered His Passion."

Mr. Rufus Gilmore III directed, **Mrs. Nell Bradford** was pianist, **Dr. Henrene Smoot** was organist, **Mr. Arthur Wesley** was percussionist, and **Mrs. Mattie B. Ezell** was narrator.

A reception was held following the Cantata. **Mrs. Bessie M. Smith** and helpers prepared a beautiful and delicious table of refreshments.

Future Generations

By Rosa Walker

God+Parents+Children+Teachers+Volunteers =Success!

All parents hope for the best life has to offer for their children. They give love, instill values, give inspiration and praise, listen to the struggles of growing up, and provide guidance. Their aspirations and goals are to provide a sound foundation on which their child can rely for support.

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African Singers Perform in Huntsville/Madison

By Kim Brown

Spectators on Wednesday April 2, at 7:00 p.m. were in for a real treat! The African Children's Choir, which has been touring North America and Europe since 1984, delighted the hearts of many on their visit to Alabama. Young, old, black and white came out and shared in this extraordinary event at Asbury United Methodist Church in Madison.

The children, ages 6 through 13, were former slaves in the East African countries of Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya and Southern Sudan. The children came from poverty-stricken homes and are cared for and educated by Friends in the West, the choir's parent organization. Ray Barnett, president of the organization, started the project as a means of helping innocent people survive. The children sang well-known songs as well as some not so popular ones. The children played musical instruments and danced down the aisles, smiling the whole time. The African Children's Concert was really an outstanding event.

Future Generations

(Continued from page 3)

A parent's influence begins at birth and lasts a lifetime. Consistent nurturing and training are the backbone for the child's effort to make their parents proud. Connecting and bonding will provide the child with confidence, independence, and a strong sense of self-worth. The greatest of all these things is the daily modeling and affirming of a Godly life.

Marian Wright Edelman, in her book, The Measure of Our Success states - "It is the responsibility of every adult-especially parents, educators, and religious leaders - to make sure the children hear what we have learned from the lesson of life and to hear over and over that we love them and that they are not alone."

Future Generations—our children—seek and need your prayers and support. Please share one Saturday a month by providing an enrichment activity or tutoring.

St. John A.M.E. Church on the World Wide Web



St. John A.M.E. Church has a website on the Internet. The URL(address) for the website is

<http://members.aol.com/stjohnameh/stjohn.html>

The outline of information on the website is:

- I. Church Picture, address, telephone number
- II. History Of St. John
- III. Ministries of the church
- IV. Information about Services
- V. A list of Organizations in the church
- VI. Announcements about upcoming events
- VII. Link to St. John A.M.E.N. on the Internet

St. John's website also includes links to other websites like: Huntsville, Alabama, A&M University, AME Church Net (an un-official network of AME related information on the Internet), and historical information on the AME Church.

If you have access to the Internet, take a look at St. John's website. E-mail suggestions and comments to stjohnameh@aol.com.

There are many other AME Churches with websites on the Internet. Some of the sites are:

AME Church Network(Un-official)
http://web2.airmail.net/quinnchp/amec_net.htm

Reid Temple AME Church- Lanham, MD
<http://www.rtamec.org/mainw.htm>

Mother Bethel - Philadelphia, PA
http://www.libertynet.org/iha/_bethel.html

First AME - Manassas, VA
<http://www.20four7.com/fame>

Metropolitan AME - Washington D.C.
<http://metro-amec.org>

Also visit the website
www.aawc.com/aac.html
for a directory of African American Churches on the Internet.

May 1997

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 9:30 am Cub Scouts 10:00 a.m. Trustee Board 3:30 p.m. Children/Youth Choir 4:30 p.m. Gospel Choir
4 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship	5	6	7 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Catechism Class	8 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	9	10 6 am - 2pm WMS Yard Sale 3:30 p.m. Youth Choir 4:30 p.m. Gospel Choir 4:30 p.m. YPD
11 Mother's Day 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship FoodSOURCE payment deadline	12	13	14 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Catechism Class	15 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	16 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	17 9:30 am Cub Scouts 3:30 p.m. Children/Youth Choir
18 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship 4:00 p.m. Steward Board Meeting	19	20 6:30 Official Board	21 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Catechism Class	22 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	23 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	24 7:30 am FoodSOURCE Distribution 4:30 p.m. Gospel Choir
25 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship	26 Memorial Day Observed	27	28 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Catechism Class Love Feast	29 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	30	31

Important Dates to Remember



April 18	Eagle Scout Court of Honor, Lee Williams III, 7:00 p.m., St. John
April 20	Mister & Miss Y.P.D. Contest, 5:00 p.m. St. Paul, Scottsboro
April 25,26	South Birmingham-Huntsville District Conference St. John A.M.E. Church - Huntsville
April 27	112th Church Anniversary, 10:50 Worship Service Piano Recital, Students of Mr. Rufus Gilmore, 4:00 p.m.
May 4	Men's-Women's Day, Little Indian Creek Baptist Church, 6:00 p.m. Rev. McCall will preach, the Sanctuary Choir will sing.
May 10	WMS Yard Sale, 6:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

112th Church Anniversary

St. John will celebrate our 112th Church Anniversary on **Sunday, April 27** during the 10:50 a.m. worship service. **Rev. W. G. Treadwell**, Presiding Elder of the East Alabama Conference, will be the guest preacher.

Dr. Katie Blanding, Chairperson

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Rt. Reverend Z. L. Grady, Presiding Bishop
Reverend Dr. E. L. Blankenship, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

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Easter Church School Program



The need for minority donors is especially great!

Because marrow types are inherited in the same way as skin, eye and hair color, a patient's best chance of finding a matched donor is with someone from the same racial or ethnic background.

Marrow Donor Program: Drive for Teresa Smith And Others

Thanks to the miracle of medicine and the gift of a stranger, patients, with fatal blood diseases such as leukemia, have been saved through a marrow transplant. But thousands more are hoping to find that one special person who matches them. St. John's member, **Teresa Smith**, is one such person seeking a matching donor because leukemia has overtaken her blood system. You can provide the living gift of life by signing up as a volunteer marrow donor.

Volunteer donors must be between the ages of 18 and 60, in good general health and not excessively overweight. To be added to the National Marrow Donor Program Registry, volunteers must sign a consent form and have a small sample of blood drawn for testing.

Let us all join together to save the life of **Teresa Cobb Smith** and others with her condition.

Screening dates, sites, and locations

June 24	Redstone Arsenal MICOM, Sparkman Center	9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
June 27	Alabama A&M School of Business Multipurpose Ctr.	7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
June 28	Blue Spring Recreational Center	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
June 29	St. John A.M.E. Church	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
June 30	UAH University Center	9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Letter from Pastor McCall

"Prayer becomes life and life becomes prayer."
- John Killenger

We celebrate separations and passages throughout our lives - separation from high school to higher education, separation from being single to marriage, from college, graduate, trade or professional school to the workplace, separation from our employment to retirement, etc. We can, however, plan, enjoy and look forward to each of our passages "when prayer becomes life and life becomes prayer."

My wife, family and I thank each of you for your support and for your yielding to the guidance of the Holy Spirit not only during the significant passages of your lives but also, especially for your meeting the needs of the people of GOD. Congratulations to each of our graduates and retirees that we recognize this month! We celebrate with each of you, your significant transitions. Thanks also to each father and every significant person who reflects to our children the spiritual meaning of the fatherhood of God.

Please also highlight on your calendar June 24-30, 1997, the screening dates for the bone marrow drive on behalf of Teresa Cobb Smith and others in need. As we celebrate Heritage Sunday on June 29, let us all affirm at St.

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YPD Volunteers

The YPD will serve as volunteers during the Bone Marrow Drive that is scheduled to be held at St. John AME on June 29 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Youth will assist by serving snacks, directing parking, and greeting donors. Youth are to dress comfortably, and be on time.

Annual Missionary Day

St. John A.M.E. Church and the members of the Betty E. Derrick Women's Missionary Society observed Missionary Day on Sunday, May 25.

The theme for this year's observance was taken from the Connectional WMS theme, "God's People for a New Age - Living in a Multicultural Society." The program included participation by two St. John members who are from countries other than the United States. Mrs. Katherine Matand read the poem, "The Cold Within," in French. Mrs. Kani McCray, of Korea, read the litany, "Aiming For A Higher Calling."

We were richly fed from the Word with the message by Sister Betty Robinson, from Psalm 137:1-4. Sister Robinson is currently the Assistant to the Pastor at Handy Chapel A.M.E. Church in Gadsden, Alabama. She is especially dear to our hearts because she is the former Area Chairperson for our WMS area, the Agnes Cooper Area.

Annual Day chairperson, Mrs. Eleanor Burnett, presented a gift to the St. John Nursery from the Betty E. Derrick W.M.S. The president, Mrs. Sandra Connaway, urged all members of St. John to be active members of the WMS, especially the men.

The WMS thanks the church family for its generosity and cooperation. The yard sale and bazaar was a financial success and a fun filled day for everyone who took part.

Mrs. Mydell Smith, Chairperson
Mrs. Sandra Connaway, President

Pastor's Letter

(Continued from page 1)

John our common heritage in Jesus Christ who came not to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. Through Jesus Christ alone, our lives become prayer and prayer becomes life in Him.

Homer L. McCall, II Speaks at Church School Convention in Birmingham

By Kimberly Brown

The youth of St. John A.M.E. Church participated in the Annual Sunday School Convention, Friday, June 6, at Grant's Chapel A.M.E. Church in Birmingham, Alabama. The first order of business was the election of new officers for the South Birmingham-Huntsville District Sunday School Convention. Miss Kimberly Brown was elected Assistant Secretary.

After elections, the congregation divided into groups, by ages, for classes. After classes, everyone adjourned to the sanctuary for a brief meeting of speakers. The meeting was followed by the Annual Worship Service. The sermon was delivered by Reverend Samuel Walker, pastor of Greater St. Paul A.M.E., Scottsboro.

At 7:00 p.m., the Annual Youth in Action Service was held. Mr. Homer L. McCall, II was the speaker for the evening. He was introduced by his sister, Miss Gale McCall. His speech was entitled, "I Believe I Can Fly." Winners of the Poster and Essay Contest were announced following the speech. The day concluded with a reception. A District picnic was held on Saturday.

Attendees from St. John were: Marcus Bailey, Briona Brown, Kimberly Brown, Angela Campbell, Gale McCall, Rakita Sconiers, Mr. Claudewell Campbell, Bro. R. B. Hereford, Sr., and Pastor and Mrs. McCall.

Mr. Lonnie Martin is the District Sunday School Superintendent and Reverend Dr. E. L. Blankenship is the Presiding Elder.

God's People
for a New Age -
Living in a Mul-
ticultural Soci-
ety.



Youth Day

"Glowing, Growing and Going for Christ" is the A.M.E. Connectional Young People's Division (YPD) motto and was the theme for this year's Youth Day observance at St. John on Sunday, June 8. Our youth are indeed **growing** in Christ. They were **glowing** for Christ with their participation in the service and they are **going** for Christ is their Christian service. Each YPDer did an outstanding job in his or her participation in the worship service.

The sermon was delivered by a son of St. John, Reverend Chekibe Holman. Rev. Holman is currently a student at Turner Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. His message was from the text 1 Samuel 30:1-6 and entitled "Prayer Changes Things". He encouraged us to pray as we go through our Zigzag experiences in life.

Miss Celeste Gilmore is the Y.P.D. President, Ms. Claudinette Purifoy is the Y.P.D. Director and Mrs. Sandra Connaway is the W.M.S. President.

Student Honors & Awards Recognition

By Homer L. McCall, II and Rosa Walker

GOD + PARENTS + STUDENTS +
TEACHERS = SUCCESS

Youth of St. John A.M.E. Church, we are proud of you. We salute you for your efforts, hard work, and participation in the 1996-97 school year. We congratulate the following students who submitted information about their achievements. They were honored during Church School on Youth Sunday, June 8, 1997.

Brittney Bell
A/B Honor Roll
Governor's Physical Fitness Award
Choir Award
William Carl Bell, Jr.
A/B Honor Roll
Perfect Attendance
Phoebe Bowser
A/B Honor Roll

Honors & Awards

Perfect Attendance
Scholarship from Girls Inc.

Sheena Bowser
A/B Honor Roll
Geoffery Brown
A/B Honor Roll
Perfect Attendance
Kim Brown
Placed 5th in State Finals-400 meter run
Kenneth Burwell Jr.
Perfect Attendance
President's Award for Physical Fitness
Kyle Burwell
A/B Honor Roll
Angela Campbell
Overall "B" Average
Perfect Attendance
Concert Band
Marching Band
American Red Cross Disaster Club
Chad Campbell
Overall "B" Average
Super Computing Award
Member of SHOTS (Students Helping Other Students)
Elliot Conner
Who's Who Among American High School Students
MVP for Baseball
Leadership Award in Basketball
Sophomore Class President
Captain Boys Varsity Basketball
Huntsville Times All-Metro Boys Basketball Team
Alabama H.S. Athletic Assoc. Tournament Award
Jerard Gibson
Beta Honor Society
Received 4 Academic Scholarships
Accepted Morehouse College
Justin Gibson
Honor Student
Student Council
Government Science Club
Band
Pride Club
Michael Goggans, Jr.
A Honor Roll
Lieutenant Governors Award
Athletic Award
Choir Award



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Honors & Awards

(Continued from page 3)

Jana Goggans

A/B Honor Roll
A Honor Roll for Semester

Aleya Henry

A/B Honor Roll

Malcolm Ifekauche

A Honor Roll
Duke University Motivation for Academic Performance Certificate
National Physical Fitness Award
DARE Program Certificate

Delroy Lewis

A/B Honor Roll
1997 Leadership Conference
Representative for Alabama

Ashley-Ann Lott

Academic Achievement in Reading
Certificate of Achievement for Running Start
Challenge By Reading 21 Books in one month

Erin Johnetta Lott

National Honor Society Award
Cheerleading Award
National Fitness
Music Award
Honor Choir Award
Outstanding Soloist Award

Gale McCall

A/B Honor Roll
Perfect Attendance
Certificate of Achievement - A grade point average for the year
HSV City School Gold Card

Brooke Rankin

A/B Honor Roll
Beta Club
National Merit Scholar
Who's Who Among American High School Students
Varsity Cheerleader (captain 97-98)
National Mathematics Award

Bobby Rice, Jr.

Perfect Attendance

Brittany Robinson

A Honor Roll
Perfect Attendance
Accelerated Reading Certificate
Music Award

Honors & Awards

Christina Sanders

A Honor Roll
Presidential Award for Physical Fitness

Meagan Speight

A/B Honor Roll

Eric Thomas III

Honor Guard
AeroSpace Team
Spanish Club
Who's Who Among American High School Students

Kristin Thompson

A/B Honor Roll
Perfect Attendance

Brandon Wallace

A Honor Roll

Janell Williams

Youth of the year for the state of Alabama

Lee Williams III

JV and Varsity Baseball



Retirees

Mrs. Mattie Brown Ezell

Mrs. Ezell retired from the Huntsville City Schools on June 1, 1997. She taught English in the Choctaw and Madison County School System for thirty-one years and three months. She was a member of numerous professional organizations which include HEA, AEA, and NEA.

Mr. James O. Heyward Sr.

Mr. Heyward will retire from Alabama A&M University on July 1, 1997. He has served as Director of Admissions for thirteen years. Mr. Heyward was a career Army officer and retired from active service in September 1983 with the rank of Colonel having served in key command and staff positions in the United States and overseas. He is a graduate of the Armed Force Staff College and the U.S. Army Personnel Management for Executives Program and has done additional work toward an Ed.S. Degree at Alabama A&M University.

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Retirees

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Mrs. Martha Smith

Mrs. Smith retired from Huntsville Hospital after thirty years of service as a nurse. She worked as a staff nurse, charge nurse, and a supervisor. Mrs. Smith graduated from UAH with a BS in Nursing. Mrs. Smith is the wife of Mr. Charles Smith and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Long.

1997 GRADUATES

Elany Washington graduated from the Alabama A&M Child Development Center. She will attend ASFL Elementary School next year. Elany is the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joe Washington.

High School Graduates

Brian Jerome Baldwin

Brian is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry J. Baldwin. He is a graduate of J. O. Johnson High School where he served as president of the 1996-97 senior class; vice-president of the 1995-96 junior class; and tuba section leader of both the marching and concert bands. As a student he received numerous school recognitions and community awards which include: (1) 20 Distinguished Young Men of Huntsville 1997 Youth Leadership Award; (2) All American Scholar; (3) Who's Who Among American High School Students; (3) selection as the J. O. Johnson Hugh O'Brian Youth Foundation Ambassador; (4) Certificates of Scholastic Achievement from the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; and (5) a scholarship award from the University of Alabama-Birmingham for a project on rocket simulation that was entered in the "Super Computer Expo 97." Additional scholarship awards have been granted by: (1) Delta Theta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.; (2) Alabama A&M University; (3) Tuskegee University/Presidential Scholarship; (4) University of North Alabama Leadership Scholarship; (5) University of Alabama in Huntsville Freshman Merit Scholarship; and (6) Alabama State University Band Scholarship.

Brian has participated in the Department of

Defense (DOD) Science and Engineering Program for three consecutive summers. He is an Eagle Scout and a former senior Patrol Leader with Troop 102. He has served with the Youth Choir, Junior Usher Board, and Young People's Department (YPD) of St. John A.M.E. Church. Brian plans to attend Alabama A&M University in the Fall of 1997 and pursue a degree in Physics with the ultimate aspiration of becoming a Physicist.

Chad Matthew Campbell

Chad is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Claudwell Campbell. He is a graduate of Hazel Green High School Class of 1997. He graduated with an advanced diploma. While enrolled at Hazel Green, Chad was a member of many organizations and a recipient of many awards. Some achievements include the Alabama A&M University Achievement Award, Delta Sigma Theta Achievement Award, member of honor roll, Certificate of Merit for participation in the Eighth Annual Alabama Pre-College Supercomputing Exposition, and was a member of Junior ROTC, Boy Scouts of America, Eagle Scouts, and Spanish Club. Chad plans to attend Alabama A&M University and pursue a degree in Computer Science.

Darrell Ezell

Darrell is the son of Mrs. Mattie B. Ezell. He graduated from Lee Jones High School. He was a member of Beta Theta Chi (vice-president), Future Business Leaders of America, Concert Band, Drama Club, Key Club, Concert Choir, Environmental Club, Thespian Society, Magnet Photography, Student Council Representative, Peer Mediator and Tech Theater. He was Delta Alpha Psi Sweetheart his junior year and Gamma Sigma Phi sweetheart his senior year. Darrell's community involvement includes Boys Scouts of America Troop 102, Eagle Scout, Alabama Cooperative Extension System 4-H Club, NAACP and COARM. Awards received include: (1) Delta Lambda Chapter's Youth Challenge Speaker at the Alpha Phi Alpha Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast (1993), (2) Baypass Corporation's keynote speaker at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration in Atlanta, Georgia; (3) Attorney General's Task Force for Juvenile Issues in the Alabama School System; (4) Lieutenant Governor Don Siegleman's Task Force on violence (on the media panel held in Montgomery Alabama); (5) Alpha Phi Alpha Delta Lambda Chapter Youth Leadership Honoree for Summer Re-

(Continued on page 6)



Congratulations



1997 Graduates

(Continued from page 5)

treat at Le Moyne Owens College in Memphis, Tennessee; (6) Who's Who Among High School Students; and (7) Second place award of Leadership by 20 Distinguished Men of Huntsville.

Jerard Trenton Gibson

Jerard is the son of **Dr. and Mrs. John Gibson**. He graduated with honors from Bob Jones High School where he participated in the Student Government Association and was a member of the National Honor Society, National Latin Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society, Senior Advisory Board, and Junior Civitan. He has also been active in the community as a Red Cross Volunteer, D.A.R.E. Role Model, High School Tutorial Services, National Youth Summer Camp, and Bob Jones Representative at Model State (Birmingham Southern). Jerard is a member of YPD of St. John A.M.E. Church, Junior Usher Board, and Fellowship of Christian Students. Jerard was awarded a four year scholarship to Morehouse College in Atlanta GA.

Brandy Elizabeth Powers

Brandy is the daughter of **Mrs. Mary Powers** and the late **Alfred Powers**. She is a graduate of S.R. Butler High School where she was a member of Future Home Makers of America, Air Force Junior ROTC, Advance Mix Choir, Women's Choir, Flag Corp, Omega Beta Epsilon, Anchor Club, Peer Advisors, Fellowship of Christian Students, Young Life, Inter-Act Club, and Fantasy PlayHouse Actress. Her awards include: All-City Choir, All-State Choir, Sixteen solo and ensemble medals, and S.R. Butler's Band Most Outstanding Senior Award. Her future plans include becoming a United States Marine, attending college while in the service, and after retiring at the rank of Sergeant Major, she would like to start her own music production company.

Malik Joe Sales

Joe is a graduate of Hazel Green High School where he was a member of the Student Government Association, National Honor Society, Spanish Club, and 4-H Club. He was also very active in the community working with Habit for Humanity and Tornado Disaster Relief.

He will attend Xavier University in the fall. Joe is the son of **Attorney Michael Sales** and **Attorney Juanita Sales**.

College & University Graduates

Sonya Denise McCall

Sonya is the daughter of **Dr. and Mrs. Homer L. McCall**. She graduated from Alabama A&M University with a Master of Science in Physics. She is working this summer in Los Alamos, New Mexico. She plans to pursue further studies this fall at North Carolina State in Raleigh, NC.

Mrs. Thalia F. Love

Thalia F. Love will graduate from the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa) this summer. She will receive a Doctorate in Educational Leadership in Administration. Thalia is currently employed by Calhoun Community College as Director of Developmental Education.

Dawn Leonette Hollins

Dawn, daughter of **Leon Z. and Carol W. Hollins** of Potomac, Maryland, and granddaughter of **Mrs. Aileen P. Wilkins** of Huntsville, Alabama, received her Degree of Doctor of Medicine from Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina on May 19, 1997. She will pursue her training of residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Having retained her membership at St. John A.M.E. Huntsville, Alabama since August 1982, Dawn fortified her spiritual anchor through affiliation with Goler Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, Winston-Salem, NC while in school for the past eight years at Wake Forest. Dawn's academic achievements include ranking in the 80th percentile of her class and membership in Mensa, an organization for people with high IQ scores whose purpose is fostering intelligence for the benefit of humanity. She attributes her accomplishments to God's blessings, her faith, a loving and supportive family, and hard work.

Reverend Dr. Karnie C. Smith

Reverend Dr. Smith received his Doctorate of Ministry Degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio on May 17. He is currently serving as the pastor of St. John A.M.E. Church, Birmingham, Alabama. Reverend Dr. Smith is the son of **Col. & Mrs. E. C. Smith**.

Father's Day ~ ~June 15, 1997



*My Father prayed for me,
Had me on his mind,
Took the time to pray for me.*

*I'm so glad he did,
I'm so glad he did,
I'm so glad he prayed for me!*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Father's Advice

(Quotes and expressions of our fathers)

"Charity begins at home and then spreads abroad. If you can not show charity to your family, how can you show charity to the world?"

Clarence York - Father of Mrs. Theresa Henry

"Nothing starting out wrong can ever be made right, so strive to do right all the time".

Dr. John T. Gibson - Father of John II, Jerard, Justin, and Shayla Gibson

One of the most memorable sayings of my father, **Reverend W. W. Austin**, referred to finding things that did not belong to you. He often said, *"You may not know who it belongs to but you know who it doesn't belong to."*

Reverend W. W. Austin - Father of Mrs. Rosetta Williams

We remember two of our Dad's most favorite sayings. *"Prepare for war in time of peace,"* which meant pack your books, fix your lunch and get your clothes ready at night for the next school day.

The second saying was, and he would remind us of this quite often, *"You are entitled to three things, 'Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness' and the rest you will have to work for."*

Miss Barbara Johnson and Mrs. Janice Johnson-Hereford

As is the case in many black families, there was not a father figure present in our home. Growing up in the church, I was bombarded with many positive male role models. On moving to Huntsville and becoming a member of St. John, the pattern of male role models continued. I am thankful for men such as **Mr. Bernard Powers, Rev. Homer McCall, Mr. Rufus Gilmore, Dr. Mingo Clark** and many others. It is these type of men that make me proud to be a father and even prouder to be a man.

My mom served as both father and mother, so on Father's Day she receives a Father's Day card from me.

Submitted by **Mr. Jason Brown**



Father's Day ~ ~June 15, 1997

Father's Advice

(Quotes and expressions of our fathers)

As I reflect daily on the practice of prayer as revealed in the Bible, in the lives of God's people throughout the centuries, and as it is especially unveiled in the ultimate revelation of Jesus Christ, GOD'S only Son, I recall the words that my father wrote to me in a letter in 1957 during the fall of my freshman year at Morehouse College. He said: "DON'T FORGET TO PRAY."

Submitted by **Pastor McCall**

A Father Is ...

A father is someone who loves and cares for his children.

A father is a person who you can talk to when needing advice.

A father is a person who teaches his kids to know right from wrong.

A father is someone who is responsible and shows good examples for his children.

A father is a person who encourages his children to become whatever he/she wants to be.

A father is a person who is willing to spend time and talk with his children and have fun.

A father is someone who loves and cares for his children.

Gerald Teague

St. John A.M.E. Church

June 1997

Seventh Annual Father-Son Banquet

The Father-Son Banquet is a tradition at St. John. The banquet is sponsored by the Steward Board and is held the Saturday before Father's Day. This year Col. E. C. Smith was the chairman for the banquet. The speaker was St. John member, **Mr. Larry Davis**. Fathers, sons and special guests enjoyed an evening of food and fellowship. Each son introduced his father and shared his special comments about his father. The father then introduced his son and/or special guest. Expressions of love and thanks were often expressed by both fathers and sons. Mr. Larry Davis shared his experiences as a son and a father, with the audience. The meal was prepared by Mrs. Bessie Smith and the food service committee. Several St. John girls served as hostesses. If you did not attend this year, mark your calendar for next year. This is a significant experience for men of all ages.

July
1997

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 	5
			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Catechism Class	6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir		3:30 p.m. Youth Choir 4:30 p.m. Gospel Choir
6 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship	7 5:00-7:30 p.m. Vacation Bible School	8 5:00-7:30 p.m. Vacation Bible School	9 5:00-7:30 p.m. Vacation Bible School	10 5:00-7:30 p.m. Vacation Bible School	11 5:00-7:30 p.m. Vacation Bible School	12 3:30 p.m. Youth Choir 4:30 p.m. YTD
13 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship FoodSOURCE payment deadline	14 Christian Education Congress	15 Christian Education Congress	16 Christian Education Congress	17 Christian Education Congress 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	18 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	19 9:30 am Cub Scouts 4:30 p.m. Gospel Choir
20 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship 4:00 p.m. Church School Anniversary Steward Board Meeting	21 6:30 p.m. Revival	22 6:30 p.m. Revival	23 6:30 p.m. Revival	24 6:30 p.m. Revival	25 6:30 p.m. Revival	26 7:30 am FoodSOURCE Distribution 9:00 am - 4:00 pm Women's Retreat 4:30 p.m. Gospel Choir
27 9:30 am Church School 10:50 am Worship Women's Day	28 Church School Board Meeting	29	30 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Catechism Class Love Feast	31 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir		

Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|------------|---|
| June 24-30 | City wide Marrow Donor Program Drive |
| June 29 | Marrow Screening,
St. John A.M.E. Church, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| July 7-11 | Vacation Bible School, 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. nightly |
| July 14-17 | 9th District Christian Education Congress,
Mobile, Alabama |
| July 20 | Church School Anniversary |
| July 21-25 | Revival, 6:30 p.m. nightly |
| July 26 | Annual Women's Retreat, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| July 27 | Annual Women's Day, 10:50 Worship |

Thought for the Month

"When you are prayerful, you are careful." - Selected

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Reverend Dr. E. L. Blankenship, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

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Marrow Donor Screening

Father's Day

Retiree and Graduate Recognition



First Quarterly Conference Held During Morning Service on November 5th

Presiding Elder E. L. Blankenship held the first Quarterly Conference of the conference year on Sunday, November 5th. He issued licenses to preach in the A.M.E. Church to **Brother David Perry, Brother Micah Perry and Brother Raymond Nomel.**

Pastor McCall appointed and Presiding Elder Blankenship confirmed the Steward for this 2000 - 2001 conference year.

The Stewards are:

Mr. Jerry Baldwin
Mr. William Carl Bell, Sr.
Mr. Everett E. Brooks, Sr.
Dr. James I. Dawson
Dr. John T. Gibson, Sr.
Mr. Rufus Gilmore, III
Ms. Patricia Grier
Col. (Ret.) James O. Heyward, Sr.
Dr. Jeannette Jones
Mrs. Nedra L. McDaniel
Mr. Otha Owens, Sr.
Dr. Clifton Pearson
Mr. Willie Sandifer
Mr. Eddie C. Sherrod
Col. (Ret.) E. C. Smith, Sr.
Mrs. Martha Smith
Mrs. Vanona Walton

Steward Emeritus

Mr. Arthur A. Burks, Sr.

The sermon for the 10:50 a.m. service was preached by Presiding Elder Blankenship. His text was taken from Isaiah 6:1 and the message was entitled "Who Is Your Uzziah?" Music was rendered by the Sanctuary Choir and included selections "Shower Down on Me A Blessing" and "Just Have Faith in God."

Pastor McCall's Letter

*He took her by the hand and
said to her, "Talitha Kouri!"
which means, "Little girl, I say
to you, get up!"*

- Mark 5:41

"GET UP! GO TO JESUS!"

There are three miracles, as you know, recorded in the fifth chapter of Mark. Taken together they underscore the holistic ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The healing of the demoniac, the sick woman, and the raising of the dead girl, each of these miracles taken together, emphasize the fact that when we surrender by faith to Jesus Christ, He gives us victory in MIND, BODY, and SPIRIT! Do you want victory in Jesus today? Are there perplexing problems, difficult people and painful situations in your life that seem insurmountable? Are you faced with obstacles that seem to obstruct your path to joy and peace? Then Jesus' words to you and me today are as true, clear, and empowering as they were to the demoniac, the diseased woman, and the dead girl. He tells us today:

- "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!" (5:8)
- "Daughter, your faith has healed you." (5:34)
- "Don't be afraid only believe." (5:36)
- "Little girl, I say to you, get up!" (5:41)

"We become what we think about most of the

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Church School Anniversary and Promotion Day Observed on Heritage Sunday

By Brittney Bell

The St. John A. M. E. Church School Anniversary was opened with inspirational praise dances from our Praise Dance Ministry. It was wonderful to see the congregation respond in such a positive way.

Other worship service participants for the 10:50 A.M. church school observance were church school children, youth, and adults. The children/youth choir provided music for the service. The church school superintendent Mr. Willie Sandifer gave the prayer of confession. Ashley Lewis, William Carl Bell, Jr., and Evan Conner read the scripture. Brittney Bell and Ms. Lula Rochelle led the congregation in the Decalogue and responsive reading, respectively. Ms. Agnes Bailey gave the occasion and Ms. Nedra McDaniel recognized guests and read announcements. The offertory sentences were read by Rakita Sconiers and the prayer of thanksgiving was given by Brother Claudewell Campbell.

Church school teachers gave certificates to students who have been promoted. Ms. Charlsie Brooks gave a moving tribute to current and past teachers of St. John's church school. Superintendent Sandifer and Pastor McCall expressed appreciation for those who have given time and talent to the church school and encouraged parents to bring their children so that they may benefit from the Christian education of the St. John church school. Pastor McCall introduced Sister Judith Gardner, who gave an outstanding sermon.

I would like to congratulate everyone that worked on the program, as well as those who participated in the program. Everyone did an excellent job. Special thanks to Sister Judith Gardner who delivered an inspiring and motivating message entitled, "Set Up To Deliver." I think each and everyone that heard the message was blessed.

There are Church School classes for all ages, so please plan to attend with your family each Sunday at 9:45 A.M.



TASTE TEA SCHEDULED

The Annual Taste Tea, sponsored by the AMEN Staff, is scheduled for Sunday, December 10th after the 10:50 a.m. worship service. Once again, we are asking members and friends of St. John to submit one or more recipes/dishes that you would like to share.

All you have to do is select the recipe(s), prepare and bring the item(s) to the Fellowship Hall before the 10:50 a.m. service. *Be sure to bring recipes with your dish.* Recipes will be published in the AMEN throughout the year.

Please contact Bridget Floyd at 837-5039, Claire Philadelphia at 534-0295, or other staff members to indicate what you will bring for the taste tea. This will greatly help in planning. Previous submissions have included appetizers, salads, casseroles, meat dishes, veggies, desserts, and punch. All dishes are welcome. Be creative and make this year's taste tea the best one yet.

What better way to get into the holiday spirit? Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

GHIMF Revival Held in October

By Bridget Floyd

The Greater Huntsville Interdenominational Ministerial Fellowship (GHIMF) held its annual revival from October 23 through October 26, 2000 at 7 pm each night. The location for the revival was First Missionary Baptist Church where Reverend Dr. Julius R. Scruggs is pastor. The evangelist for this year was the Reverend Clarence Hillard, who is pastor of Jordan United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, and St. Peter United Methodist Church in Madison, Louisiana.

Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, pastor of St. John and president of the GHIMF, gave the welcome and occasion on the first night of revival. He highlighted three major events sponsored annually by this group of greater than eighty-five (85) clergy who represent eight denominations. These activities include the Mar-

(Continued on page 3)

Veterans Day Observance

By Arthur Walker

The origins of Veterans Day in America or, as it was then called, Armistice Day officially received its name through a Congressional resolution in 1926 (the same year that Dr. Carter G. Woodson initiated the celebration of "Negro History Week"). It became a national holiday twelve (12) years later by a similar Congressional action. Following in the tradition of memorial gestures which had occurred in England and France since the end of World War I—"the war to end all wars"—the annual ceremonies all took place on November 11, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of WW1 fighting at 11:00 a.m., November 11, 1918 (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month).

Unfortunately, "the war to end all wars" failed to live up to its billing. In the 1940's World War II erupted, in the 1950's Americans fought in the Korean conflict, and in the 1960's America was mired in a seemingly never-ending "conflict" in Vietnam. More recently, our young men and women of the military have been placed in harm's way in geographical locations that many Americans would have difficulty finding on a world map; places like Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Kuwait, Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Serbia, and, more recently, Yemen, where 17 young sailors (one-third were African-Americans) lost their lives to a terrorist attack.

Even when not serving in "hot zones," our military men and women must endure the hardships of being separated from loved ones for extended periods of time. Many serve in remote locations like Diego Garcia (a tiny speck of an island in the Indian Ocean) or hostile climates like Thule, Greenland and Saudi Arabia. In foreign lands, they must acclimate themselves to different cultures and political systems.

For the millions of Americans who have served in the armed forces, a debt of gratitude is owed. Veterans Day observance is America's way of pausing to honor the commitment and contributions of all who have served in the Army, Army-Air Corps, Air Force, Marines, or Navy. If we fail to keep this in mind, Veterans Day will become nothing more than a "white sales" day at malls around the country.

GHIMF Revival

(Continued from page 2)

tin Luther King Birthday/Emancipation Proclamation Celebration Service, Thanksgiving Service, and Revival. The occasion was also presented as three-pronged; that is, Christ, Celebrate Christ, and Celebrate Christ in Your Life and Homes.

Reverend Paul Hillard, Jr. presided over the Monday night service. The Union Hill Cumberland Presbyterian Church Choir provided choral selections. Ushers for the evening were from First Baptist, St. John AME, St. Mark Primitive Baptist, and Blackburn Chapel Cumberland Presbyterian Churches. Reverend Stanley Terrain read the scripture (Romans 10: 1-9). Reverend Dr. Henry Bradford, Jr. offered prayer and Rev. Michael Jones gave the offertory appeal and prayer. Reverend Paul Hillard, Jr., nephew of the evangelist, introduced the Reverend Clarence Hillard.

Reverend Clarence Hillard's sermon was entitled "The Door of Fellowship", based on text from Galatians 3:28. He began by stating that the center of church unity is the name of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He postulated that if people of the church do not love the name of Jesus, they could not really be happy in the church. Further, God's presence in the church is assured in that there only needs to be two or three gathered in his name to assure this; that is, "a quorum is established by three". Reverend Hillard indicated that it is important for people to experience Jesus, which in his view would result in crowds of people flocking to be a part of God's church.

Reverend Hillard stated that the church should "call persons to their commitment" but expressed concern that "Satan has stacked the church with his folk" and that "Christ may not be in all of those who are leading in the church". Other obstacles to fellowship in God's church include members who are involved in baseless conflict with ministers and the tendency to stay at home in order to watch or listen to a sermon. The latter lacks the "personal touch ... when the Holy Spirit comes and we can touch each other". According to Reverend Hillard, when Christians come together to worship "there is a fellowship that surpasses all others - a fellowship of unity". He went on to suggest that there

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Thanksgiving – November 23, 2000

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will
of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."
~I Thessalonians 5:18~

Now thank we all our God,
With hearts and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom His world rejoices. ~ Rinkart



When things go wrong, I would not be a grumbler,
Complaining, seeing everything as grim;
For when I think of how the Lord has blessed me,
I cannot help but give my praise to Him. ~ Hess

Thank the Lord when trouble comes,
His love and grace expressing;
Grateful praise will strengthen faith,
Turn trials into blessings. ~ DCE

If we were thankful for everything
The way God tells us to be,
What a wonderful change in our living
We would be able to see! ~ Eaker

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever.
Give thanks to the God of gods. His love endures forever.
Give thanks to the Lord of lords. His love endures forever."

Psalm 136: 1-3 (NIV)

As you celebrate this season of Thanksgiving, take time to express your thanks to God through worship. Special services of harvest and thanksgiving include:

50+ Harvest Day
Downtown Thanksgiving Service

GHIMF Thanksgiving Service

Sunday, November 19th at 10:50 a.m. service
November 19, at 7:15 p.m. at First Baptist
Church on Governors Drive
November 22, at 7:00 p.m. at Madkin Chapel
CPCA, Reverend India Scruggs, pastor



ADVENT



ADVENT 2000: December 3 – 24, 2000

ADVENT begins the Christian liturgical year on the Sunday closest to November 30, which is St. Andrew's Day. The season is four Sundays in duration. The Sundays are referred to as "Sundays in Advent".

The advent message comes from the two Latin words, *as venire*, which means "to come to". The message is that God, in Christ, is coming into the world. It includes all time.

In times past, God did come in the Christ-like child in whose honor we celebrate Christmas. Thus, God supplies the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophets. In times present, the individual may experience God coming into their lives for the first time, "new birth," or in the renewal and growth into deeper dimensions of reality. In times to come, we are promised the return of the Christ in his full glory and power as judge of all the world, both the living and the dead.

Advent also bears the admonition that we need to prepare for the sure coming of the Lord. Preparation for the coming Lord must include the following:

REPENTANCE: We must forsake our sins and seek to reform our lifestyles in accordance with God's mandate for right living.

PRAYER: We must pray for the coming of Christ into our personal lives.

PATIENCE: We must watch and wait for the Lord's coming. It may be delayed or it may be soon and sudden. However, His arrival is assured.

The liturgical color for Advent is violet. It is a color that communicates a feeling of quiet dignity, royalty, and repentance. Violet (or purple) is the traditional color of a king's robe. Such a color is most expedient to announce the coming of the King of Kings.

An alternative color for the season is blue, the color symbolizing hope. The Christ coming brings hope of a new and abundant life to all.

ADVENT RESOURCES:

Old Testament passages which allude to a Messianic (Christ) figure whose arrival and reign was yet to be established.

New Testament passages which speak of the arrival of a fulfillment to the Messianic hope in Jesus of Nazareth.

New Testament passages which suggest the return of Jesus as the reigning Christ eternal.

Internet – www.upperroom.org; www.rbc.net

(Advent information taken from the New Members Manual.)



Church School Lesson Overview — December 2000

This month's lesson reviews were written by Brother Lafayette Townsend (3), Brother E. C. Smith (10), Brother Willie Sandifer (17, 24), and Sister Pat Grier (31)

December 3, 2000

Lesson Title: Preparing the Way
Background Scripture: Luke 1:5-25; 3:1-22
Printed Text: Luke 3:2b-18
Key Verse: A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.' Luke 3:4

The ministry of John the Baptist is highlighted by the phrase "Preparing the Way" as he made ready for the arrival of the promised Messiah. John was given the task of creating a climate of expectation in which Jesus could teach and minister effectively. John the Baptist's message speaks loudly to Believers today. He taught that the process of preparing the way for the Messiah was to prepare one's heart through repentance. How much more is this an appropriate way to prepare for Jesus' second coming! Repentance is still required of those who wish to know Jesus as personally as Lord and Savior.

December 10, 2000

Lesson Title: Responding to God
Lesson Scripture: Luke 1:26-38
Printed Text: Luke 1:26-38
Key Verse: And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy Word.—Luke 1:38

Who was Mary? Mary was descended from David. Luke's genealogy of Christ is through His mother. In this lesson, Mary visited her kinswoman Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. Luke tells the story of Jesus' birth from Mary's standpoint, describing her maidenly fears, her humble submission to the will of God. Mary sang praises to God for the favor accorded her in being the mother of the Messiah. Mary was a woman with a quiet spirit, humble, self-control, and the knowledge of the Old Testament. She would not talk to others about mysteries of her experience, but kept all things hidden in her heart.

December 17, 2000

Lesson Title: Praising God
Lesson Scripture: Luke 1:39-56
Printed Text: Luke 1:39-55
Key Verse: And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; Luke 1:46-48

Mary's song of praise, known as the "Magnificat," is the focus of this lesson. The Magnificat, a song of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, is considered the model for Mary's song. She sings praise for what God has done both in her life and for Israel. Mary's words of personal joy had celebrated God's mercy and the song tells us that God's mercy is at work in striking and baffling ways. God is the God of all humanity, of all creation, and in relation to each and every creature.

December 24, 2000

Lesson Title: Welcoming the Savior
Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:1-20
Printed Text: Luke 2:4-20
Key Verse: To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Luke 2:11

This lesson looks at the story of Jesus' birth and the angelic announcement concerning that event to the shepherds. The actions and reactions of the people in this story give a clear picture of the impact of God's grace on human life. As soon as the angels are off the scene, the shepherds decided to go to Bethlehem in order to see exactly what had happened regarding that which they were told. The good news came to the shepherds as a revelation; and in their actions, the shepherds serve as models for all who receive the good news of God's saving grace.

December 31, 2000

Lesson Title: Presented in the Temple
Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:21-40
Printed Text: Luke 2:25-38
Key Verse: 'For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the

(Continued on page 7)



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 6)

face of all peoples; A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel." Luke 2:30-32

This Sunday's lesson focuses on Jesus' earthly parents and the old man Simeon. All three were faithful to God and were able to see God's promises to them come to fruition.

The scripture for this lesson tells of Jesus' parents presenting Him in the temple after the custom of the law — the dedication of the first-born child to God. There in the temple they met Simeon. The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon earlier that he would not see death until he had laid eyes on the 'consolation of Israel', the Messiah. The Holy Spirit then led Simeon to the temple on the same day that Joseph and Mary brought Jesus there. There Simeon held Jesus in his arms and identified Him as the Messiah — the fulfillment of God's promise to His people. Jesus, a mere baby, was the hope of the world.

Joseph and Mary were faithful to the Lord in bringing Jesus to the temple to be dedicated. Simeon was faithful in waiting for the fulfillment of the Lord's promise that he would see the Messiah before he died. We, too, should be faithful in our walk with the Lord because God always keeps His promises.

Pastor's Letter

(Continued from page 1)

time." Jesus is the MIND REGULATOR. Jesus is the BODY HEALER. Jesus is the RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. Let Jesus give you His vision! Let us focus on lifting Him up inside, outside and wherever we go! Taste and see that the Lord is good! Get up wherever you are. Go to Jesus! There is victory in Him!

a.s.a.p
 Always Say A Prayer

GHIMF Revival

(Continued from page 3)

should be a spirit in the church such that if one is not feeling well, "a small smile, pat on the shoulder, or a word of encouragement," would serve to inspire one to "go on a little longer". This fellowship lets people know that they are not alone. He went on to say that God promised "never to leave us alone", referring to the familiar hymn.

He concluded by characterizing the "fellowship of unity" as capable of bringing Christians together "in the great getting up morning". This "great fellowship" was described by quoting the scripture written by John who "saw men coming from all directions". Reverend Hillard indicated that this will be a time when God will find his people and posed the question of whether those in the congregation wanted "to be in that number". The evangelist then sang a testimony of how good God has been and repeated the refrain, "I just say thank you Lord, I won't complain ... God has been good to me, more than this world could ever be ..."

After the hymn of invitation, "Just As I Am", Reverend Hillard asked that the congregation sing the spiritual "Steal Away" as they departed from the service. The benediction would be given on the last night of revival.

The program for the remainder of the week had Reverend Jerry Crutcher presiding and introducing the evangelist on Tuesday, October 24th. The Little Indian Creek P.B. Church Choir provided music for the night. Ushers were from Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian, Conley Chapel CME, and Union Hill Primitive Baptist Church. On Wednesday night, Dr. Scruggs presided and introduced Reverend Hillard. The choir of First Missionary Baptist provided choral selections. The host church also provided ushers, as did St. Elizabeth Cumberland Presbyterian and New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist. The revival culminated on Thursday night. Reverend Dr. Oscar L. Montgomery presided and introduced the evangelist. The choir of Union Hill P.B. Church provided music for the service. Ushers were from Progressive Union M. B. Church, Center Grove United Methodist Church, and Fellowship Presbyterian and Madkins Chapel Cumberland Presbyterian Churches.



Church and Community Announcements



Church School convenes each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. after the Early Morning Worship. Plan to attend with your family.
Brother Willie Sandifer, Superintendent

BIBLE STUDY

Prayer Service and Bible Class meet each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. Lessons are taught by Pastor McCall and the Ministerial Staff.



Youth, young adults and adults, are invited to be a part of the **St. John Praise Dance Ministry**. This newest ministry of St. John was organized in support of the Pentecost and continues to lead the service in praise on the 5th Sunday of each month. This ministry meets on the **third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.**

Join now! Praise Him in song! The choirs of St. John want you, your children, youth and young adults to join in praising God in song. You may join by simply showing up at any of the rehearsals listed below:

Children-Youth Choir.....Saturdays after the 1st, 2nd, & 5th Sundays at 3 p.m.
Gospel Choir.....Last Monday of each month and
Thursday after the 1st Sunday at 6 p.m.
Male Chorus.....Each Friday, except the Friday after the 4th Sunday at 6 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir.....Each Thursday except Thursday after the 1st Sunday
(Rehearsal times are subject to change, periodically)



Heart/Healthy Bowl is the last Saturday of each month at Pin Palace, 2006 Country Club Lane, 6:30 p.m. Information regarding rates for adults and children is located on the bulletin board. Come and join us for fun. For further information, please contact Mrs. Rosa Walker at 852-0813.



Sign up sheets are available in the vestibule for members to join several new ministries at St. John. You may sign up for:
College Praise Choir
Healing Ministry
Office Volunteers (8-12 Monday - Friday)
Homeless Ministry

50+ Harvest Service will be Sunday, November 19, at 10:50 a.m. The preacher for this service will be Reverend Dr. James R. Johnson.

The **Pastor's Aid** will sponsor a **bake sale** on Sunday, November 19, after each service. Also, the Pastor's Aid is seeking new members. Please contact Mrs. Claire Philadelphia for more information.

The **Downtown Thanksgiving Service** will be Sunday, November 19, at 7:15 p.m. at First Baptist Church on Governor's Drive. Brother Rufus Gilmore is the coordinator for St. John.

GHIMF Thanksgiving Service, Wednesday, November 22, 7:00 p.m. at Madkin Chapel CPCA.

Church Conference and Planning Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 28. The election of Trustees for the conference year and the planning of the calendar for the year will be the primary agenda items.

The **annual taste tea**, sponsored by the AMEN Staff, is scheduled for Sunday, December 10th after the 10:50 a.m. worship service. Once again, we are asking members and friends of St. John to submit one or more recipes/dishes that you would like to share. Sister Bridget Floyd and Claire Philadelphia are the co-chairpersons.

Peace on
Earth

December
2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 3:00 p.m. Children- Youth Choir
3 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Deadline for AMEN Articles	4	5	6 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	7	8 8:00 p.m. Male Chorus	9 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 3:00 p.m. Children- Youth Choir
10 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Taste Tea	11	12	13 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	14 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	15 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	16 3:00 p.m. Children- Youth Choir
17 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	18	19	20 5:30 p.m. Praise Dance Ministry 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	21 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	22 8:00 p.m. Male Chorus	23
24 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26	27 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	28	29	30
31 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 p.m. Watch Night						



Important Dates to Remember

November 19	Harvest Sunday, sponsored by Fifty-plus, Reverend Dr. James R. Johnson will preach.
	Downtown Thanksgiving Service, First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive, 7:15 p.m.
November 22	GHIMF Thanksgiving Service, Madkin Chapel CPCA, 7:00 p.m., Reverend India Scruggs, Pastor
November 23	Thanksgiving Day
November 25	South Birmingham-Huntsville Planning Meeting, Handy Chapel, Gadsden, AL, Reverend Jodie Jones, pastor
November 28	Church Conference, Election of Trustees and Church Officers, Annual Planning Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
December 10	Annual Taste Tea, after 10:50 a.m. Worship Service
December 17	Christmas Program

INDNJC

Thought for the Month

"My grace is sufficient for you." 2 Corinthians 12:9

St. John A.M.E. Church
229 Church Street
Huntsville, Alabama 35801
(256) 534-3265
(256) 534-6828 Fax

Return Service Requested

stjohnameh@aol.com

Rt. Reverend Z. L. Grady, Presiding Bishop
Mother Carrie R. Grady, Episcopal Supervisor
Dr. E. L. Blankenship, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

First Quarterly Conference
Church School Anniversary
GHIMF City-wide Revival
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving
Advent

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Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville, AL 35810



March

2001

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	2	3 10:00 a.m. Trustee Board 3:00 p.m. Children-Youth Choir
4 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Deadline for A.M.E.N. Articles	5 9:30 a.m. Fifty Plus	6 Noon Prayer	7 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	8	9 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	10 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 3:00 p.m. Children-Youth Choir
11 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	12	13 Noon Prayer	14 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	15 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	16 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	17 3:00 p.m. Children-Youth Choir 4:00 p.m. YPD
18 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship 4:00 p.m. Stewardess Candlelight March	19	20 Noon Prayer 6:30 p.m. Official Board	21 5:30 Praise Dance Ministry 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	22 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	23 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	24
25 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship 4:00 p.m. St. Matthew, Fackler	26	27 Noon Prayer	28 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast	29 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	30	31 

Praise Dance Workshop — January 27, 2001



Children's Activity Page

Name _____ Skill: Problem-solving math

Valentine Fun

In each group, find the one that is different from the other three. Color the space it is in.

1.		2.	
3.		4.	
5.		6.	

Brainwork! Tell someone why each is different.

VISIONS 2000 – Richard Allen Foundation

The Richard Allen Foundation is a non-profit service organization based on the legacy of Bishop Richard Allen, founder of the Free African Society and the African Methodist Episcopal Church, organizations which served the spiritual, economic, and educational needs of his people through self help. Our purpose is to continue the legacy by promoting economic development, education, and empowerment for youth, adults and seniors. This goal will be accomplished through the creation of a financial and economic base serving the needs of African peoples and enabling us to meet the global challenges of the 21st century.

WE HAVE MADE OUR FIRST INVESTMENT IN A HOTEL PROPERTY

With Your Help – We Can Do More



Founding Sponsors are individuals who have given a one time \$100 contribution to help seed the creation of a fund to acquire **ownership in hotels** and provide preferential investment opportunities.

Ownership in hotels will:

- Recycle dollars in our community.
- Increase employment opportunities.
- Create numerous vending opportunities for entrepreneurs.
- Provide income to support community programs, etc.

St. John members who are founding sponsors of Visions 2000 are Pastor & Mrs. McCall, Col. & Mrs. E. C. Smith and Nedra McDaniel. Please contact one of these sponsors for your contribution form to invest in this vision.

Vision 2000 Richard Allen Foundation 110 S. LaBrea Avenue Suite 415 Inglewood, CA 90301
Phone: 800-777-1028 Email: rafv2k@yahoo.com website: www.richardallenfoundation.org



9th District

9th District Celebrates
Founder's Day

Under the Spirit-filled, Christ-centered, soul-winning leadership of **Bishop Z. L. Grady** and our Episcopal Supervisor, **Mother Carrie R. Grady**, the Ninth Episcopal District had one of its best celebrations of Founder's Day. On Friday, February 9, 2001, the celebration was held at St. John A.M.E. Church, Birmingham, Alabama where Reverend Dr. Kamie C. Smith is pastor. On Saturday, February 10, 2001, the celebration continued at the (Daniel Payne) Nichols Grady School of Religion Site in Birmingham. Clergy, missionaries, lay, youth and our guests all helped to make this one of the Ninth District's best celebrations of our founding.

The workshops centered on creative, provocative and well-planned lessons of the RAPTURE. Reverend Dr. Stella Stocker, Director, Nichols-Grady School of Religion, presented Reverend Walter Moon, Pastor of Hopewell A.M.E. Church, (Kingston) who led in the empowering teaching ministry. On Friday afternoon Reverend Pompey and Reverend Dr. F. Duncombe, 9th District Prison Ministry Coordinators, presented the Regional Director of the Prison Fellowship who gave a brief motivational discussion.

The empowering, Spirit-filled, and memorable sermons given from God during the celebration were delivered by the following ministers:

Friday Noon Worship -

Reverend Carl McDaniel, Pastor, St. Paul A.M.E. Church, Lanett, Alabama.

Friday Evening Worship -

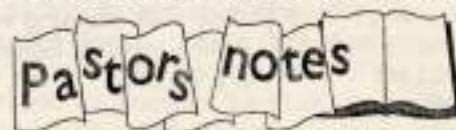
Reverend Dr. Ben Gay, Presiding Elder Allanta Conference - 6th Episcopal District

Saturday Closing Worship-

Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor McCall's Letter



"Lord if" or "Yes Lord"

(John 11:21-27)

Much like Martha, Jesus guides us to accept Him as the Resurrection and the Life. It is Jesus who moves us from "Lord if" to "Yes Lord." Do these words remind you of your own self talk: Lord, if you give me this; if you get me out of this...? Lord, if you move this burden, heal this illness, solve this problem, help me through this difficulty; Lord, if you help me to move up to where I can be useful, then I will serve you, magnify you, praise you.

Martha and Mary realized and became living demonstrations of the power of moving from "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died," to "Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Christ." (John 11:21,27)

We can also become "if-fy" people who become "salty" rather than the salt of the earth; "if-fy" people who prefer following a "shadow" rather than being a "light" that leads others to the Lord. One of the challenges of LENT and encountering Jesus any time is to eliminate the "ifs" and embrace Christ. **With His Spirit we can say Yes to His Teachings, Yes to His Life, Yes to His Death, and Yes to His Resurrection.**

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March for Jesus	Page 11

*"Saving,
Sacrificing
and Serving
for Christ"*

YPD Convention Held In Spite of the Storm

By Glenda Sconiers, YPD Director

A severe storm downed trees, damaged buildings, and interrupted power, but it did not stop the spirit-filled YPD Convention. This annual state-wide meeting was held at Bryant Chapel AME Church in Bessemer on Saturday, February 17, 2001.

Our YPD'ers shared the following remarks regarding the convention.

Shanti Owens ~ "We discussed five principles of purpose, prayer, passion, patience, and endurance. We discussed challenges like peer pressure, drugs, jealousy, violence, racism, sex, and criticism. I learned that it is not easy out here, and whatever my dream is I'm going to stick to it."

Adrina Sconiers ~ "During our workshop the speaker asked us about our challenges, what we want to be when we grow up, and what we are doing to get there."

Shannon Lott ~ "I learned to have patience and passion for other people."

9th District Celebrates Founder's Day

(Continued from page 1)

St. John A.M.E. Church, Huntsville, Alabama

Pastor McCall substituted for Bishop Adam J. Richardson whose plane was cancelled in Texas.

An offering was received during the celebration for the Daniel Payne Building Fund. Additional funds will be collected at the Mid-Year Convocation in Opelika in March.

The Ninth District Motto: "Saving, Sacrificing and Serving for Christ" was indeed a living reality throughout this year's celebration.

Mark Your Calendars !

Annual Stewardess Candlelight March

The Annual Stewardess Candlelight March will be held **Sunday, March 18, 2001 at 4:00 p.m.** at the church. The preacher will be the **Reverend Kenneth B. Lankford, Jr.**, pastor of Fletcher Chapel P. B. Church, Greenbrier, Alabama. All Stewards, Stewardesses, Deaconesses, Ministers, Officers, and Members are expected to attend. The theme is "Light a Candle! Don't Curse the Darkness."

Mrs. Mable McCall is the president of the Stewardess Board.

Matthew Chapel Church Anniversary

St. John will lead in the **Church Anniversary Services at Matthew Chapel A.M.E. Church, Fackler, Alabama on Sunday, March 25, 2001, at 4:00 p.m.** Reverend **Vicki Sanders** is pastor. All Choir Members, Ministers, Ushers, Stewards, Trustees, Officers, and Members are asked to attend and support this event. **Pastor McCall will preach** and the Stewards will lead the devotion.

Spring Youth Revival April 9-11, 6:30 p.m.

The **Spring Youth Revival** will be held **Monday, April 9 – Wednesday, April 11, 2001 at 6:30 p.m. nightly.** The guest evangelist is **Reverend C. C. Cummings**, pastor St. Paul AME Church (Smithfield) Birmingham.

St. John's 116th Church Anniversary

The **116th Church Anniversary** of St. John will be celebrated on **Sunday, April 29, 2001 at 10:00 a.m.** There will be only one worship service. The preacher will be the **Right Reverend Z. L. Grady**, Presiding Prelate of the Ninth Episcopal District of the AME Church.

Mrs. Lydia Owens is the Church Anniversary chairperson.

Church School Lesson Overview – April 2001

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by **Lula Rochelle (1st)**, **Willie Sandifer (2nd)**, **William Bell and Brittney Bell (3rd Sunday)**, and **Jason Brown (4th and 5th Sundays)**.

Sunday, April 1, 2001

Lesson Title: Empowered to Serve

Lesson Scripture: Acts 6:1 – 8:3

Printed Text: Acts 6:1-8, 7:55 – 8:1a

Key Verse: The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. Acts 6:7

As the early Christians moved forward with the gospel, it was inevitable that they would run into opposition from governmental authorities, especially from the religious leaders who were angry and jealous of their wisdom and power. In the early days of the church, it was customary to make daily disbursements to the poor widows of the church who had no other means of support. Some of the believers who were Hellenists (i.e., newly converted Jews) complained because their widows were not receiving the same treatment as the widows of Hebrews from Jerusalem and Judea. You see that is how the devil works. If he cannot destroy God's plan by attacks from the outside, he will seek to overthrow believers by attacks of dissension from within. This is illustrated in this lesson.

The twelve apostles realized that with the increasing growth of the church, something had to be done about handling these matters. However, they themselves did not want to abandon the ministry of the word of God in order to handle business matters, so they recommended the church designate seven spiritual men to handle the temporal affairs of the church. Out of the seven men chosen, only two of them were well known to us—Stephen and Phillip. Stephen, who is the primary focus of this lesson, became the first martyr of the church. Opposition to Stephen's powerful ministry arose from the synagogue. These were places where Jews gathered on the Sabbath for instruction in the law. These zealous Jews proved no match for Stephen as they challenged him. Stephen was a Samaritan who had been converted to Christianity. Yet, he was considered a man "full of faith and of the

Holy Ghost" (Acts 6:5). Since these Jewish leaders could not silence Stephen, they secretly brought on false witnesses to accuse Stephen of blasphemy against Moses and God. (Acts 6:13-14). However, as Stephen stood before the Sanhedrin Council, they heard the charges, but as they looked at Stephen, they saw not the face of a demon, but the face of an angel. They saw someone fully surrendered to the Lord, determined to proclaim the truth, and more concerned with what God thinks than with what men may say.

As Christians, we are called to serve and forgive. This lesson "Empowered to Serve," reminds us that we are responsible for serving, teaching, witnessing, and sharing the "Word of God" with others. Just as Jesus commanded the disciples in (Matthew 28:19-20) i.e., "The Great Commission," it becomes our responsibility to spread the good news of Jesus Christ at home, in our local communities, as well as throughout the world.

April 8, 2001

Lesson Title: Called to Witness to All People

Lesson Scripture: Acts 8:4-8, 26-35

Printed Text: Acts 8:4-8, 26-35

Key Verse: Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Acts 8:4

This lesson focused on persecuted believers who had fled Jerusalem, preaching about Christ wherever they went. Philip encountered an Ethiopian official who wanted help in understanding a portion of Isaiah as he returned home from worshipping in Jerusalem. Philip linked the messianic prophecy to Jesus, and the man joyously responded by asking to be baptized.

Sunday, April 15, 2001

Lesson Title: Proclaiming The Risen Lord

Lesson Scripture: Luke 24:1-12 Acts 9:1-31

Printed Text: Luke 24:1-10; Acts 9:19b-22, 26-28

Key Verse: Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; He has risen!

Jesus Christ Is Alive! This lesson is very im-

(Continued on page 4)





Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 3)

portant because it talks about and describes when and what happened when Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Three days after Jesus was crucified on the cross for our sins, he rose from the dead. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James, went to the tomb where Jesus was put after His death. They went to prepare Jesus' body for burial, and found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. They saw no one. Then two angels appeared and said that Jesus had been raised from the dead. The women were astonished at what the angels had told them. The women left the tomb and told all these things to the eleven apostles and the other disciples.

This lesson also covers the account of Saul's conversion on the Damascus road. After several days in Damascus, Saul proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God. Barnabas helped Saul by his witnessing and boldly preaching in the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus also depends on each Christian believer to carry on his earthly mission, to love one another, help one another, witness to each other about God's great love, and to win souls for Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. **Jesus Christ Is Alive!**

Sunday, April 22, 2001

Lesson Text: Gentiles Receive the Spirit

Lesson Scripture: Acts 10: 1-11:18

Printed Text: Acts 10: 30-40, 43-48

Key Verse: God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. - Acts 10:34-35 (NRSV)

One of the longest surviving problems that has served to separate even believers from each other is INTOLERANCE or RACISM. In this lesson the main character is Cornelius, who has the great distinction of becoming the first Gentile to hear the Gospel. Cornelius, a centurion, sought out God in order to learn more about God and also because he needed a savior. Peter was to witness to Cornelius but was reluctant to do so because of the long-standing division between Jews and Gentiles. God worked through Peter and opened his eyes to God's desire to add Cornelius to the

(Continued on page 6)

Usher's Corner

By Lanita Slaton

March 18 - Senior Women
8:00 a.m. Martha Smith, Mildred Patton
10:50 a.m. Agnes Bailey, Carol Ball

March 25 - Youth Ushers
8:00 a.m. Vivian Humphrey, Lanita Slaton
10:50 a.m. Jill Burwell, Brenda Lott

April 1 - Senior Men
Communion
8:00 a.m. Vanona Walton, J. Washington
10:50 a.m. Eleanor Burnett, Brenda Lott

April 8 - Youth Ushers
8:00 a.m. Vivian Humphrey, Lanita Slaton
10:50 a.m. Agnes Bailey, Carol Ball

April 15 - Senior Women
8:00 a.m. Rose Thomas
10:50 a.m. C. Purifoy, Maple Smiley

April 22 - Youth Ushers
8:00 a.m. Martha Smith, Mildred Patton
10:50 a.m. Jill Burwell, Brenda Lott

Note: If you are not able to serve your scheduled Sunday, please ask someone to serve in your place or contact Brother William Bell.

'Walk for JEAN' Team Gearing Up for Another Walk-a-thon

The 'Walk for JEAN' team is gearing up again to participate in the MS Walk-a-thon this year. Your support of this important fund-raiser would be most appreciated. Last year the team ranked in the top five teams in Huntsville for funds raised and all thanks to your valuable contributions.

The Walk is March 24th and the team will be collecting pledges the week after the walk. Just let any member of the team know if you can support the Walk with a pledge or by walking with the team. Contact team members Pat Grier, Agnes Bailey, Jackie Grier, Vanona Walton, or Kenneth and Lorraine Parham for more information.

South Birmingham - Huntsville District Conference

April 6-7, 2001

St. John A.M.E. Church Huntsville, Alabama

Presiding Elder E. L. Blankenship, Presiding

Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Host Pastor

Friday, April 6

Morning	- Opening Worship
Afternoon	- Business Session - Workshops
Evening	- Welcome Program - Community Night Reverend Anthony Robinson, pastor of Phillips CME Church will preach Phillips CME Church Choir will sing

Saturday, April 7

Morning	- Annual Prayer Breakfast - Workshops - YPD Youth Panel on Student Violence
Afternoon	- Closing Worship - St. John Children-Youth Choir will sing

WELCOME

Pastor and Mrs. McCall, officers, and members of St. John A.M.E. Church Huntsville welcome Presiding Elder and Mrs. Blankenship, ministers, ministers' spouses, delegates, lay, missionaries, YPD, friends, and guests to St. John. We pray traveling mercies for you as you journey and pray that you are richly blessed during the Annual District Conference. If you need directions or hotel information, please contact the church office at (256) 534-3265 between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.

Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 4)

kingdom. Reluctantly Peter did visit with Cornelius and assured him that God shows no partiality. Peter continued to reach out to Gentiles and baptized them in the name of the Lord.

Even today, we are separated by our legal, religious, and social barriers that keep us apart and hamper our communications. We worship on different days, at different times, we are even buried in separate cemeteries. But, be assured that there is no black heaven, no white heaven, no black God nor white God, there is only GOD. A GOD for ALL who believe in Him and keep His commandments.

Sunday, April 29, 2001

Lesson Title: The Church in Antioch

Lesson Scripture: Acts 11:19-30

Printed Text: same

Key Verse: While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said "set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Acts 13:2 (NRSV)

Following the stoning death of Stephen the followers of Jesus scattered to other areas. Some went to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch (of Syria). In Antioch a church formed which consisted mostly of Gentiles. This was unheard of, but served notice that God's message is for everyone and can be spread by anyone. The church in Antioch continued to grow and attracted the attention of the leaders in Jerusalem. Barnabas, known as the encourager, was sent to Antioch to help the church mature. Due to the excitement caused by the devotion and commitment of the church at Antioch, Barnabas sought out Saul to assist him in developing the church. They worked together and the church continued to grow.

When the great famine came to the land as prophesied, the church at Antioch shined even brighter. The church assisted those in other areas by sending gifts to the suffering brethren in Judea who had already suffered mightily due to their persecution for being Christians. After the church at Antioch had matured God separated Barnabas and Saul

(Continued on page 11)

St. John Begins Lent with Ash Wednesday Service

LENTEN SEASON covers the forty-six day period between Ash Wednesday and the eve of Easter. Traditionally on this day, ashes have been placed on the foreheads of Christians as a symbol of the beginning of the season. The ashes are used to make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the believer and are from the charred remains of the palm branches used on Palm Sunday the previous year.

Lent itself excludes the six Sundays and is, therefore, only forty days. Our worship services on Sundays are weekly commemorations of the first Easter and the proclamation that Christ is risen. The date of the beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is determined by the date of Easter.

Ash Wednesday Service was held on **February 28 at 6:30 p.m.** in the sanctuary. The call to worship, a call and response of commitment to Christ, was led by Sister Judith Gardner. Prayer was offered by Brother Claudewell Campbell. The responsive scripture reading from Psalm 51:1-12 was led by Brother Raymond Nomel. Songs during the service were centered on repentance, suffering and commitment and included "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross", "I am on the Battlefield for My Lord", and "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior."

Pastor McCall introduced the preacher for the hour. Brother David Perry brought a spirit-filled message entitled "The Dove Has Landed" with text from Genesis 8:6-12.

The ceremony of the ashes followed the invitation to discipleship and the service concluded with Love Feast.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51:17

Lenten Meditation*:

Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

*From daily devotions during Lent from Christianbook.com.



*March for Jesus /
Jesus Day 2001*

*Be a part of Huntsville's
March for Jesus 2001*

Saturday, June 2, 10 a.m.

The march will start from St. John.

The theme for Jesus Day 2001:

...a day on earth as it is in Heaven

No one goes hungry

No child is fatherless

and the streets are filled with singers

Jesus Day promotes a lifestyle of doing what Jesus did by providing an entry-level experience of serving the community in Jesus' name. By joining with believers all around the world and throughout the community, individuals and congregations demonstrate the gospel through millions of acts of kindness and deliver a strong message about how much God loves the world.

Coordinators for St. John are **Brother William Bell** and **Sister Nedra McDaniel**. Contact them for more information about the march as well as how you can participate in the planning, the march and the Jesus Day activities following the march.

March for Jesus Huntsville

*P.O. Box 878 Huntsville Alabama 35804-878
(256) 859 - 6738*

Web Site: www.marchforjesus-hsv.org

Email: info@marchforjesus-hsv.org

Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 6)

so that they might begin new tasks for the Lord. There were new leaders of various backgrounds in the church who were now able to continue the work that had been started.

The church at Antioch was a reflection of the leaders God had sent to it. The congregation responded to needs in the same manner as did its spiritual leaders. Are these traits present in your leader and if so, as a member are you following that lead?

Pastor McCall Preaches the Gospel Beyond the Walls of St. John

Pastor McCall has been invited to preach at several services beyond the walls of St. John over the past thirty (30) days. On each occasion, he has allowed the Holy Spirit to use him as a vessel to spread the Gospel.

When Bishop Richardson's flight to Birmingham was canceled, Bishop Grady called on Pastor McCall to preach at the Saturday service for the **Ninth District's Founder's Day Celebration** on February 10, 2001. With one hour's notice, Pastor McCall delivered a powerful message entitled "Break Every Yoke" with text from Isaiah 58:6 and Matthew 11:28-30.

On Saturday, February 24, Pastor McCall preached the sermon for 11 a.m. service at **First Seventh Day Adventist Church** on Stringfield Road. The order of service was led by Pastor Jones. This service was their annual Community Service where they invite ministers from other denominations in the community to participate in the order of service. It was an honor for Pastor McCall to be selected to bring the message.

On Sunday, February 25, Pastor McCall preached the message at the **Black History Program** held at 3 p.m. at **Little Indian Creek P.B. Church** on Indian Creek Road. Reverend Jerry L. Crutcher is the pastor. Steward Otha Owens offered prayer, Reverend Dr. James R. Johnson read scripture, and the Gospel Choir rendered music. This set the tone for the message by Pastor McCall. His sermon was entitled "From Sir to Savior Is All About Relationships" with text from John 4:4-14.

Pastor McCall will continue to spread the word in the community as he preaches the Anniversary Sermon at **Matthew Chapel A.M.E. Church**, Fackler, Alabama on Sunday, March 25, at 4:00 p.m. Reverend Vicki Sanders is the pastor of Matthew Chapel.

*"Go preach My gospel," saith the lord.
"Bid the whole earth My grace receive.
Explain to them My sacred word;
Bid them believe, obey, and live"*

Important Dates to Remember



- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| March 16-17 | 9th District Mid-Year Convocation, St. Luke AME Church, Opelika, AL |
| March 18 | Stewardess Candlelight March, 4:00 p.m. |
| March 19 | Official Board, 7 p.m. |
| March 24 | North Alabama Conference Lay Organization Annual Spring Luncheon, Birmingham, Alabama |
| March 25 | Church Anniversary, 4:00 p.m., Pastor McCall, preaching, Matthew Chapel AME Church, Fackler, AL, Reverend Vicki Sanders, Pastor |
| April 1 | Daylight Savings Time Begins, spring forward one hour |
| April 6-7 | South Birmingham-Huntsville District Conference, St. John AME Church, Huntsville, Presiding Elder E. L. Blankenship, presiding |
| April 8 | Palm Sunday |
| April 9-11 | Youth Spring Revival, 6:30 p.m., Reverend C. C. Cummings, Evangelist |
| April 15 | Easter Sunday |

Thought for the Month – Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" –John 11:25-26

INDNJC

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 Dr. E. L. Blankenship, Presiding Elder
 Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
 6305 Matic Rd.
 Huntsville, AL 35810

9th District Founder's Day

YPD Conference

Upcoming Services

Easter Special Features

ST. JOHN A.M.E.N. NEWSLETTER



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 6 Issue 11

November 2001

Officers Appointed and Elected for New Conference Year

Officers for the 2001-2002 conference year have been appointed, confirmed, and elected.

On Sunday, November 4, Pastor McCall appointed the Stewards and they were confirmed by Presiding Elder Blankenship.

The Stewards are:

Jerry Baldwin
William Carl Bell, Sr.
Everett E. Brooks, Sr.
James I. Dawson
John T. Gibson, Sr.
Rufus Gilmore, III
Patricia Grier
James O. Heyward, Sr.
Jeanette Jones
Nedra L. McDaniel
Otha Owens, Sr.
Clifton Pearson
Willie Sandifer
Eddie C. Sherrod
E. C. Smith, Sr.
Martha Smith
Vanona Walton

Steward Emeritus

Arthur A. Burks, Sr.

The Trustees were elected at a church conference on Thursday, November 8. The following Trustees were elected:

Everett Brooks, Jr.
Wilbert Brownlow
W. M. Clark
Phyllis Conner
Bridget Floyd

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor McCall's Letter

"Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon." Isaiah 55:6-7

As we know, America underwent a post-traumatic syndrome after the events of September 11. We are still healing nationally. Embedded in our psychic and minds are the continual media replays of the airplane slamming into the World Trade Center Twin Tower. And as we celebrate Veterans' Day, let us remain thankful to God for all those who nobly and sacrificially gave their lives to protect the freedom many of us often take for granted.

As we continue to heal nationally and as we pray and support those commissioned and sent to deter the power of evil from the world, let us also embrace the changes God makes in our lives. He heals our wounds and empowers graciously our spirits and resolve to seek Him while he may be found.

God still heals us in *HIS WORD*, in *HIS NAME*, and at the *CROSS*, we find real life, not false substitutes, with our best friend, Jesus Christ. We find forgiveness in Him. We find a future with certainty and not fear and by His stripes we are healed. Let GOD'S NAME be praised for the healing He is doing.

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Officers Appointed and Elected

(Continued from page 1)

Earl Griffis
Randy Love
Pearlean Myhand
Theodore Tyson
Kenneth Parham
Glenn Phippen
Lula Rochelle
Lynn Sherrod
Bessie Smith
Terry Speight
Lauretta Teague
Lee Williams, II

The following officers were also elected during the church conference:

James O. Heyward, Secretary
Cora Speight, Financial Secretary
Nedra McDaniel, Treasurer

Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom His world rejoices;
Who, from our mothers' arms,
Hath blessed us on our way,
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

All praise and thanks to God,
The Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns
With them in highest heaven,
The one eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adore,
The thus it was, is now,
And shall be evermore. Amen.

— Martin Rinkart

Pastor's Annual Report

Copies of the Pastor's 2001 Annual Report are available from the church office. The report is also published (in color) on the Internet at <http://members.aol.com/stjohnameh2/index.html>.



Bishop Kirkland Featured at GHIMF Annual Fall Revival

The Right Reverend T. Larry Kirkland, Ecumenical Officer of the AME Church, was the featured evangelist for the GHIMF Fall Revival. The revival services were held at First Missionary Baptist Church, October 29th through November 1st. Reverend Julius Scruggs is the pastor of the host church. Various church choirs and gospel singers provided music each night of revival. On Monday night Pastor McCall presided and introduced the evangelist. The Senior Ushers of St. John served on Monday night as well.

Bishop Kirkland brought the word of God interspersed with humor that emphasized the points of his sermons. Each sermon seemed to be most appropriate for the times in which we live. The first sermon was "A Remedy for a Troubled Heart" taken from the text of John 14: 1-4. Tuesday night he spoke on "The Three Steps to Personal Revival," taken from Nehemiah 8: 1-10. The third night Bishop Kirkland spoke on the topic "The Cutting Place" based on the actions of Elijah in 1 Kings 17: 1-6. On the final night Bishop Kirkland spoke from Luke 13: 1-9 regarding "A Call to Repentance".

Those in attendance, as well as the host clergy, demonstrated a great appreciation of Bishop Kirkland. He had previously spoken in January 2001 at the GHIMF service celebrating the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Emancipation Proclamation. In these days and times, the community clearly needs a revival to encourage perseverance in faith and to grow closer to God, which is the only answer in trying times like these.

Godly Snippet!

Don't get so busy enjoying today's victory that tomorrow ends up in defeat.

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Hebrews 2:1

Keep the faith!

Sister J.

Deaconess Corner

LET US BREAK BREAD TOGETHER

Heavenly Father, hear our thanks
For Thy love and care;
Help us all to show our love
And each blessing share.

"Give us this day our bread." (Matthew 6:11)

Not only that we have bread to eat but also that we have bread to share. For this we thank You, dear God.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Thank we all our Father, that the hungry-hearted do not have to go hungry, for Jesus is the Bread of Life. Feed on Him! He supplies every need.

"And Jesus said unto them, 'I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.'" (John 6:35)

Thanks be to God!

Godly Snippet

I have held many things in my hands and lost them all; but the things I have placed in God's hands, those I will always possess.

I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.

2 Timothy 1:12

Keep the faith!!!

Sister J.

Thanksgiving Services Planned



The Fifty-Plus Auxiliary of St. John AME Church will celebrate its annual Harvest Sunday Services on Sunday, November 18, 2001, at the 10:50 A.M. service. Brother Darrell Ezell will deliver the sermon and the Children/Youth Choir of St. John AME Church, directed by Mrs. Ellen Washington, will render special music.



Plan now to attend the 21st Annual Downtown Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, November 18, 2001 at 4:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church on Governors Drive. A light supper will be served at 5:00 p.m. Please contact Sister Lorna Howell at 859-6550 for more information.



THANKSGIVING The Annual Community GHIMF Thanksgiving Service will be held at St. John AME Church on Wednesday, November 21, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. Reverend Dr. Wendell Thompson will preach. Reverend John Clay is the president of the Greater Huntsville Interdenominational Fellowship (GHIMF).

WMS News

Sister Erica Mayes was elected first vice-president and Sister Jackie Grier was elected secretary of the Agnes-Cooper Area Women's Missionary Society at the Area Meeting in Scottsboro on Saturday, November 10, 2001.



Bake Sale November 18

The Pastor's Aid Auxiliary will sponsor a Bake Sale on Sunday, November 18, after each service. You may contact Sister Claire Philadelphia for more information at 534-0295.

STEWARDSHIP & TITHING

Excerpts from the New Member's Manual

When you tithe, you return to God one tenth of His money.

"Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." Luke 6:38 (NRSV)

Tithing is a biblical term which means giving ones first fruits to God. It is the first tenth of one's income. Tithing is a voluntary and systemic way of returning to God part of what He has given us. It refers to the total gross income from any source including salary, stocks and bonds, interest income and dividends, etc.

It is also necessary that we as a people begin to realize the significance of a "self tithe." This means that you give your tithe to God first and then you tithe 10% of your income to yourself by saving 10% of your earnings. One then begins to learn how to live on less and experience a victorious life because you have been obedient to God, for you are sowing the seeds of a good steward. Basically, you are in charge of God's gifts to you.

Tithing is a spiritual approach. When we tithe, we are expressing faith in God and we are trusting God to keep His promise. Not to tithe is blatant disobedience to God's Word and is equal to robbing God and results in a curse.

Malachi 3:8-10 (NRSV) states:
"Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, 'How are we robbing you? In your tithes and offering! You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me - the whole nation of you!'"

"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of Heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing."

ADVENT

ADVENT begins the Christian liturgical year on the Sunday closest to November 30. The season is four Sundays in duration.

The Sundays are referred to as "Sundays in Advent". The advent message comes from the two Latin words, *as venire*, which means "to come to". The message is that God, in Christ, is coming into the world. It includes all time.

Advent bears the admonition that we need to prepare for the sure coming of the Lord. Preparation for the coming Lord must include the following:

REPENTANCE: We must forsake our sins and seek to reform our lifestyles in accordance with God's mandate for right living.

PRAYER: We must pray for the coming of Christ into our personal lives.

PATIENCE: We must watch and wait for the Lord's coming. It may be delayed or it may be soon and sudden. However, His arrival is assured.

The liturgical color for Advent is *violet*. It is a color that communicates a feeling of quiet dignity, royalty, and repentance. Violet (or purple) is the traditional color of a king's robe. Such a color is most expedient to announce the coming of the King of Kings.

During this season of Advent 2001, use the time for you and your family to grow closer to God. There are many Advent resource guides available at Christian bookstores to guide you through a series of studies. The lighting of the Advent wreath and reading of Biblical passages relating to peace, love, hope and joy are also encouraged during this season.



View the AMEN
on the Web!

View the newsletter on the web at <http://members.aol.com/stjohnameh/amen/index.html>.



There Is Power in Prayer!!!

By Sister Judith Gardner

We can all agree that we are living in perilous times, but let us not forget that we serve an awesome God. And He is still in control of whatever situations are happening around us.

This is not a time for us to be fearful, but this is a time to know who we are in Christ Jesus. We have power and authority because Jesus said, "all power and authority has been given to me, and I give you power and I give you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions."

With the threat of germicidal war, recession, and more terrorism, let us remember where our help comes from. Our help comes from the Lord. The Lord is always looking for some one to stand in the gap, to hold back the evil of this world. This is a time for us to pray, for the fervent effectual prayers of the righteous availeth much.

Before Esther was used to deliver her people, she prayed; before David defeated Goliath, he prayed; before the crossing of the Red Sea, Moses prayed; while in the fiery furnace, the three Hebrew boys prayed; before the lions had lock jaw, Daniel prayed. While Jesus hung on the cross for your sins and mine, He prayed.

Prayer is our most effective weapon, use it for the pulling down of strong holds. "If my people, who are called by my name, would humble themselves, and pray, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and heal the land." II Chronicles 7:14. Meet the conditions, and God will provide the blessings.

a. s. a. p. Always Say A Prayer

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7

AMEN: A Taste of St. John and Friends

Reserve yours now!

A great cookbook is a source of favorite recipes - and a source of pride. We have made every effort to create a well-organized, attractive, and easy-to-read cookbook. The cookbook includes recipes for the physical and spiritual body. It has a unique spiritual touch. We would like every member or household to have a copy of this cookbook.

We expect delivery in a few weeks, just in time for our Fifth Annual Taste Tea on December 9, 2001. We are now taking advance orders. Cookbooks may be purchased at both Sunday worship services. The cookbooks are \$6.00 each and will make wonderful gifts for weddings, birthdays, and the upcoming holidays.

The proceeds will be used to purchase a microwave oven for the kitchen in the fellowship hall, serving utensils, and other items that will be useful in preparing and serving food for church functions. We feel this is for a worthwhile cause.

Please reserve copies by contacting Sisters Bridget Floyd, Meagan Speight, or Claire Philadelphia.



5th Annual Taste
Tea
December 9th

The St. John AMEN Staff will host the 5th Annual Taste Tea on Sunday, December 9 after the 10:50 a.m. worship service.

Members and friends are invited to prepare favorite dishes (along with the recipes) for the tea. Recipes that have not already been published in the AMEN will be published in one of the monthly issues.

This year we are encouraging members who have recipes in the cookbook to prepare one or more of these dishes for the tea.



Church School Lesson Overview — December 2001

This month's lesson reviews were written by Church School Superintendent, Brother Willie J. Sandifer (2nd, 9th, 16th and 30th) and Sister Pat Grier (23rd).

December 2, 2001

Lesson Title: The Servant's Mission
Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 49:1-7
Printed Text: Isaiah 49:1-6

Key Verse: And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Isaiah 49:6

In this lesson we examine the role of God's servant, who has been given a mission to bring hope and light to others. Isaiah, perhaps the most important Book of the Old Testament, reveals God's plan more completely for His people than any other prophet in history. Isaiah focuses on the Messiah and His love for His people despite their rebellion and disobedience. The "Servant" is not just the nation of people, but One who has been given a special assignment that will benefit every nation.

December 9, 2001

Lesson Title: The Peaceful Kingdom
Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-9
Printed Text: Isaiah 11:1-9

Key Verse: The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. Isaiah 11:6

We are reminded that believers are now a part of the New Kingdom where righteousness, peace, and joy abound. In Isaiah 11, the prophet is given a glimpse of God's prophetic future. Though Israel had rebelled against God and did not want to obey Him, God chose not to leave them in their sins. His promise to David was sure. One of David's sons would sit on the throne and rule God's people forever. Isaiah helps us understand that God's purpose for Israel would be fulfilled

in Jesus Christ who would rule the eternal kingdom with power and authority as King and Lord.

December 16, 2001

Lesson Title: Comfort for God's People
Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 40:1-11
Print: Isaiah 40:1-5, 8-11

Key Verse: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the work of our God shall stand for ever. Isaiah 40:8

Isaiah gives Hezekiah a strong and prophetic word of God's future judgement on the king. Because of his lack of faith in God and Israel's sinful ways, the Babylonians would conquer Jerusalem, God's people, and their treasures and take them to their land. The judgment was also against King Hezekiah's sons and the generations to come. Isaiah prophesied that they would be eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon. This prophecy was fulfilled in Daniel 1-3.

December 23, 2001

Lesson Title: God's Servant Brings Hope
Lesson Scripture: Luke 2: 8-20
Printed Text: Isaiah 9:2-7

Key Verse: 'For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' Isaiah 9:6

This Sunday's lesson is about HOPE. On this Sunday before Christmas, the lesson focuses on the hope that we all have because Jesus came into the world and gave meaning to the season of Christmas.

The lesson Scriptures are taken from the Old Testament (Isaiah 9:2-7) and the New Testament (Luke 2:8-20). The Scripture from Isaiah tells of the hope and promise of a "great light" that would come and bring the world out of its darkness of sin. Chapter 9 of Isaiah tells of the promise of a child who would reign on David's

(Continued on page 11)



Thanksgiving Thoughts

By Sherry Patton

Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving is ...	the time for thanks.	Kyle Speight, 8 years
Thanksgiving is ...	good food, fun with family.	Kevin Speight, 8 years
Thanksgiving is ...	time to give thanks.	Danielle Howell, 11 years
Thanksgiving is ...	a day to give love.	Kianah Israel, 10 years
Thanksgiving is ...	family gatherings.	Geoffrey Brown, 12 years
Thanksgiving is ...	visits from friends.	Adrina Sconiers, 10 years
Thanksgiving is ...	giving to others and family.	Jalisa Williams
Thanksgiving is ...	prayer, families giving to others.	Shanti Owens, 17 years
Thanksgiving is ...	giving thanks and counting blessings.	Ashley Ball, 15 years
Thanksgiving is ...	time for families to share big meals.	Jamal Williams, 17 years
Thanksgiving is ...	a time to reflect the goodness of God.	Phyllis Conner
Thanksgiving is ...	a time to share.	Wallace Parham, 5 years
Thanksgiving is ...	prayers and good food.	Alexis Howell, 6 years
Thanksgiving is ...	giving thanks to God for His many blessings.	Mable McCall
Thanksgiving is ...	remembrance, love, and reconciliation.	Lee Williams, II
Thanksgiving is ...	thanking God for the world.	Michaela Brown, 8 years
Thanksgiving is ...	groups of people coming together to pray.	Elany Washington, 8 years
Thanksgiving is ...	your family and friends.	Jessica Nelson, 8 years
Thanksgiving is ...	a constant attitude of gratitude.	Gale McCall
Thanksgiving is ...		(you fill in the blank)

Whatever Thanksgiving is to you, this Thanksgiving take time to make a list of the things for which you are thankful and pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God, from whom all blessings flow.

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*



Putting Faith into Action 2001 - Williams Family Home

Habitat for Humanity of Madison County, St. John AME Church, Mallard Creek PB Association Brotherhood Organization

Pictures by Brother Jason Brown

HABITAT
HUMANITY

Pictures from the final days of Habitat Build 2001



The St. John A.M.E.N. Staff thanks Brother Jason Brown for faithfully supplying pictures throughout the Building on Faith 2001 project.

HABITAT
HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity Building on Faith 2001

By Tonya McCree



Habitat for Humanity of Madison County sponsored the building of a four-bedroom home for, and with, **Sister Janice Williams** and family at 991 Toney School Road in northwest Madison County. Church partners in the build were **St. John and Mallard Creek Primitive Baptist Association Brotherhood Organization**. The completion of this beautiful home is a wonderful blessing from God.

Once again, the members of St. John came together and volunteered their time, talents and prayers. Each contribution was essential. Many members donated sweat equity, delicious lunches (Missionary Society and Stewardess Board), Gatorade, juice, bottled water and more. As Coordinator, I would like to personally thank all who helped to ensure another successful build.

The home was dedicated to God on **Sunday, November 4, 2001** in a Holy Spirit filled ceremony. Reverend McCall began with a prayer. Brother Robert Bremer, Executive Director for Habitat for Humanity of Madison County, followed with a presentation of plaques to the churches participating in the build. Brother Bob Kubichan, team leader, presented a Bible from Habitat to Sister Williams. Sister Williams thanked God and all of the volunteers and made a special presentation to Brother Bob Kubichan, for his unselfish, dedicated service. Sister Lydia Owens made a special presentation to Brother Willie Moore, house leader, for his dedicated service and positive attitude regardless of the circumstance. Sister Shanti Owens dedicated a beautiful song "Excellent" to her Aunt Janice. Reverend McCall prayerfully blessed the home and property. Brother Harold Moore, President of Mallard Creek P.B. Association Brotherhood Organization, offered the benediction and closing prayer. All who shared in this blessing had a wonderful time.



December 2001

Joy
World

Sun	Mon on	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 10:00 a.m. Trustee Board Meeting
2 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Article Deadline	3 9:30 a.m. Fifty Plus	4 Noon Prayer	5 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	6	7 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	8 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 3:00 p.m. Children- Youth Choir
9 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Annual Taste Tea	10	11 Noon Prayer	12 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	13 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	14 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	15 3:00 p.m. Children- Youth Choir 4:00 p.m. YPD
16 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship 4:00 p.m. Steward Board	17	18 Noon Prayer	19 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	20 12:00 p.m. Deacon- ess Meeting, Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	21 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	22
23 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	24	25 Christmas Day	26 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	27 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	28	29
30 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	31 New Year's Eve Watchnight Service					



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 6)

throne. The Scripture from Luke fulfills that hope and promise and tells of the birth of the Messiah, our greatest Hope. As this lesson is taught, emphasis should be placed on the significance of Isaiah's foretelling of the promised Messiah and the fulfillment of that promise in Luke 2.

Isaiah 9:6 brings vividly to mind the birth of Jesus as described in Luke 2:11. "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." During this Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, let us keep our hearts and minds focused on Jesus, our hope for eternal salvation.

December 30, 2001

Lesson Title: Justice for the Nations

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 42:1-9

Printed Text: Isaiah 42:1-9

Key Verse: Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. Isaiah 42:1

Isaiah 41 opens with the nations being challenged by God, who reminds them of His greatness, power, wisdom, and foreknowledge. This was more than a century and a half before Cyrus - God's instrument to fulfill His divine purpose and to be a blessing to His chosen people - was born. The Lord revealed to Isaiah that He was going to raise Cyrus up to be used by God to conquer the nations and to protect Israel.

Godly Snippet!

The past should be a springboard and not a hammock.

This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before. Philippians 3:13

Keep the faith!!!

Sister J.

Church School Promotion Day Encourages Youth to "Make Right Choices"

By Phyllis Conner

The Church School celebrated its Promotion Day on October 21, 2001, during the 10:50 A.M. worship service. The theme for this year's program was "Making Right Choices." Participants during the worship service were: Mrs. Loma Howell, Call to Worship; Mr. Willie Sandifer, Prayer of Confession; Meagan Speight, Old Testament (Habakkuk 1:1-3; 2:1-4); Brittney Bell, the Epistle (II Timothy 1:3-14); Evan Conner, the Gospel (Luke 17: 1-10); Ms. Jacquelyn Grier, Decalogue; Ken Burwell, Responsive Reading; Jamaal Williams, Welcome and Occasion; Mrs. Nedra McDaniel, Announcements and Guest Recognition; Gale McCall, Offertory Sentences; and Mrs. Ada Houston, Prayer of Thanksgiving.

The preacher for the service was Reverend Claudewell Campbell. His sermon topic was "When Making Right Choices, Trouble Comes Anyway." His biblical text was taken from Acts 5:27-32. Dr. Lee Williams, II, introduced Reverend Campbell. The Children-Youth Choir provided music.

The Church School teachers presented promotion certificates to students who were advancing to the next level. The following students were honored with promotions: Beginners - Alexis Howell; Primary - Shane Bloemetjie, Mikala Brown, Nathaniel Brownlow, Evan Conner, Drucilla Fitchard and Elany Washington; Juniors - Geoffrey Brown, Kyle Burwell, Tommy Friend, Ashley Lewis, Christina Sanders, and Meagan Speight; Intermediate - Ashley Ball, Brittney Bell, and Bobby Rice, Jr.; Senior - Christina Mack.

Mr. Willie Sandifer, Superintendent of the Church School and Pastor McCall, gave remarks.

But Peter and the apostles answered, "we must obey God rather than any human authority."
Acts 5:29 (NRSV)

Important Dates to Remember



November 18	Harvest Sunday, sponsored by Fifty-Plus, 10:50 a.m. Brother Darrell Ezell, Preacher
	Downtown Thanksgiving Service, First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive, 4:00 p.m.
	Pastor's Aid, Bake Sale after each service
November 21	GHIMF Thanksgiving Service, St. John AME Church, 7:00 p.m., Reverend Dr. Wendell Thompson, Preacher, Reverend John Clay, GHIMF President.
November 22	Thanksgiving Day
November 24	South Birmingham-Huntsville Planning Meeting
December 9	Annual Taste Tea, after 10:50 a.m. Worship Service
December 16	Children's Christmas Program, 9:30 a.m.

INDNJC

Thought for the Month – "...then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal the land."
- II Chronicles 7:14

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Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

Inside this issue ...

2001-2002 Officers
GHIMF Revival
Thanksgiving



Dr. Davis Featured Evangelist for Summer Revival

By Bridget Floyd

Rev. Dr. James L. Davis, Senior Pastor of Big Bethel AME Church, Atlanta, Georgia, was the evangelist for St. John's Summer Revival. The services were held August 5-7, 2002 at 6:30 p.m. Members of the Steward Board led devotion nightly, members of the Senior Usher Board served nightly, and St. John ministerial staff and guest ministers were on program each night.

Worship in song set the stage each night for the evangelist's sermons. The Gospel Choir was featured Monday night. They were directed by Mr. Cleveland Wilson and accompanied by pianist Mrs. Antoinette Wilson and percussionist Mr. Talbert Cox. Tuesday night the Children/Youth Choir sang, directed by Mrs. Ellen Washington and accompanied by Mr. Kevin Long, pianist. On Wednesday night the Male Chorus rendered music, led by Director of Music, Mr. Rufus Gilmore III. Pastor McCall, the evangelist, and those in attendance gave accolades to outstanding musical performances by each group.

Dr. McCall presented the speaker each night with highlights of his various accomplishments rather than reading from a formal vita. He emphasized the fact that the highest endorsement is to trust one's child to the spiritual care of an individual, which is the case with Dr. Sonya McCall, who is now a member of Big Bethel and was in supportive attendance during revival. Dr. Davis has roots in Alabama (of which he spoke proudly) and has pastored several churches in the South Birmingham-Huntsville District. At Big Bethel he has

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor McCall's Letter

"Travelling in a Storm" - Acts 27

What do you do when you are travelling in a storm? In the twenty-seventh chapter of Acts, Paul is a prisoner in a storm aboard a ship headed for Rome. This experience of the Apostle shows us how to cope with many storms we may pass through in our own journey home. Our transitions and seasons of life are often stormy such as beginning a new school year, a new job, a new relationship, an illness, and a host of other problems and plans known and unknown. However, the example of Paul shows us the value of dependence on God as you and I travel through the storms of life.

Although Paul began the trip as a prisoner, at the end of it he was the captain. As you know from your reading of this chapter, by the grace of God moving through the faithful testimony of Paul's presence, all passengers were saved, although the ship was lost.

The plan outlined in chapter twenty-seven for travelling in life's storms is very simple whether the storms are: 1. Spiritual, such as temptation or sin; 2. Emotional or economic, such as the loss of a job, divorce, retirement, peer pressure; 3. Physical, such as illnesses, etc.

Paul's example to us as we travel in life's storm is simple:

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Senior Pastor of
Big Bethel is
Evangelist for
Summer Revival.

Summer Revival 2002

(Continued from page 1)

spearheaded an economic development program which offers opportunity to some and communicates a need to "cease and desist" to negative elements who previously inhabited the historic "Sweet Auburn" area of Atlanta. The numerous ministries of Big Bethel will be joined by an assisted living facility in January of 2003. Dr. McCall emphasized that in Dr. Davis' ministry, and literally, "God opens doors that no man can shut." He alluded to the atypical occurrence of the jetway door being opened, allowing Dr. Davis to board, after the plane had begun to prepare to leave the gate of Hartsfield International Airport in Atlanta.

The sermon title for Monday was "Trusting God in Tight Situations" from the text 1 Kings 17: 1-15. Dr. Davis indicated that church people talk about faith more than they use it. That is, it is untested, similar to a water resistant watch which has yet to be submerged. He said a different kind of faith is needed "when your back is up against the wall". It is then "time to trust God".

He referred to the Biblical instances where God had tired of the Israelites who had been blessed by God but "thought more of the gifts than the Giver". According to Dr. Davis, no matter what God gave (or gives) it was not (is not) His intention that it take the place of the Giver. In the text Elijah had the task of letting the people know of God's displeasure. The manifestation of this was God's causing a drought, due not only to lack of rain but the formation of dew as well. As directed, Elijah told King Ahab. The land was barren but God placed Elijah "on a welfare plan" where the raven brought food and Elijah drank from the brook. Ultimately Elijah, too, was in the throes of fully experiencing the drought. God gave specific instructions for him to go to a town and ask a widow to prepare food for him. Elijah was persistent in following God's directions despite the widow and her son being on the brink of death due to lack of food, and her insistence that she could not fulfill his request. But "God had arranged it", therefore when she relented, making two portions and giving the larger to Elijah, she and her son were blessed with an abundance of meal, and life rather than death.

Dr. Davis emphasized it is important to 1) Put God's Agenda Before Yours, 2) Understand How God Operates. That is, "He gives no regard to how reluctant we are, He just wants us to do it". He said that in a "tight situation ... enough is enough. God's grace and mercy are enough to get you through". He urged those in attendance to not worry about their 401 K's; Trust in God. "Don't worry about Wall Street scandals; Trust in God. Don't worry about war around the world: TRUST GOD!"

Dr. McCall invited people to Christian Discipleship and to altar prayer which was led by Rev. Carey Vickers.

On Tuesday, Dr. Davis spoke from Judges 14: 1-4 and urged the reading of the 13th and 14th chapters in their entirety. His subject was the family is under attack and from the text specifically "For His Father and Mother Knew Not That it was For the Lord". Dr. Davis pointed out that the family is the most abused gift that God has on Earth. He went on to say "It is a place that we hurt, and hurt others more than anybody or anything else. He gave the reason as the family being the "only thing that gives 'a care'. No one else cares enough about what you do".

Dr. Davis said the family is an instrument of God that He will use to save the world: "As the family goes, so goes society". Children are a product of their families; i.e., their behavior whether respectful or disrespectful reflects the home in which they were raised. He suggested that if a parent made mistakes in rearing a child, s(he) should apologize to that child and "do a better job with the grandchild". Dr. Davis indicated "no child is born by mistake, but by purpose of God's plan". He admonished those who would condemn a person, or the child born to that person, who is not wed.

(Continued on page 4)

"Trusting God in Tight Situations"

"For His Father and Mother Knew Not That it was For the Lord"



Deaconess Corner

Dear Friends,

To emphasize a recent Sunday School lesson on Sin and Forgiveness, we pray the following poem for each of you and ourselves, realizing that 'for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God' - (Romans 3:23).

FAITH AND REVERENCE

If I have uttered idle words or vain,
If I have turned aside from want or pain,
Lest I myself should suffer through the strain -

Good Lord, forgive!

If I have craved for joys that are not mine,
If I have let my wayward heart repine,
Dwelling on things of earth, not things divine-

Good Lord, forgive!

If I have been perverse, or hard, or cold,
If I have longed for shelter in Thy fold,
When Thou hast given me some part to hold-

Good Lord, forgive!

Forgive the sins I have confessed to Thee,
Forgive the secret sins I do not see,
That which I know not, Father, teach Thou me-

Help me to live.

Author - Charles H. Gabriel

St. John Welcomes New Member

The following person joined St. John this month:

Kimberly Battle

Please introduce yourself to our new member and welcome her to St. John.

Flowers on the Altar

August is the month to sign up to sponsor "Flowers on the Altar." Sponsors are being solicited for any of the Sundays from September 2002 through August 2003. Anyone interested in signing up for one or more Sundays should contact Sister Pearlean Myhand no later than August 31, 2002.

Baptisms

Talisha Rice and **Lenita Rochelle** will be baptized by immersion on Sunday, August 25 at 7 AM at Indian Creek P.B. Church, 320 Indian Creek Road, Rev. Timothy M. Rainey, Pastor.

We praise God for these persons who have made their decisions for Christ.

Mustard Seed

It is better to be in the storm with Jesus,
than to be in the storm without Him.

*"Then they cry out to the Lord in their trouble,
And He brings them out of their distresses.
He calms the storm, So that its waves are still."*

Psalms 107: 28 - 29

JAG!

Pastor's Letter

(Continued from page 1)

1. Know whose you are, who you are and who is in control. (27:23)
2. Don't panic. Claim God's promises. (27:24)
3. Keep the faith. (27:25)

Let us trust and thank God everyday for His healing and saving help received by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior who mastered every storm so that in Him no storm would ever master us.

Summer Revival 2002

(Continued from page 2)

Dr. Davis referred to the 13th chapter where a child was given to a barren woman. It is here that clarification of the stewardship role is given regarding the duties of parents, because children belong to God. Dr. Davis described his practice over the past five years of requiring three counseling sessions with parents prior to baptism of children, to preclude a ceremonial commitment without follow-through in bringing up a child in the church and the word of God.

The Biblical text focused on the early years of Samson who had a good family home that prepared him for "responsible independence" so that he could leave home when he was grown. Subsequently he met a woman who peaked his interest and returned home for guidance from his father rather than from his less wise peers. Dr. Davis described in the vernacular his perception of how Samson was impacted by this woman. He advised parents to be open with children regarding their experiences and share their wisdom and guidance, not pretend that they did not face temptations or made all the right choices in their youth. He gave examples of how critical parents can be when considering their children's friends and romantic interests. He focused on the verse indicating that in their criticism, Samson's parents did not know that God was in Samson's selection.

Dr. Davis indicated that the greatest gift is that a "child will rise up and call you blessed". He had the congregation stand as he stated "The strength of family is found in unity". Further, the church family is a unique family in itself. As everyone held hands, Dr. Davis offered a prayer of unity. Dr. James R. Johnson gave the dismissal prayer after altar call.

"Dealing and Living in the Meantime"

On Wednesday night Dr. Davis spoke on "Dealing and Living in the Meantime" with Psalm 30 as the text. He defined the meantime as the most difficult time in which we live. Not everyone recognizes their meantime as such, but mistake it for their "end time". Meantime situations have caused people to "blow their brains out because they could not cope".

David wrote of his serious illness and "friends" who rejoiced in his illness. Although David was "a man after God's own heart", prior to his illness, he had begun to live in "a false sense of prosperity" and "God allowed him to become ill", according to Dr. Davis. He advised against allowing material things to interfere with knowledge that "God is in charge" and expressing thankfulness to God for health and strength. Dr. Davis suggested ways to deal with the "meantime": 1) Activate Your Remembrance...of His Holiness. Remember what God has done and that "anything that God will bring you to, he will bring you through". 2) Thank God For What He Has Done. He urged automatically giving thanks for what may be viewed as a minor event (brushing teeth, hair, waking up). According to Dr. Davis, "a thankful spirit allows you to stretch out for God...we stretch out our faith until it fits". 3) Learn How to Pray. Effective prayer occurs when you understand what God wants to happen. That is, the more knowledge you have of God's word and will, the more effective your prayer life can be.

Dr. Davis said "there is no failure in Jesus...I can do all things" when God is in the picture. With regard to the "end point", David's words were quoted: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." In the end time God will take away the sorrow of the world.

Closing remarks were given by the evangelist and Dr. McCall. Dr. Davis gave the benediction for this summer revival that "began" in those present.



St. John Youth Excited About Returning to School

St. John Youth were asked to share their excitement about returning to school for the 2002-2003 school year. Here are their responses.

"I am excited about returning to school this year because....."

"we will have new classmates, we get a new room and we will have a new teacher."

Regin L. Tarver
4th Grade, Whitesburg Academy

"I will see old friends, meet new friends and learn new things."

Ashley Ball
11th Grade, Johnson High School

"it is my first year in college, so I am very anxious for school to start."

Rakita Sconiers
Freshman, Alabama A&M University

"I have a lot of work to do and I have to take a SAT test."

Druscilla S. Fitchard
5th Grade, University Place Elementary

"I have seven teachers, I get to go to a new school and I have a locker."

Danielle Nicole Howell
6th Grade, Monrovia Middle School

"I like chemistry and reading. Also, I am excited about A.C.E."

Michaela J. Brown
4th Grade, Rainbow Elementary

"I am ready to start learning again."

Adrina Sconiers
6th Grade, Ed White Middle School

"I haven't seen most of my friends in the 7th grade for two (2) whole years."

Geoff Brown
8th Grade, Discovery Middle School

"I get away from my boring summer activities."

William Mosley
8th Grade, Ed White Middle School

"because I learn Math and English and Social Studies and Reading!"

Alexis Howell
1st Grade, Monrovia Elementary

"there was nothing to do [during the summer]. Now there is something to do; we get to color, write and eat lunch with friends."

Kourtney Burwell
3rd Grade, Lynn Fanning Elementary





We Pray for Students Returning to School!

By Sister Judith Gardner

Going back to school should be a fun time as our children make new friends, as they obtain new teachers, and as they gain new learning experiences. But with all of the school shootings, violence, drugs, and negative peer pressure, going back to school has turned into a scary time.

We pray daily for our students as they return to school.

We pray for parents, teachers, and school staff of all schools.

We pray for God's protection, His care, and His guidance over their lives.

We pray for students who are battling forces that our eyes can't see, Whose classrooms have been transformed into battle fields, And their playgrounds are being used for drug deals.

We pray for students whose minds are absorbing what their teachers do and say, For the future of our nations is in the classrooms of today.

Many students have been lost along the way, Overwhelmed by worries, cares and dismay. Their dreams have been shattered, their hope destroyed.

And in this moment of prayer, let us be still, because God is still God.

We pray for students, as they receive new dreams to dream, Who break the rules And pray in school.

We pray for students as they stand tall against the forces of the enemy, Finding strength in the blood of the lamb, Pulling down strongholds, destroying walls, And gaining victory through prayer for all. We pray for our students.

Church School Back-to-School Celebration Filled with Fun

By Willie J. Sandifer

The old saying "time flies when you're having fun" applies to the August 9th Back to School Celebration sponsored by our Church School. During the Sparkler, The Unspoken Word, Pizza, and Jeopardy, time really did seem to fly, leaving no time for Musical Chairs and/or Pictionary. We send a special thanks to everyone who made it such a tremendous event.

As a reminder, we wish to leave you with a couple of questions:

Unspoken Word Clue

- 1) Was in the beginning with God.
- 2) Root and Offspring of David.

Jeopardy Answer Matthew's Gospel

Who were the Pharisees and Sadducees confident in having as their father?

Matthew 3:9

"Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

~Proverbs 22:6~

2002 Vacation Bible School Focused on Staying "Online With Jesus"

By Clarence Cooper, Jr.

St. John held its annual Vacation Bible School during the week of July 15th through July 19th. The theme for VBS was *Online With Jesus*. Clarence Cooper served as the 2002 VBS coordinator.

The 2002 VBS was taught by an exceptional assembly of teachers who worked tirelessly developing activities and lesson plans that knitted seamlessly with the VBS theme. Throughout the course of the week, each class was asked to create a banner that not only tied to the theme *Online With Jesus*, but additionally represented the creativity of the class. Each class presented its banner during the culminating program on Friday, July 19th.

The Preschool class was taught by Mrs. Lorraine Parham and Ms. Patrice McIntosh. The always jubilant Preschool class assisted with the nightly devotion by presenting the Bible, the Christian flag, and the American flag. The Preschool class banner featured the title *E-pals with Jesus* and contained Bible scripture and pictures of each student. When presenting their banner, the Preschool class recited in unison "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved!"

Ms. Alice Hereford, Ms. Brenda Lott, and Mrs. Erica Harbin taught the Primary class. The Primary class banner featured the title *I Can Talk About Jesus*. The Primary banner additionally featured pictures of each student and ways that we all can stay connected with our Savior. When presenting their banner, the Primary class listed four (4) *Things We Can Tell About Jesus*: 1. God gave Jesus as a gift to all mankind; 2. Jesus died on the cross for us; 3. God forgives; and 4. God gives eternal life for all who believe.

The Junior class was taught by Mrs. Pat McIntosh, Ms. Cassandra Ingram, and Mr. Ronald McIntosh. The Junior class banner featured the title *Ways We Stay Connected to Jesus*. The Junior banner played off a desktop computer idea and was surrounded by the various ways we stay connected with Jesus. When presenting their banner, the Junior class listed prayer, study of the Word, and church school attendance as ways to stay connected with Jesus.

The Teen class was taught by Brother Raymond Nomel and Brother Eric Etheridge. The Teen class banner featured the VBS theme *Online With Jesus* as its title. Around the title, the Teen class placed pictures of Biblical personalities, which included Moses, David, and Noah among others. When presenting their banner, the Teen class focused on faith and how we can use the lives of these great Biblical personalities as patterns for our lives. By doing so, we too can obtain an even closer relationship with Christ.

The Adult class was led under the direction of Mrs. Lilly Rivers and Ms. Rosa Whittaker. The Adult class banner featured the book title on which class discussion was centered; *Journey to the Well*, by Bishop Vashti M. McKenzie, the first female bishop of the AME Church. The Adult banner centered around a project in which each Adult class attendee was given a small felt water pot that they were responsible for keeping all week. Upon conclusion of the class, each attendee was asked to return with their pot filled with "something" so that it could be mounted next to the well on the banner. That "something" was a life lesson or meaningful thought or experience that led them to the well, similar to the experience that the "woman at the well" had with Jesus.

In addition to the wonderful class activities and discussions, VBS 2002 attendees were treated each night to refreshments provided by the various boards, choirs, auxiliaries, and organizations of St. John. VBS attendees were also given an excellent educational workshop on pottery and sculpture, presented by Dr. Clifton Pearson on Thursday, July 18th.

(Continued on page 8)

VBS – Online with Jesus

(Continued from page 7)

The attendees, teachers, and volunteers conducted a Spirit-filled culminating program on Friday night, which began with the singing of *Victory in Jesus*. Certificates of Award and Appreciation were presented to all youth attendees, teachers, and volunteers. Pastor McCall closed the 2002 Vacation Bible School with inspirational words, the invitation to Christian Discipleship, and the benediction.

Mustard Seed

**Focus on the bigness of your God,
and not the bigness of your problems.**

*The name of the LORD is a strong tower:
the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.
Proverbs 18:10*

JAG!

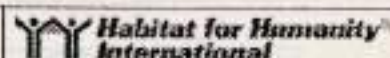
Come and Go with Us

Sunday, September 15, 2002
4:00 PM
Wayman Chapel AME Church
Decatur, Alabama
Pastor's Day for Reverend R. B. Hereford

Sunday, September 29, 2002
4:00 PM
Matthew Chapel AME Church
Fackler, Alabama
Pastor's Day for Reverend Vicki Sanders

Pastor McCall will preach for each of the services and the combined choirs of St. John will sing.

Please be prayerful and supportive.



St. John to Participate in Habitat for Humanity Building Blitz

Each year members of St. John participate in a Habitat for Humanity Building project during the summer/fall season. We partner with other churches and organizations in the city to build a home for a family selected by the Huntsville Habitat for Humanity office.

This year we will participate in a two week building blitz from August 31 to September 14. The Church of the Nativity, St. Matthew Episcopal Church, First Christian Church, St. John AME Church and First Missionary Baptist Church will work with Kerry and Fatina Baker and their four children to build a house for the Baker family.

Brother Eddie Whitehead is the coordinator for St. John. Please contact Brother Whitehead or the church office for more information.

FoodSource Ministry

Sunday, August 18th, will be the last day to purchase a FoodSource unit for August. The cost of a standard unit is \$21.00 and the cost of a family pac is \$37.00. A grill pac is also available for \$15.

Please contact Reverend Claudewell Campbell to purchase a unit.

Mustard Seed

**The past cannot be changed.
It matters not how you start out,
but it counts on how you end up.**

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended;
but this one thing I do, forgetting those
things which are behind,
and reaching forth unto those things which
are before"

Philippians 3:13



Annual Conference
2002

NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT African Methodist Episcopal Church 2002 Annual Conference Schedule

*The Right Reverend T. Larry Kirkland, Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Mary L. Kirkland, Episcopal Supervisor, WMS*

September 3, 2002
The WMS Conference Branch Annual Meeting

**Alabama Conference
September 3-7**
ST. PAUL AME CHURCH

Reverend Joe Rembert, Host Pastor
706 East Patton Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36111

September 10, 2002
The WMS Conference Branch Annual Meeting

**South Alabama Conference
September 10-14**
PARKS CHAPEL AME CHURCH

Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Host Pastor
1000 Montana Street
Dothan, Alabama 36303

Rest Week

September 24, 2002
The WMS Conference Branch Annual Meeting

**East Alabama Conference
September 24-28**
GAINES CHAPEL AME CHURCH

Reverend Benjamin L. Little, Host Pastor
404 East "A" Street
Anniston, Alabama 36201

October 1, 2002
The WMS Conference Branch Annual Meeting

**North Alabama Conference
October 1-5**
GRANT CHAPEL AME CHURCH

Reverend James A. Rumph, Sr., Host Pastor
6931 Division Avenue
Birmingham, Alabama 35206

Rest Week

October 15, 2002
The WMS Conference Branch Annual Meeting

**Central Alabama Conference
October 15-19**
GRANT CHAPEL AME CHURCH

Reverend Marion Brock, Host Pastor
Selma, Alabama 36701

October 22, 2002
The WMS Conference Branch Annual Meeting

**West Alabama Conference
October 22-26**
BETHEL AME CHURCH

Reverend Ronald Nored, Sr., Host Pastor
1524 Avenue "D" Ensley
Birmingham, Alabama 35218

District Meetings

Planning Meeting
November 8-9, 2002

Founder's Day
February 7-8, 2003

Mid-Year Convocation
March 21-22, 2003

Youth Crusade for Christ
May 17, 2003

NOTE: The WMS Annual Meetings are on Tuesday and the Annual Conferences are Wednesday through Saturday.



Church School Lesson Overview – September 2002

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews written by Willie J. Sandifer (1st Sunday), Agnes Bailey (2nd Sunday), Pat Grier (3rd Sunday), Willie J. Sandifer (4th Sunday), and Vanona Walton (5th Sunday).

September 1, 2002

Lesson Title: Repentance and Renewal

Background Scripture: 2 Chronicles 29, 30; 2 Kings 18-20

Lesson Scripture: 2 Chronicles 30:1-12

Key Verse: "The LORD your God is gracious and compassionate. He will not turn his face from you if you return to him." 2 Chronicles 30:9

This lesson helps us see that the majority does not accept the call to true godliness. A godly king realizes the "product" he has to offer – renewal of proper worship – is desperately needed by all the Jewish people. So, he sends his "sales force" throughout the land with the message, only to have them repeatedly rejected and scorned. He presses on with his plans, and many are spiritually blessed. King Ahaz led the country far into idol worship, but king Hezekiah turned it around. He restored the Passover feast that had been long neglected.

September 8, 2002

Lesson Title: God Restores A Sinner

Lesson Scripture: 2 Chronicles 33:1-13

Key Verse: When he prayed to him the Lord was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord is God. 2 Chronicles 33:13.

The focus of this week's lesson is forgiveness. As we study the life of King Manasseh, we see an evil man that is forgiven by God.

Manasseh became King of Judah at the age of twelve and ruled for fifty-five years. He began as an extremely evil king and led the hearts of the people away from the Lord. Because of their sins, the people were led into captivity in Babylon. It was during captivity that Manasseh sought the Lord and God heard his prayer and forgave him. Manasseh's repentance is a dramatic lesson in

God's Grace.

We should remember that there is no person so evil that God cannot save them. It is not the amount of evil in one's life, but the response to God that matters. God will save anyone who turns to Him regardless of how wicked they have been.

September 15, 2002

Lesson Title: A Sinful People

Lesson Scripture: Zephaniah 1:12; 3:1-7, 11-15

Key Verse: "The Lord within her is righteous; He does no wrong. Morning by morning He dispenses His justice, and every new day He does not fail, yet the unrighteous know no shame." (Zephaniah 3:5)

This Sunday's lesson is taken from the book of Zephaniah. The prophet Zephaniah prophesied during King Josiah's reign, about the time the prophet Jeremiah's ministry began. Zephaniah proclaimed a message of impending judgment by God upon a sinful people and the fulfillment of a promise to restore Jerusalem and God's chosen people.

This Sunday's lesson can be studied and taught in three parts.

Part I – Zephaniah 1:12 - The day of the Lord, the time when God's Lordship and judgment will reign, is coming. No sinner will be able to hide. God's judgment will prevail. Zephaniah 1:12a portrays God as one searching every corner with lamps to fret out the unrighteous. Zephaniah 1:12b portrays the people as COM-PLACENT – like dregs left in wine, the worthless and offensive bits of sediment that settle in wine as it ages.

Part II – Zephaniah 3:1-7 – Zephaniah speaks of the wickedness of Jerusalem and opens Chapter 3 with a cry of WOE – indicating a three-fold indictment of being oppressors, being rebellious, and being morally filthy. Zephaniah warned the people that they would feel God's wrath if they did not repent. The people heeded not Zephaniah's warning, and felt no shame for their sins.

PART III – Zephaniah 3:11-15 – Zephaniah

(Continued on page 11)



Church School Lesson Review

(Continued from page 10)

reiterates to the people that God does not forget His promises. God has promised to restore Jerusalem and His chosen people. Zephaniah closes this Book with a song of delight that those who are in Christ look forward to the return of Christ and the New Jerusalem.

In conclusion, we are to remember that there is a day when God will judge us according to the lives we have lived. We should live each day obeying God's commandments and desiring to serve Him with our whole hearts.

September 22, 2002

Lesson Title: Josiah Makes a New Beginning

Background Scripture: 2 Chronicles 34, 35; 2 Kings 22, 23

Lesson Scripture: 2 Chronicles 34:1-4, 19-21, 29-33

Key Verse: "Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what he spoke against this place and its people, and because you humbled yourself before me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD." 2 Chronicles 34:27

In the long reign of Manasseh and the short reign of Amon, places of idol worship were built all over Judah. King Josiah ordered them destroyed. This lesson is about a godly king's efforts to restore lost distinctions. In destroying idolatry and unholiness, Josiah was no "moderate" as some of his godly predecessors had been. Josiah's grandfather Manasseh, in embracing and promoting all kinds of pagan practices, was one of the worst of Judah's kings. He led his people in these evil ways until they became worse than the pagans around them. This evil king changed in his latter years. He supported the real God as vigorously as he had supported the fakes. Earnestly he tried to undo the evil he had done, but was not completely successful.

September 29, 2002

Lesson Title: Rebellion and Judgment

Lesson Scripture: Jeremiah 6

Key Verse: This is what the Lord says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the

ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls". Jeremiah 6:16

Chapter 6 of Jeremiah begins with a warning of hostile forces that would overrun Judah from the north. The people of Judah continuously ignored the numerous warnings about the moral pollution that gravely imperiled their society. They were told how to cure it, but they were too busy enjoying life. The sinners in Judah could not complain that they had no way of knowing what was right, since God's genuine prophets were constantly among them. But the people refused to pay attention and repent. Since the people of Judah refused to act in God's way and refused to heed his warnings, He would have all the other nations to take notice. God wanted the whole world to be witness to the fact that their rebellion against him will be punished.

God brought disaster to the people of Judah, not because he wanted to, but because the fruit of their schemes required it. The armed invaders, instruments of the Lord's vengeance, will come from "the north". This northern invader was identified as Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. His forces would destroy Jerusalem and take most of its survivors into captivity.

We, in society today have the same choices that the people of Judah had. God lets us choose our paths, but we are warned that we must accept the consequences of our choices.

**St. John AME Church
Church School Department**

Brother Willie J. Sandifer, Superintendent

Church School convenes at 9:45 AM each Sunday. There are classes for all ages. Everyone is invited to attend.



Important Dates to Remember



August 25 Baptism, 7 a.m., at Indian Creek P.B. Church, 320 Indian Creek Road, Rev. Timothy M. Rainey, Pastor 837-2335.

August 31 – September 14

Habitat for Humanity Building Blitz,
Brother Eddie Whitehead, Coordinator for St. John

September 15 **Wayman Chapel AME Church, 4:00 PM,** Decatur, Alabama, Rev. R. B. Hereford's Appreciation, Pastor McCall preaching

September 22 **Men's Day**

September 28 **Harvest Home Fellowship,** Handy Chapel AME, Gadsden, AL

September 29 **Matthew Chapel AME Church, Fackler, Alabama, Rev. Vicki Sanders' Appreciation, 4:00 PM,** Pastor McCall preaching

October 1 **North Alabama Conference WMS Annual Meeting**
October 2-5 **124th Session North Alabama Annual Conference,** Grant AME Church, Birmingham, Reverend James A. Rumph, Host Pastor

Thought for the Month – "In every crisis there is a message. Crises are nature's way of forcing change - breaking down old structures, shaking loose negative habits so that something new and better can take their place." - Susan Taylor

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Mrs. Mary Kirkland, Episcopal Supervisor
Reverend Dwight Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor



Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

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Vacation Bible School
Back to School
Habitat Building Blitz



Bishop Kirkland Presides at North Alabama Annual Conference

*And are we yet alive,
And see each other's face?
Glory and praise to Jesus give
For His redeeming grace.*

The 124th Session of the North Alabama Annual Conference began officially on Wednesday, October 2, at 10:00 AM at Grant Chapel AME Church, Birmingham, Alabama, with the processional of Bishop Kirkland, General Officers, Presiding Elders, and Ministers of the Conference. The traditional opening hymn, "And Are We Yet Alive," was sung and the conference was off to a spirit-filled start. The Annual Sermon was preached by Reverend T. Eric Nathan, pastor of Greater St. Paul AME Church, Florence, Alabama, and a son of the pulpit of St. John. Reverend Nathan's sermon was centered in 2 Corinthians 4:1-7 and it was entitled "We Have This Ministry." Bishop Kirkland was chief celebrant for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Governor Don Siegelman also addressed the conference during the opening session.

The business session of the Conference began on Wednesday afternoon with the Roll Call of ministers and lay delegates, summary reports from the Presiding Elder's Districts and the reading of Pastoral Reports. Pastor McCall, the first to read a Pastoral Report, was supported by Mrs. McCall and numerous members of his congregation. St. John's delegate, Dr. Jeanette Jones, spoke on behalf of the church. Copies of the Annual Report are available from the pastor's office.

Pastors and delegates continued to make

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor McCall's Letter

Enemy of the Truth

"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2)

It has been noted that Jesus performed more miracles of the type mentioned in John 9:1-12 (giving sight to the blind) than of any other and it is also known that the rabbis had developed the principle that "there is no death without sin, and there is no sin without iniquity." They also held that "terrible punishments come on people because of the sin of their parents," and that "a child could sin in the womb," or that its soul "might have sinned in a preexistent state." Hence we are confronted with the above question by Jesus' disciples, "Who sinned...?"

Rather than be distracted by the ploys of the satanic accuser, "Who sinned?" "Who is sinning?" "Who will sin?" Let us stand steadfast with our master, Jesus, who said: "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:32) Jesus is the truth. The man born blind was cured by Jesus whereas the Pharisees remained spiritually blind.

Rather than casting the blame (the Accuser) in any situation, why not have a progressively closer walk with God through community involvement and by having a deeper relationship with a Man called Jesus (9:11). Why not share the blame of claiming the truth of Jesus' words as did the man born blind? See what happens

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Annual Conference

(Continued from page 1)

their reports over the next day and a half. Bishop Kirkland listened intensely to each report; offered support, encouragement, and advice; and also added touches of humor.

Rich preaching continued throughout the conference. In addition to the Annual Sermon by Reverend Nathan, other powerful sermons were preached. Reverend J. C. Smith, pastor of Miles Memorial, delivered the Missionary Sermon on Wednesday evening during a joint service of the Sons of Allen and the Women's Missionary Society. The text was from St. John 2:7-8 and the message was entitled "It's Time to Change." Rev. Melvin Wilson of the First Episcopal District (pastor of St. Luke AME Church, New York City/Harlem) preached the Noon Hour of Power sermon on Thursday. Rev. Wilson's sermon was centered on Psalm 34. It was entitled "The Confessions of a Crazy Man." Reverend Roosevelt Williams, pastor of Hopewell AME Church, Kingston, preached the Lay Night Sermon. The text was from Exodus 25:10-22 and the message was entitled "A Radical Encounter with Christ." The Ordination service was held at noon on Friday with General Officer Johnny Barbour preaching. His text was Philipians 2 and the sermon was entitled "Following the Ultimate Servant."

The Youth Night Service on Friday night was a sermon through praise in song, dance, karate and Christian Rap.

Ministers of the conference preached the Word during devotional meditations. The First Day Afternoon Session devotional meditation was delivered by Reverend Vicki Sanders with text Acts 3:12-18 and was entitled "Only Through Christ." Rev. C. Clopton gave the meditation for the Second Day Morning Devotion. The meditation was entitled "We've Got to Go Through the Night." with text Psalm 30:1-5. The meditation for the Second Day Afternoon Devotion was given by Rev. Wilmer Marshall. The title was "Peace Be Still" and the text was St. Mark 4:35-41. Rev. Damien Littlejohn gave the meditation for the Third Day Morning Devotion.

St. John ministers, lay, missionaries, and

youth were participants throughout the conference. Pastor McCall served as Conference Secretary and Conference Dean. Delegate Jeanette Jones served on the Resolution Committee. Mrs. Eleanor Burnett received a certificate for her office of Corresponding Secretary for the Conference WMS. Many St. John youth participated in the Youth Choir and praise dance team for Youth Night. Licentiate Meriam Garrett was admitted to the Annual Conference. Brother Nomel was advanced to First Year Studies, Reverend Claudewell Campbell was advanced to Fourth Year Studies, and Reverend Debra Woods was ordained Itinerant Elder. Brother Willie J. Sandifer assisted with the Church School service on Saturday morning.

The closing worship service began at 11:00 AM. Presiding Elder A. L. Hyché served as worship leader. Presiding Elder D. E. Dillard presented Bishop Kirkland who gave the sermon. The sermon was anchored in I Thessalonians 1:1-10. The title was "The Kind of Church God Wants." Bishop Kirkland expounded on the description Paul gave of the church at Thessalonica and highlighted three models of the church:

1. Be sure you have an "elect church." Are you saved?
2. The church must be exemplary. They were examples of what they taught.
3. God wants an enthusiastic church.

Bishop Kirkland stated he is fired up about many things but what he is fired up most about is that on Friday, Jesus died and on the first day, Sunday, He got up - and that he is saved by what Jesus did. The stirring, Spirit-filled sermon moved many throughout the sanctuary.

The service and conference concluded with the commissioning service and the reading of Pastoral appointments by Bishop Kirkland.

We welcome Rev. Dr. Homer L. McCall as the pastor of St. John AME Church, Huntsville and Presiding Elder Dillard as Presiding Elder of the South Birmingham-Huntsville District.



Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Anita Burns

God is our Protector and our Strength. Every mature Christian knows that God is God and God alone. He was Supreme in the beginning and He is Supreme in the end. Psalm 46 says nations are in an uproar, and kingdoms crumble! God thunders and the earth melts. The Lord Almighty is here among us. The God of Jacob is our fortress. Then, why do we have need to fear and fret in these times of crises that we face today, if God is our ever present strength and help in times of trouble? Let us humbly bow in "A Prayer for Peace".

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Our Father, up in heaven,
hear this fervent prayer—
May the people of ALL NATIONS
BE UNITED IN THY CARE,
For earth's peace and man's salvation
can come only by Thy grace
And not through bombs and missiles
and our quest for outer space...
For until all men recognize
that "THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S"
And peace on earth cannot be won
with strategy and swords,
We will go on vainly fighting,
as we have in ages past,
Finding only empty victories
and a peace that cannot last...
But we've grown so rich and mighty
and so arrogantly strong,
We no longer ask in humbleness—
"God, show us where we're wrong"...
We have come to trust completely
in the power of man-made things,
Unmindful of God's mighty power
and that HE IS "KING OF KINGS"...
We have turned our eyes away from HIM
to go our selfish way,
And money, power and pleasure
are the gods we serve today...
And the good green earth God gave us
to peacefully enjoy,
Through greed and fear and hatred
we are seeking to destroy...
Oh, Father, up in heaven,
stir and wake our sleeping souls,
Renew our faith and lift us up
and give us higher goals,

Pastor's Letter

(Continued from page 1)

when Jesus "the prophet" (9:17) is the center of our evangelism. Why not continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus (as the man in this narrative) by taking up your cross and by fulfilling your stewardship requirements? Yes, God is good! Why not have a closer walk with God so that you will progress, as did the man born blind, into learning above all to worship Him as the Son of God.

For our community involvement, evangelism, and stewardship are all rooted in our worship of the Son of God. Jesus is Lord. To God be the glory. Let us continue to advance God's Kingdom this year through worship, stewardship, evangelism and community involvement. EACH ONE REACH ONE!

Mustard Seed

If you don't like the situation which you
are in,
try changing the way you think.

"And do not be conformed to this world,
but be transformed by the renewing of
your mind,
so that you may prove what the will of
God is,
that which is good and acceptable and
perfect."

Romans 12:2

JAG!

Deaconess Corner

And grant us heavenly guidance
as war threatens us again—
For, more than GUIDED MISSILES,
all the world needs GUIDED MEN.

(The poem is from the Book 'Someone Cares - The Collected Poems of Helen Steiner Rice')



Church School Lesson Overview – November 2002

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews written by Willie J. Sandifer (1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays) and Rosetta Williams (3rd Sunday).

November 3, 2002

Lesson Title: The Fall of Jerusalem

Background Scripture: 2 Chronicles 36:9-21; 2 Kings 24:8-25:26

Print: 2 Chronicles 36:11-21

Key Verse: "The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets" 2 Chronicles 36:15, 16

This lesson describes the result of the sins of the people. It was not just the king who had a problem; the people and leading priests were also unfaithful and desecrated the temple. They have walked in their own way, disregarding the direction of the Lord; now they face people who care not for the Lord and know not of His compassion. They have refused to hear the cry of the poor; now they cry and no one shows them compassion. The Babylonian army came three times, eventually leveling Jerusalem and the temple. They took most of the survivors to captivity in Babylon. The fall of Jerusalem teaches us not to take for granted the warnings of the Lord.

November 10, 2002

Lesson Title: Grief and Hope

Background Scripture: Lamentations

Print: Lamentations 1:12-16; 3:22-26, 31-33, 40

Key Verse: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22, 23.

This lesson describes Jerusalem's plight and attributes it to God's judgement. The rebellious people of Judah were in captivity. Their grief and hope found expression in the book of Lamentations. Judah had ignored the word of God and no comfort was available. Jeremiah declares God's steadfast, never-ending love; and sees God as a source of hope. Although God's judgement is painful,

God continues to act out of compassion. As you study this lesson, remember that God is waiting to show mercy to you.

November 17, 2002

Lesson Title: Who Is To Blame

Lesson Scripture: Ezekiel 18

Key Verse: Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die. Ezekiel 18:4 (NRSV)

In today's lesson, we find that emphasis is placed on individual responsibility. Ezekiel, a prophet of God, did not believe the old proverb that says children would inherit the sins of their father. He held on to the hope of forgiveness and new life—when each person repents of his own sins and turns from his evil ways. Today, as in the Biblical times, many people blame everything and everyone else for their actions except ourselves. This is very sad because we are giving our control and power over to someone else.

The people to whom Ezekiel spoke had been very rebellious and refused to obey God. They were exiles in Babylon. Ezekiel stressed that they have the opportunity to repent. He taught that salvation would bring new life to them. God had disciplined the exiles; however, Ezekiel taught them that they still had an opportunity to change and find the life that God desired for them regardless of their sins.

In summary, Ezekiel presents God's truth to people who are addicted to their own sinful ways. They want to continue thinking that they are innocent victims of their fathers' sins. Many will continue to say that it is not fair to punish them for sins that they did not commit. Ezekiel challenges us to acknowledge God's fairness in dealing with our sins on a personal basis. God holds us all accountable only for our own sins and not for the sins of others. God's judgment will be fair, just, and right, whether the people choose to see it that way or not. Judging each one according to his ways means that no one will be held guilty or innocent because someone else has done wrong or right. We have all sinned; however, our God is a forgiving God.

(Continued on page 9)



Christian Men Leading in Worship Through Prayer Men's Day 2002

By Clifton Pearson

The theme for the Men's Day Celebration, "Christian Men Leading in Worship Through Prayer," was an inspired theme. At the first, and only, organizational meeting for the event a few men sat around tables in the fellowship hall. They seemed somewhat stalled by the coming of 9/11 (September 11, 2002). Two or three men worked on a draft for a program theme; one had written down some possibilities before coming. Suggestions were passed on slips of paper in the direction of Pastor McCall. He received the fragmented statements and seemed to start a process of mentally moving them around. Then he verbally altered the words until he formed a theme from the fragments. Somehow it fit the mood of the group and charged them with a task for the upcoming program. The men of St. John would prayerfully lead in the Sunday, September 22 worship service.

Mr. Rufus Gilmore III, Director of Music, had the Male Chorus members arrive at the church at nine-thirty before the start of the Men's Day program. It probably seemed to some that those guys are really into their music. The truth of the matter is that the chorus did not know one of the selections because they honored Mr. Gilmore with a surprise dinner on one of the rehearsal nights. After eating, Gilmore had a true challenge getting "musical" sounds from the group. The other reason for the early arrival was that the Male Chorus started a prayer service as a prelude to the program.



The Male Chorus rendered selections "I've Been Singing Hallelujah All Day" and "You Can't Make Me Doubt Him"



Everett Brooks, Jr. challenged the men with a thought provoking occasion.



Col. James O. Heyward read announcements and welcomed visitors.



Brother Walter Williams blessed the congregation with selection, "I Walk With God."

Men's Day 2002

After the prayer service the program began with the printed Order of Service and continued in fine form. Then Bishop DeVeaux was up to preach (great!). The Bishop announced that his text was from Jude and Micah and the message was entitled "Walking in the Pathway of Duty".

We were into our third hour of service when an inspired Bishop William P. DeVeaux seemed to transition from the guest preacher into choral director. He called for a soloist and then commanded the women and men in the church to sing alternately. "It is well, it is well; with my soul, with my soul," they sang. It was indeed well with our souls as our voices raised with the instruments, filling the entire air space. Some stood with their eyes closed; others stood with outstretched arms. Most sang through large smiles. What a wonderful closing!



Bishop DeVeaux directs the choir and congregation in singing the invitational hymn, "It Is Well."

As program chairman, I reflected on the concept of duty as it applied to the program participants. Some of the men volunteered for duty, for others it was regular duty, and a few were drafted. None of the participants resisted, regardless of the task required. No one was AWOL and none took the duty lightly. Each man's action, from the starting prayer to the closing musical note, indicated willingness to "do justice, love mercy and to walk humbly with God." The Bishop's message was well received and confirmed that we must pray in the Holy Spirit, be faithful, and walk the dutiful path.

By all accounts, the event was a blessing. It is well; it is well with my soul, AMEN.



New members Lenita Rochelle, Lillie Rivers, Jeffery Rivers, Talisha Rice, Patrice Ruffin and Benita Jackson were read into full membership during the Men's Day Service.

November 2002

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 First Quarterly Conference
3 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship First Quarterly Conference AMEN Deadline	4 50 Plus Meeting 9:30 AM	5 ELECTION DAY 2002	6 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	7 Noon Prayer	8 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	9 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
10 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Food Source Deadline	11 Veteran's Day	12	13 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	14 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	15 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	16
17 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship 4:00 p.m. Steward Board	18	19	20 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	21 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	22 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	23
24 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Downtown Thanksgiving Service	25	26	27 GHIMF Thanksgiving Service	28 Thanksgiving Day	29	30

Important Dates to Remember



October 20	Church School Anniversary and Promotion Day, Rev. Debra Woods, Preacher
October 20	POP Fall Festival, 4:00 PM, Searcy Homes Area Music – Dance – Drama – Refreshments
October 28-31	GHIMF City-wide Revival, First Missionary Baptist Church, 7 PM, Rev. Dr. Dennis J. Ward, Pastor of Main Street Baptist Church, Lexington, Kentucky
November 2-3	First Quarterly Conference
November 5	Election Day, 7 AM – 7 PM
November 8-9	Ninth District Planning Meeting

Thought for the Month –
Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped Him." (John 9:38)

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Inside this issue ...

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God's Emancipation Proclamation

Pastor Homer L. McCall

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. - Luke 4:18-19

The Anointing

The anointing is the difference. As we celebrate the birth of Christ, we are reminded of the Holy Spirit we receive at our rebirth by grace through faith in Christ. What a wonderful celebration at Christmas – God's Emancipation Proclamation! For it is not merely a weekly, monthly, or annual (Black History Month) remembrance. Although it is on the inside, its value is not reflected by any outside appearance. The anointing of the Holy Spirit through our union with Christ is the difference. At Christmas we can spiritually visualize Jesus identifying with us as the Holy Spirit descended upon Him at His baptism (3:21-22). We can also remember that He was filled and led by the Holy Spirit in the wilderness (4:1-13). He delivered, in the power of the Spirit, God's Emancipation Proclamation of our salvation (4:14-21). As children of God, let us daily claim the power of the anointing of the Holy Spirit – the greatest gift of Christmas. We can claim His power through *constant, fervent, unselfish prayer* and through *daily reliance* on the WORD of God. The Anointing of God is the difference not only at Christmas but for eternity.

The Preaching of the Gospel

Jesus, the Anointed One – Prophet, Priest and King – preached good news to all especially those with an attitude receptive to the gospel. It is an attitude which only the Holy Spirit can provide, cultivate and nourish. What a wonderful gift we can share anytime, anywhere, anyway and with anyone – the proclamation that Jesus is LORD. He still delivers the captive. He still breaks yokes, bondages and enslavement to drug addiction, violence, destructive thought patterns, pride, arrogance or sexual promiscuity! He still can empower anyone to live, move and have their being in Him through a life of abstinence that honors the CREATOR rather than serve the creature.

Through claiming the power of God's anointing let us share the good news that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds..." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)

For the salvation of souls, let us claim and share the victory Christ already has won. Let us pray that others be *convinced, convicted, and converted* by the Holy Spirit to *repent, rely* on Christ's WORD and be *released* from the penalty of eternal death by His grace through faith in the living Christ. His anointing is the difference for anyone, anytime, anywhere.

The Healing

God's Emancipation Proclamation (Luke 4:18-19) also reminds us not only in December or February but also in any month or day of the year that "Jesus was sent to heal the brokenhearted." Although the emphasis here is our spiritual healing, Christ is the Physician whose ministry proves that He was sent to heal us bodily and spiritually. Hearts and homes need healing at Christmas. Congregations and communities need healing at Christmas. Students, schools, teachers, parents need healing at Christmas. The elderly, the young need healing at Christ-

(Continued on page 2)



Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Ada Houston

A Wondrous Christmas Cake

*Stir 'til very soft and dreamy
One cup of Christmas light,
Pour the milk of kindness in,
To make it snowy white;
Never spare the sweet tidbits
Of gentle love and caring;
Add as much as you can spare
Of giving, listening, sharing.*

*No need to brown or bake,
No need to frost or ice,
Just share your wondrous
Christmas Cake,
Give everyone a slice!*

*Praying you have a warm and sharing
holiday!*

Mustard Seed

**Generous people aren't
necessarily faithful to God.**

But "faithful people" are always generous.

"... freely you have received, freely give."

St. Matthew 10:8b

JAG

You are Invited! Christmas Program

Everyone is invited to attend the Annual Christmas Program on Sunday, December 22, 2002 at 10:00 AM in the church sanctuary.

Mrs. Lorraine Parham is the coordinator.

Trustees Elected for Conference Year 2002-2003

The Church Conference elected the following Trustees for the 2002-2003 Conference Year.

Everett Brooks, Jr.
Wilbert Brownlow
W. Mingo Clark
Phyllis Conner
Bridget Floyd
Geneva Fontenot
Earl Griffis
Karl Gullatte
William Hammond
Randy Love
Pearlean Myhand
Kenneth Parham
Glenn Pippen
Lula Rochelle
Lynn Sherrod
Terry Speight
Lauretta Teague
Lee Williams, II

Church Officers 2002-2003

James O. Heyward, Sr., Secretary
Nedra L. McDaniel, Treasurer
Cora H. Speight, Financial Secretary
Willie Sandifer, Church School
Superintendent
Lorraine E. Parham, Director of
Christian Education

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

mas. The homeless, the hungry, the helpless need healing at Christmas. Our national family needs healing at Christmas. Abraham's family – the human family – needs healing at Christmas. The Anointing of the Holy Spirit we share through union with Jesus Christ is the difference – He is our salvation! He is our healing! He is LORD.

Song of Isaiah

Evelyn M. Johnson

*"For unto us a Child is born,
To us a Son is given."
And to the earth on Christmas morn
God sent His gift from heaven.*

*"The government shall be upon
His shoulder," strong to bear
The burdens of mankind since dawn
Of time and all its care.*

*"His name was 'Wonderful' to be!"
The name of matchless worth,
For unto Him would every knee
Of man be bowed on earth.*

*"Counsellor, the mighty God,
The everlasting Father" of
All children of the common sod
Who bring to Him their love.*

*"The Prince of Peace," all hail to Him,
Who born in cattle stall,
Now reigns on high, mid seraphim -
The sovereign Lord of all.*

Love Came Down at Christmas, Jenny Ever Hancock, Ideal Publications, Nashville, Tennessee, 2002, page 2.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6 (KJV)

The Prince of Peace



"Gift of Warmth" Sponsored by the December Group

By Doris Outlaw

The cold winter days are quickly upon us. The December Group will sponsor their Second Annual "Gift of Warmth" for the homeless.

A box has been placed in the church lobby. Please place new or used blankets, warm hats, scarves, gloves, and heavy duty socks that read "one size fits all" into the box. We are asking our church families, friends, boards and organizations to help us achieve success in this community project.

Let us share the gift of warmth to our homeless neighbors as well as keeping them in our prayers.

Love Came Down at Christmas

*Love came down at Christmas -
Love all lovely,
Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.*

By Christina Rossetti

Welcome New Members

Ms. Amanda Scott
Mr. Brandon Rochelle

Begin Christmas with Morning Worship

The Annual Christmas Morning Service will be held at 6:30 a.m. on Christmas morning. Begin Christmas in family worship.

AMEN Staff Purchases New Microwave for St. John

The AMEN staff is pleased to announce that they have successfully met the goal of purchasing a convection/microwave oven for the kitchen in St. John's fellowship hall. As readers may remember, the profits from the sale of our cookbook, *AMEN: A Taste of St. John and Friends*, were to be used to purchase the microwave. It has been a little over one year since the sale of cookbooks began. During that time almost 400 cookbooks have been sold.

The microwave was ordered a few months ago and installed approximately three weeks ago. It was put to good use during the sixth annual taste tea held on December 8th. The AMEN staff appreciates the support of the congregation and friends who purchased cookbooks and contributed recipes that were included in the publication.

There are still a few cookbooks left. As many of you know, they make great gifts. This is the perfect season to purchase the remaining books. Any further proceeds will be used to purchase serving dishes and utensils for the fellowship hall. The cookbooks are \$6.00 each.

A special thanks is extended to Trustee Board Vice-Chairperson, Dr. Willie Clark, for his assistance in the purchase of the microwave.

Ministries Co-Sponsor Annual Taste Tea

This year the Women's Praise Dance ministry joined with the AMEN Staff to sponsor the Taste Tea. With the additional participants in the planning and execution of the tea, the tea continued to provide a time of sharing dishes and recipes. Over forty (40) different dishes were prepared and over one hundred members shared in the "tasting."

The AMEN Staff and Praise Dance Ministry are grateful to those who participated in the tea. We look forward to publishing the recipes in future issues of this newsletter.

St. John AME Church 2003 Calendar of Events

229 Church Street Huntsville, Alabama

Homer L. McCall, D. Min., Pastor

*Church School	Each Sunday, 9:45 a.m.
*Early Sunday Morning Worship	Each Sunday, 8:00 a.m.
*Sunday Morning Worship	Each Sunday, 10:50 a.m.
The Lord's Supper	First Sunday, each month
Mid-Week Service	Each Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
Love Feast	Wednesday before First Sunday
Y.P.D. Meeting	Third Sunday, following 10:50 a.m. service
Finance Commission Meeting	Each Saturday, 8:30 a.m.
Official Board Meeting	To Be Announced
Steward Board	Third Sunday, 4:00 p.m.
Trustee Board	First Saturday, 10:00 a.m.
Church School Board Meeting	Tuesday before First Sunday, 6:30 p.m.
Newsletter Staff Meeting	Second Saturday, 10:30 a.m.
Missionary Society	Saturday after First Sunday, 1:30 p.m.
Stewardess Board	Saturday after First Sunday, 3:00 p.m.
Deaconesses	First Thursday, 11:30 a.m.
Prayer Time	Thursday, noon
Fifty Plus Auxiliary	First Monday, 9:30 a.m.
Pastor's Aid Board	To Be Announced
Children-Youth Choir	Wednesday before and after the 2nd Sunday, 6:00 p.m.
Gospel Choir	Last Monday of each month and Thursday after the 1 st Sunday, 6 p.m.
Male Chorus	Each Friday except Friday after 4 th Sunday, 6 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir	Each Thursday except Thursday after the 1 st Sunday, 6 p.m.

* Times will vary on fifth Sundays and special events.

January 2003

January 1	New Years Day
January 5	Commitment Sunday
January 14-17	Church Growth and Development Seminar Renaissance Concourse Hotel, Atlanta, GA
January 15	Community Wide MLK Emancipation Proclamation Celebration GHIMF 7:00 p.m. First Baptist Church, Rev. Dr. Julius Scruggs, Pastor, Reverend Dr. C. McClain, Guest Preacher
January 24-25	Praise Dance Service and Workshop
January 26	Souper Bowl of Caring YPD Outreach
January 28 - February 1	Bishop's Retreat

Connectional Legislation Conv V
Connectional WMS Executive Board Meeting,
Marriott Hotel - Orlando, Florida

February 2003

February 1-2	Second Quarterly Conference
February 7-8	9th District Founder's Day Celebration St. Paul AME Church, Montgomery, AL
February 9	Founder's Day Celebration (Local Churches) Rev. Dr. Jerome Harris, Director of Employee Security, Guest Preacher

(Continued on page 6)

St. John AME Church 2003 Calendar of Events

(Continued from page 5)

February 15 _____ 9th District YPD Convention
Brown Chapel AME Church, Selma, AL
February 24 _____ Black History Month Observance

March 2003

To be announced _____ Spring Revival
March 5 _____ Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30 p.m.
March 7 _____ District Reporting for Mid-Year Convocation
March 16 _____ Stewardess Candlelight March, 4:00 p.m.
Rev. O. Wendell Davis, Pastor
Union Chapel MB Church, Huntsville, Guest Preacher
March 21-23 _____ 9th District Mid-Year Convocation
St. Paul AME Church, Birmingham (Smithfield), Alabama

April 2003

April 6 _____ Daylight Savings Time Begins
To be announced _____ Women's Ministry Anniversary
April 11 _____ Annual District Conference
Livingston Chapel AME Church, Guntersville, Alabama
April 13 _____ Palm Sunday
Church Anniversary, 10:00 a.m.
Bishop T. L. Kirkland, Guest Preacher
April 18 _____ Good Friday
April 20 _____ Easter Sunday
April 25 _____ 9th District Lay Banquet
St. John AME Church, Montgomery, AL
April 30 - May 3 _____ Connectional Ministries in Christian Education Meeting
Nashville, TN - Marriott Airport

May 2003

May 3-4 _____ Third Quarterly Conference
May 7-14 _____ Self-Denial
May 11 _____ Mother's Day
May 17 _____ Youth Crusade for Christ
St. Paul AME Church, Montgomery, Alabama
May 18 _____ Missionary Day, 10:50 a.m.
May 26 _____ Memorial Day
May 31 _____ Searcy Homes Block Party

June 2003

June 7 _____ March for Jesus
June 8 _____ Pentecost Service, 8 a.m.
Retiree & Graduate Recognition Day, 10:50 a.m.
June 12-13 _____ South Birmingham-Huntsville District Church School Convention
Miles Memorial AME Church, Tarrant City
June 14 _____ Father/Son Banquet, 6:30 p.m.
June 15 _____ Father's Day
Youth Day
June 23-26 _____ Bishop's Council and General Board Meeting, Convo VI
Philadelphia, PA
June 29 _____ Heritage Sunday

(Continued on page 13)

50+ Members Lead Harvest Service

The **50+ Auxiliary Harvest Service** was held during 10:50 A.M. worship service on the third Sunday in November, November 17. The guest preacher was **Reverend Earla Lockhart**, Associate Minister at First Missionary Baptist Church. Members of the 50+ Auxiliary participated in the order of service, including the litany, occasion, memorial, and a special music selection by the 50+ Choir. The Women's Praise Dance Ministry opened the service with ministry in dance. The Children-Youth Choir rendered the music. The vestibule of the church was beautifully decorated with fall decorations and food from the harvest. **Mrs. Mattie Ezell** is president of the auxiliary.



Women's Praise Dancers minister in dance - "Jesus Is Lord"



50+ Choir, accompanied by Mr. Rufus Gilmore, directed by Rev. Dr. J. R. Johnson



Pastor & Mrs. McCall and Rev. Lockhart



The vestibule is decorated with fruits of the harvest.

St. John AMEN and Praise Dancers Sponsor 6th Annual Taste Tea



YPDers served the congregation during the Taste Tea.



Members of the congregation selected from a large variety of dishes.



Hazel Gilmore, member of the Women's Praise Dance Ministry, was co-chairwoman for the tea.



AMEN Staff members Gerald Teague, Jr. and Claire Philadelphia.

Christmas Bible Trivia Test

Created by:
www.bible-trivia.com.
You may take the test
and check your
answers online at
http://www.bible-trivia.com/Christmas_test.html
Answers will also be
posted on the general
announcements
bulletin board at the
church.

1. For the journey to Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph

- A. Walked
- B. Joseph walked and Mary rode a donkey
- C. Rode a bus
- D. The Bible does not say

2. When Mary became pregnant, Mary and Joseph were

- A. Married
- B. Just friends
- C. Engaged
- D. None of the above

3. When Mary became pregnant

- A. Joseph married her
- B. Joseph wanted to dissolve their relationship
- C. Mary left Nazareth for a while
- D. An angel told them to go to Bethlehem
- E. Both B and C
- F. Both B and D

4. Christmas has always been observed

- A. On December 25
- B. On January 17
- C. At Grandma's house
- D. None of the above

5. Who directed Mary and Joseph to go to Bethlehem?

- A. Herod
- B. An angel
- C. Caesar
- D. The IRS

6. Just what is a "heavenly host"?

- A. An angelic choir
- B. The welcoming angel in heaven
- C. An army of angels
- D. None of the above

7. How many angels spoke to the shepherd?

- A. A multitude
- B. Two-Gabriel and Michael
- C. One
- D. Who knows

8. What song did the angels sing?

- A. "O Little Town of Bethlehem"
- B. "Joy to the World"
- C. "Glory to God in the Highest"
- D. None of the above

9. The baby Jesus was born in a

- A. Cave
- B. Manger
- C. Barn
- D. Who knows

10. What animals were present at Jesus birth?

- A. Cows, sheep and camels
- B. Cows, sheep and donkeys
- C. Lion, tigers, and bears
- D. None of the above

11. What is a manger anyway?

- A. A barn

- B. A place for hay
- C. A feeding trough
- D. A Greek term for a nursery

12. When did baby Jesus cry?

- A. When He saw the wise men
- B. Whenever babies usually cry
- C. When the cattle started lowing
- D. No crying he makes

13. Joseph's family was from

- A. Jerusalem
- B. Nazareth
- C. Bethlehem
- D. None of the above

14. Who saw the star over Bethlehem?

- A. Mary and Joseph
- B. Shepherds
- C. The three kings
- D. Both b and C
- E. None of the above

15. What sign were the shepherds to look for?

- A. A star over the stable
- B. A barn outlined with Christmas lights
- C. A baby in a manger
- D. Both a and c

16. What did the innkeeper say to Mary and Joseph?

- A. I have a stable out back
- B. There's no room in the inn
- C. Both A and B
- D. None of the above

17. How many wise men came to see Jesus?

- A. One
- B. Three
- C. Twelve
- D. The Bible doesn't say

18. What in the world are Magi?

- A. Eastern kings
- B. Magicians
- C. Astrologers
- D. None of the above

19. When the wise men bought their gifts to Jesus, they found him in.

- A. A manger
- B. A house
- C. A church
- D. None of the above

20. Who told Joseph to name the baby Jesus?

- A. Mary
- B. The chief priests and scribes
- C. Angel of the Lord
- D. Herod the king

January 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Year's Day	2 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	3 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	4
5 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Deadline	6 50+ Meeting 9:30 a.m.	7	8 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	9 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir	10 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	11 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
12 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	13	14	15 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	16 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	17 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	18
19 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	20 Dr. M. L. King Day	21	22 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	23 Noon Prayer	24 Praise Dance Ministry Service	25 Praise Dance Ministry Workshop
26 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	27 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir	28	29 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast	30 Noon Prayer	31	



Church School Lesson Overview – January 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews written by Church School Superintendent, Willie J. Sandifer.

January 5, 2003

Lesson Title: Setting Right Priorities

Printed Text: Mark 10:17-27

Key Verse: Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing: go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." Mark 10:21 (NRSV)

When a young man came to Jesus with the question "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus gave him the answer he obviously wanted to hear. He cited the commandments to the young man. The young man boasted that he had kept all of the commandments from his youth. Jesus then asked him to sell everything, give it to the poor, and follow Him. Even though he had inquired about how to obtain eternal life, his riches hindered him from following through. The problem was that he thought that he could earn eternal life.

Matthew 6:24 reminds us that "We cannot serve God and money." The disciples were surprised when Jesus told them that "It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" Matthew 19:23. Anything that is in our lives that hinders our relationship with God must be given up. If we were to do as Matthew 6:33 advises, "Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things will be given you as well," all will be well with us.

January 12, 2003

Lesson Title: Purposeful Friendships

Printed Text: Luke 10:38-42; John 11:20-27, 30-32

Key Verses: The Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41-42 (NRSV)

This lesson deals with purposeful friendships, which indicates that we do not get to choose our friends. Jesus was on His way to the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem, when He stopped by Martha, Mary, and Lazarus' home. Martha was working to make the "perfect"

meal for Jesus. She wanted to see that the house and everything was in order. In contrast, Mary was more interested in listening to Jesus. Martha expressed frustration and asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her. Jesus stated, in Luke 10:42, "there is need of only one thing, Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." The "better part" was being open to the words that Jesus spoke. Mary's spirit was in tune with Jesus' spirit.

January 19, 2003

Lesson Title: Truth and Character

Printed Text: John 18:31-38; 19:12-16a

Key Verses: Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" John 18:37-38 (NRSV)

When Pilate questioned Jesus about being a king, Jesus did not deny it. Jesus said His kingdom was not of this earth. Pilate again tried to turn Jesus over to the Chief Priests and Pharisees, telling them, "Here is your King." They refused to accept Jesus as their king and demanded that He be crucified. Although Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent of any crime punishable by death, he gave in to the pressure and allowed them to take Jesus to be crucified.

As Christians, we must trust at all times. If the position of favor or money or praise is to belong to us, we do not need to lie, cheat or steal for it. As the popular contemporary gospel song goes, "What God has for me is for me".

January 26, 2003

Lesson Title: Failure and Restoration

Printed Text: Luke 22:31-34, 54-62; John 21:17

Key Verse: Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "feed my lambs." John 21:15 (NRSV)

This lesson teaches us the danger of taking on temptation in our own strength. Among the twelve apostles, Peter is the one who rises to the forefront often in the final days of Jesus' ministry on earth. God can use flawed people in His service despite their shortcomings. God uses imperfect people and He is in the restoration business for those who disappoint him but choose to return to Him.



Important Dates to Remember

December 22	Christmas Program, 10:00 AM
December 25	Christmas Morning Service, 6:30 AM
December 29	Heritage Sunday, Church School 9:00 AM, Worship Service 10:00 AM
December 31	Watch Night Service and Love Feast
January 1	New Year's Day

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. Romans 10:9-10 NIV

Thought for the Month – "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." - Matthew 3:11

INDNJC

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Mrs. Mary Kirkland, Episcopal Supervisor
Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
3305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

Inside this issue ...

Pastor's Christmas Message
Church Calendar
6th Annual Taste Tea
50+ Harvest Service
Trivia Christmas Quiz



Christmas Morning Worship Tradition Continues at St. John

The tradition of an early morning Christmas Service at St. John continued on December 25, 2002 with a 6:30 a.m. service.

Pastor McCall presided. Director of Music, Rufus Gilmore, was the organist. Prayer was offered by Steward Clifton Pearson. Reverend Claudewell Campbell read the scripture. Congregational songs were "Angels We Have Heard on High" and "Joy to the World". The Christ candle in the Advent wreath was lit by Gale McCall and the Christmas Morning Advent Litany was led by Ms. Barbara Johnson, coordinator for the Advent readings.

Sister Meriam Garrett delivered the Christmas Morning message. Her sermon was entitled "Christmas Presents" with text Luke 1:27-35. She spoke of the Christmas presents that we cannot buy; thankfulness, faithfulness and hopefulness.

Sister Garrett reminded us that we should be thankful for the changes in children's behavior over the past few weeks as they anticipate Christmas presents. We should be thankful for whatever we receive because some have no presents. The second present she described was faithfulness. She described Mary's faithfulness to God as she was able to sing "my soul does magnify the Lord." The third present was hopefulness. We can be hopeful because of a child born over 2000 years ago - a gift to the world. She closed by reminding us that Christ is the greatest gift - the best Christmas present.

The Invitation to Christian Discipleship was extended by Pastor McCall. The Christmas service concluded with the congregation joining hands in a circle and prayer led by Pastor McCall.

Pastor McCall's Message

**"But grow in the grace and knowledge of
our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."**

2 Peter 3:18

We could offer a contemporary educational parallel/paraphrase to the spirituality of 2 Peter 3:18 by noting the purpose of the hottest topic in education today, the "No Child Left Behind" law. The goal, as you know, of this law is to have 100 percent of students reaching proficiency in reading and math by the 2013-2014 school year and schools will be accountable for raising student achievement. The purpose of my message this month is not to analyze the pros and cons of this important landmark law.

However, to reach this maximum student achievement and productivity, we do need adequate and sustained parental involvement in the learning process as well as enhanced teacher quality and effectiveness by 2005-2006. We could not legislate morality ("Love your neighbor as yourself") into the Supreme Court Decision of 1954 and the Civil Rights and Voting Right Acts of the 60's and America's public schools remain basically as segregated today as they were then. Regretfully and painfully, an ACT of GOD often motivates us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Rather than make a resolution today, why not allow the Holy Spirit in you as a believer to help someone at home, church, school, or community to increase (through prayer and Bible study) "in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:52) If your per-

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Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Anita "Mama Neel" Burns

Peace and love that are shown through kindness and joy in the world happen one heart at a time.

Was the miracle that happened long ago the source of joy and love within your heart?

How Do You Feel?

Once again, this year, the Advent and Christmas season are past. How did the end of the season leave you? Are you like some persons, sorry that Christmas is over? Are you sorry all the exciting festivities are over? Are you one who looks forward to Christmas all year long with the delight of a child who feels that the dazzle of Christmas makes the world just alright? When the tree lights shine no more, is your Christmas Spirit packed away with the decorations until next year? Did the joy the Christ Child brought ever enter into your heart?

Are you among those who are glad Christmas is over. If so, maybe you were tired of the hustle and bustle of the season or perhaps you are the person who just doesn't like Christmas at all. Sad to say we have all heard the expression "I hate to see Christmas come". If you are glad Christmas is over is it possible that you are depressed, lonely, sick or dealing with the death of a loved one. Did conditions that just didn't come together lead you to give up on life? Did you never come to realize the manger brought the beginning of life to the World?

Are you among those with the spiritual feeling of the shepherds, who heard the news from the angels and found the Christ Child just as they had been told. The shepherds were not sad that Christmas was over. These men carried Christmas with them forever and forever.

Will we as God's Children keep the true meaning of Christmas in our hearts? Will we continue to share the generous spirit of giving, loving, and forgiving that we were

(Continued on page 4)

New Members Corner

By Cora Speight

St. John's newest member is Mrs. Novella Anderson. Mrs. Anderson moved to Huntsville just over a year ago. Her daughter, Mrs. Beverly Hill, is also a member of St. John. Mrs. Anderson was born in Huntsville, but moved away during her childhood.

Mrs. Anderson was formerly a member of Ebenezer AME Church in Ft. Washington, Maryland. She lived in the Fort Washington area for approximately 20 years. Mrs. Anderson worked for many years as a receptionist for a Consulting Engineering firm whose specialty was building churches.

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

sonal devotional time has become lax, why not sincerely say, "Yes, Lord, I will not be left behind." At St. John, let us continue to allow God's Spirit to use us to grow daily in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to reach out in His love to those in our neighborhoods, schools, institutions, and streets.

Remember! Celebrate! Act! A Day On - Not a Day Off, we can celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday by allowing God's spirit to use us to guarantee that the hopes of every child will be fulfilled. For as we claim and apply the power of the anointing through faith in Jesus Christ, no one will be left behind. To God be the glory!

Second Quarterly Conference Scheduled for February

Presiding Elder Dillard will hold the **Second Quarterly Conference** for St. John on **Saturday, February 1 at 11 AM**. On February 2, Presiding Elder Dillard will preach for the 10:50 a.m. worship service.

All boards and organizations are to be prepared to make their quarterly reports at the conference on Saturday, February 1.



Church School Lesson Overview - February 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Lillie Rivers (1st Sunday), Willie Sandifer (2nd Sunday), and Claudinette Purifoy (3rd and 4th Sundays).

February 2, 2003

Lesson Title: Encouraging Others

Lesson Scripture: Acts 4:32-37; 9:26-27; 11:19-30; 15:36-40

Print: Acts 4:36-37; 9:26-27; 11:22-26; 15:36-41

Key Verse: When he (Barnabas) came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced....for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. Acts 11:23-24 (NRSV)

To encourage- is to help, give support to; be favorable to; foster.

In our lesson today we see how Barnabas lived up to his name as an encourager to the Church, Saul of Tarsus, and to John Mark. Barnabas was a Levite. His actual name was Joseph, or Joses, but the apostles called him Barnabas, which meant "son of encouragement," or "son of consolation." Barnabas was among the earliest converts to Christianity. He was a man of great generosity. The first recorded deed of Barnabas was that he sold a piece of property that he owned and donated the money to the church (Acts 4:36-37).

After the conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus, it was Barnabas who brought him to the Apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-27). They and the church feared Saul for his reputation of persecuting the church. Barnabas described how Saul met Jesus on the Damascus Road and how he later spoke boldly in the name of Jesus. Barnabas gives us a wonderful example of how to help new Christians.

When the church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch, he encouraged the Antioch church by exhortation, mentoring, and teamwork. Once again, we see Barnabas being a mentor and encourager. On their second missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas disagreed sharply over John Mark's failure concerning the first missionary journey. The disagreement caused the two

to separate. Paul may have had good reasons to disagree, however Barnabas spoke up for John Mark as he once did for Paul.

In closing, there is always someone who needs encouragement. Remember just as Barnabas was an encourager so should every Christian be an encourager.

February 9, 2003

Lesson Title: Paul: Obedient Messenger

Background Scripture: Acts 25:23 - 26:32

Print: Acts 26:12-23, 27-29

Key Verse: So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. Acts 26:19

Paul, who had been a great persecutor of Christ and Christians and now was an equally enthusiastic spokesperson for Christ, plead his case before King Agrippa. Paul told Agrippa that all he had done was to be obedient to God's call. He had preached the good news of the Messiah to the Jews and to the Gentiles. Paul's eloquence was so great that King Agrippa was almost persuaded to become a Christian.

Paul was born in Tarsus; his father was a Roman Citizen. He was a Pharisee by birth. He was well educated, having received training by the great philosopher, Gamaliel. Paul also claimed that his knowledge came "Through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12)

February 16, 2003

Lesson Title: Playing a Supportive Role

Lesson Scripture: Acts 16: 1-5, Philippians 2:19-24, 1 Timothy 1: 1-3; 2 Timothy 1: 1-5

Key Verse: Timothy's worth you know, how like a son with a father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. Philippians 2:22

"... and the best supporting actor award goes to Timothy, Paul's true son in the faith".

In this lesson we learn of Paul's second mission, for it was the 1st time that Paul left the east and witnessed in the cities of Greece in the western world and where he met a young man by the name of Timothy on his second preaching journey in the city of Lystra. In this lesson we also address what it truly means to

(Continued on page 4)





Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 3)

be supportive, to be of assistance, to be an encourager, and to be a true shoulder to lean on.

Timothy was truly a committed Christian, who supported the ministry of Paul as well as the message of Jesus Christ, i.e., Christianity. He was willing to take in instruction and sincerely perform his tasks. Paul was so impressed with Timothy because of his strong Christian character and the invaluable assistance that he provided to him that he commissioned Timothy to start new churches. Paul, like any good mentor, provided the necessary guidance that Timothy needed with running the church. Paul instructed Timothy in his letters as described in 1st and 2nd Timothy to help people stick to the truth because there is danger in false doctrine and those who teach it, teach people to do the right things in life, respect authority and leadership, take care of your family, and be careful about worldly things.

February 23, 2003

Lesson Title: Partnering in Ministry

Lesson Scripture: Acts 18:1-4, 24-26; Romans 16:3-4; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19

Key Verse: Greet Prisca and Aquila, who work with me in Christ Jesus, and who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Romans 16:3-4

This lesson is about teaching and helping others in the faith, and focuses on Priscilla and Aquila. In Paul's day, Corinth was an influential city, powerful politically and economically. It is there that Paul began his next mission and met some fellow tentmakers and Christians, Priscilla and Aquila. They had recently come from Rome because Claudius had expelled Jews from the city. Paul began his Corinthian witness in the synagogue, as usual, but due to Jewish opposition he eventually had to abandon the synagogue and concentrate on the Gentiles. Priscilla and Aquila offered assistance and opened their home to Paul, preachers, teachers, and other Christians in the ministry of the gospel without fear of retribution. They encouraged others to

Hold These Dates

May 31 – Searcy Homes Block Party

June 7 – March for Jesus

*"Peace be to these streets
...in the name of Jesus"*

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
John 14:27 (NIV)

Deaconess Corner

(Continued from page 2)

with during this glorious season?

We give you thanks Dear Father and may your gift of Peace at Christmas be our treasure in the new year.

Church School Lesson

accept Christ as their Savior. Priscilla and Aquila, were a Christian couple that used everything they had including their home to assist in the ministry. Their gift was to start new churches and provide instruction, when needed, to foster the ministry and they were willing to risk their lives for the gospel.

Paul remained in Corinth approximately 18 months because God had assured him that his work there would be blessed. Paul, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila, left Corinth and journeyed to Ephesus where they remained to establish the witness there. While in Ephesus, Priscilla and Aquila encountered Apollos. Luke describes Apollos as a Jew who knew of Jesus and taught accurately about him but was deficient in this Christian knowledge, knowing only of John's baptism. The scriptures state that "Priscilla and Aquila soon instructed him accurately" meaning that they explained to him more correctly the way of God. Apollos ventured to Achaia, equipped with new knowledge and was a great help to those who, through God's grace, had become believers. He was able to defeat Jews in public debates with his strong arguments by providing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah.

CURIOUS ABOUT THE USE OF DANCE AS A FORM OF WORSHIP?

Interested in using your gift of dance to praise God?

Willing to come and experience the blessings of ministry through dance?

The Praise Dance Ministry of St. John invites you to attend the annual Praise Dance Workshop.

"Praise God: From Tears to Joy"

Friday January 24th 6:30 p.m Praise Worship Service

Guest Preacher Reverend Angela Walker
Music provided by the St. John Male Chorus

Saturday January 25th 9 -2 Praise Dance Workshop
Continental Breakfast & Lunch provided

Featured Liturgical Dancers:

Cynthia Handy-Quintela and Monica Ryan - Adults 25+
United Christian Church – Huntsville Praise Dancers - Youth
Deno Conerly (Step Praise Dancing) - Children

Mark your calendar and come, remove your sackcloth, and share in the joy of dance.

The Praise Dance Steering Committee

*You turned my wailing into dancing;
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.*

Psalm 30:11

Christmas Program Uses Drama to Tell the Story of Jesus' Birth

The Annual Christmas Program was held during the Church School hour on Sunday, December 21. Mrs. Ellen Washington served as Worship Leader. The opening congregational hymn was "O Come All Ye Faithful". Amber Davis offered prayer and Christina Mack read scripture from Luke 2:1-7. Recitations from the children began the display of children and talent. Sapphire Rochelle, Janelle Woods and Kaitlyn McClung were dressed as gifts as they recited their speech, "The Best Gift." Alicia Brownlow recited "Mary's Prayer" and Alexis Howell recited "Tis the Season".

Following a second congregational hymn, "Jesus the Light of the World," the College Praise Church School Class and Wallace Parham presented a skit entitled "God Gave a Baby." The play, "Night of Miracles" told of the birth of Jesus and included readers and dramatization by the youth and children of the church. Mr. Joe Washington built the manger scene backdrop and Mr. Kevin Long was pianist. Soloists for the play were Ms. Lula Rochelle and Ms. Shanti Owens.

The closing congregational hymn was "Joy to the World." The youth praise dancers ministered in dance using the song "Joy to the World."

Program coordinator, Mrs. Lorraine Parham, and the committee did an excellent job of planning, organizing, and presenting the 2002 Christmas Program. To God be the glory!



Christmas Program





**MARTIN
LUTHER
KING
DAY**

Dr. King Advocated Achieving Peace Through Love

As the world remembers the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and our military forces are positioning for multiple wars, we should remember Dr. King's cries for peace. Dr. King was an advocate for love and non-violence. His pleadings for peace are found throughout his speeches and sermons.

His acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 was anchored in a cry for peace to be achieved through love and nonviolence. In this famous speech he said:

I refuse to accept the idea that man is mere flotsom and jetsom in the river of life unable to influence the unfolding events which surround him. I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.

I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of thermonuclear destruction. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant.

In his sermon entitled "Loving Your Enemies", he noted that he frequently preached on this subject with text from the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, "Ye have heard that it has been said, 'Thou shall love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.' But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." He concluded this sermon with a fervent prayer that is fitting for us today as we also pray for peace.

Oh God, help us in our lives and in all of our attitudes, to work out this controlling force of love, this controlling power that can solve every problem that we confront in all areas. Oh, we talk about politics; we talk about the problems facing our atomic civilization. Grant that all men will come together and discover that as we solve the crisis and solve these problems—the international problems, the problems of atomic energy, the problems of nuclear energy, and yes, even the race problem—let us join together in a great fellowship of love and bow down at the feet of Jesus. Give us this strong determination. In the name and spirit of this Christ, we pray. Amen.

(Delivered at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama, on 17 November 1957.)

As we observe Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in 2003, let us thank God for Dr. King and his outstanding contributions to society and pray for peace on earth.

February 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Second Quarterly Conference
2 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Second Quarterly Conference AMEN Articles Deadline	3	4	5	6 Noon Prayer	7 9th District Founder's Day	8 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
9 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship Founder's Day	10	11	12 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	13 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	14 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	15
16 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Steward Board 4:00 PM	17	18	19 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	20 Noon Prayer	21 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	22 HIV/AIDS Workshop 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM
23 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	24 Community Faith Gathering Aids Coalition 6:30 p.m.	25	26 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	27 Noon Prayer	28	

Important Dates to Remember



January 19	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Service, Conley Chapel CME Church, 3:00 P.M., Rev. James Jackson, pastor, Pastor McCall will preach
January 20	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 24	Praise Dance Service and Workshop Praise Service, 6:30 a.m., Reverend Angela Walker, Guest Preacher, Mrs. Cynthia Hardy-Quintela, Guest Dance Presenter
January 25	Praise Dance Workshop, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Guest Presenters: Cynthia Hardy-Quintela, Monica Ryan, United Christian Church Praise Dancers, and Deno Conerly
January 26	Trial Sermon, Sister Ellen Washington, 8:00 a.m.
February 1-2	Second Quarterly Conference
February 7-8 February 9	Founder's Day, St. Paul, Montgomery, AL Founder's Day at St. John, General Officer Jerome V. Harris, Guest Preacher, Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Thought for the Month – "If there is to be peace on earth and good will toward men, we must finally believe in the ultimate morality of the universe, and believe that all reality hinges on moral foundations." –Excerpt from "The Trumpet of Conscience" by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

INDNJC

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 Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
 6305 Matic Rd.
 Huntsville AL 35810

Inside this issue ...

Christmas Morning Worship Service
Christmas Program
Praise Dance Service and Workshop
Dr. King – Advocate for Peace



St. John Celebrates Founder's Day

By Bridget Floyd

St. John celebrated Founder's Day on Sunday, February 9th during the 10 am worship service. The featured speaker was Rev. Dr. Jerome V. Harris, Director of Employee Security (General Officer) of the AME Church.

The Gospel Choir, accompanied by Mrs. Antoinette Wilson and directed by Mr. Cleveland Wilson, provided music for the worship service. Mr. Talbert Cox, percussionist, also accompanied the choir. Ricardo Love and William Bell served as acolytes for the service. The regular order of worship was followed with a few modifications for this special program. Mr. Otha Owens, Sr. gave the prayer of confession after the singing of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing". Scripture from the Old Testament was read by Mrs. Martha Smith. The Epistle was read by Mr. William Bell, Sr., and the Gospel reading was done by Mr. Eddie C. Sherrod.

Mrs. Nedra McDaniel led the congregation in the Contemporary Decalogue, followed by the Summary of the Decalogue and Gloria Patri. The responsive reading was led by Dr. Jeannette Jones. Dr. John T. Gibson, Sr. gave the welcome and occasion. Col. (Ret.) James O. Heyward read announcements and recognized guests.

Dr. McCall introduced the guest preacher and also presented his wife, Mrs. Sandra Harris, and their son, Chris, who were with him. He highlighted the fact that they both spent their formative years in Montgomery, Alabama. He pointed out that Dr. Harris' religious growth occurred at St. John AME Church, Montgomery. Dr. Harris earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Alabama State and a master's degree in Banking and Finance from Louisi-

(Continued on page 4)

Pastor McCall's Message

Lessons from the Wilderness
Luke 4:1-13

Once upon a time, someone said: *Experience is a tough teacher; it gives you the test first and the lesson later.* Before Christ began His ministry, before He went to Calvary for our redemption, He had already overpowered and conquered Satan in the wilderness of Sinai where Moses and Elijah also fasted forty days. In your own hour of temptation and testing, why not claim the victorious lessons from the wilderness that Christ offers freely to all. By faith we can claim the power of His anointing and prevail over Satan each day.

Once upon a time, little boys and girls memorized Scripture at home, church, and for devotions at school. The first lesson from the wilderness is simple: THE WORD! "It is written..." Each time Satan attacked Christ, as you know, Jesus gave a Scripture-Answer (cf. Deut. 8:3, Deut. 6:13, Deut. 6:16). Whereas Adam and Eve and Israel in the wilderness faithlessly failed the test and withdrew from God, you and I by God's grace and through the faith in Jesus Christ can *memorize before we evangelize*. God's Holy Spirit in you will empower you and guide you to answers to your problems, your healing, your companionship, your loss, your suffering, your finances, your children, your marriage, your work, your past-present-future, your studies and He will be the eternal ANSWER to your every unsolved mystery. Leave it to Jesus! He is the

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Praise Dancers Instructed in the Ministry of Dance During Workshop

By Thalia Love-Brown

Ms. Cynthia Handy-Quintela and Ms. Monique Ryan were the guest presenters for the adult workshop during this year's Praise Dance Workshop.

Ms. Quintela first explained liturgical dance. Liturgical dance reinforces the words of a song or scripture. It helps us to reclaim the sacredness of our bodies and promotes all aspects of the use of the arts in Christianity. Liturgical dance was defined as Holy Spirit-guided dance, rather than dance steps put to music.

Ms. Ryan presented a video entitled "The Moving Word: Ministry of Dance." The video presentation focused on four aspects of dance ministry: dance theology, dance trials, dance testimony, and dance triumph. Dance theology involves the study of our spiritual belief system through movement. The scriptural reference used was II Samuel 6:14, "and David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with linen ephod." Praise dancers are encouraged to lead with their lifestyles and to let God manifest his work through the ministry of dance. This entails asking God to reveal one's gift and purpose. Once God had revealed the purpose of the gift, one must prepare. Praise or liturgical dancers must bathe everything in prayer.

Dance trials are challenges. The question of "to dance or not to dance" must be answered first. This must be discussed with the pastor to determine the attitude toward dance and what elements will fit into that church. The dance ministry must be congregationally friendly. Most people's reference point for dance is from a social standpoint which presents the greatest challenge. To meet this challenge, dancers should establish a code of dress. In addition, dancers should receive some training and skills in dance and interpretation through dance. Praise dancing should honor the body and the spirit.

(Continued on page 3)

Church Street CPCA Joins St. John for Ash Wednesday Service

Ash Wednesday in Christian churches is the first day of the penitential season of Lent. On this day, Christians have a smudge of ashes placed on their foreheads, as a sign of penitence. The ashes are obtained from palm branches that were distributed the previous Palm Sunday. They are burned and blessed before the service on Ash Wednesday. Ashes are received because in the ancient times people who did penance often did penance in "sackcloth and ashes." Christians have ashes placed on their forehead in the sign of the cross to show a spirit of humility and sacrifice.

St. John observed Ash Wednesday with a joint service with our neighbors at Church Street CPCA.

The order of service followed the flow of our traditional worship service with the addition of a special call to worship to begin the service and the "ceremony of the ashes" following the sermon. Pastor McCall led the service and Mr. Rufus Gilmore, III was organist. Prayer was offered by Reverend Dr. Mitchell Walker of Church Street CPCA, scripture was read by Sister Ellen Washington, and Reverend Claudewell Campbell led the responsive reading (Psalm 51:1-12) and the Summary of the Decalogue.

The Ash Wednesday sermon was delivered by Reverend Lenwood Purce. His sermon was entitled "Yes, There is Hope" with text Ezekiel 37:1-9, 13-14. In this timely message, he emphasized that in spite of the critical situations our nation faces as we move closer to war, there is hope. He compared our despair to that of the dry bones in the valley. As the valley of dry bones represented the kingdom of Israel and the life restored to the bones represents the restoration of Israel, when we allow God to move in our midst there is hope, deliverance, and life changing power.

Following the invitation to Christian Discipleship, Pastor McCall led the Ceremony of the Ashes.



Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Sarah 'Granny' Bell

A Golden Stairway

A heart that shows no mercy,
A heart that holds no love,
Deprives itself of happiness
And blessings from above.

But the dawning of each new day
Invites us to partake
In proving what a difference
A caring heart can make.

And a heart that beats for others
On its journey down life's road,
Builds a golden stairway
Toward its Heavenly abode.

(Catherine Janssen Irwin)

*And the peace of God, which transcends
all understanding,
will guard your heart and minds
in Jesus Christ.*

Philippians 4:7

Praise Dance Workshop

(Continued from page 2)

The video presentation pointed out that God's word is not simply for entertainment; it is meant to be life-changing. Praise dance should be used to testify to God's goodness and to show triumph in God's word.

The workshop concluded with the participants forming groups and reading a scripture and interpreting the scripture through movement.

This workshop was one of three concurrent workshops presented during the Praise Dance Workshop on Saturday, January 26, 2003 at St. John. The Praise Dancers of United Christian Church of Huntsville presented a workshop for the youth and Mr. Justin Beatty presented a workshop for the children.

Pastor Speaks to Team Redstone

By Adrienne Pope Kelley

"The Souls of Black Folks (100th Anniversary)" was the theme of the Black History Month Celebration held at Redstone Arsenal on Thursday, 20 February 2003 at 9:00 a.m. in the Command's Sparkman Center Bob Jones Auditorium. Pastor McCall presented the keynote address.

To build on the theme, Rev. Dr. McCall selected as his subject - "Who Will Stand in the Gap?" He challenged an audience of over 400 persons to build on the efforts of many Black leaders, past and present, who have stood in the gap for a better world. "The problem of the 21st century remains who will stand in the gap constantly interceding before GOD on behalf of the land", said Pastor McCall.

He continued by stating, "We won't leave here like we came when we stay in the gap and be true to our GOD and true to our native land. When you stand in the gap with hands and heart attuned to GOD, you won't leave here like you came". And indeed the audience did not leave the auditorium like they came after this thought-provoking address.

Ms. Arturine Shackelford, Defense Intelligence Agency, Missile & Space Intelligence Center and Ms. Benetta Halbert, Acquisition Center, US Army Aviation & Missile Command provided beautiful solos for the occasion. Mr. Horace Wilson of the South Central Personnel Operations Center presented an original poem.

Included in the audience of over 400 were a representative number of members from St. John and the Huntsville community.

Mustard Seed

**STACK EVERY PIECE OF CRITICISM
BETWEEN TWO LAYERS OF PRAISE.**

*"Correct, rebuke, and encourage -
with great patience and careful
instruction."*

2 Timothy 4:2 NIV

JAG



Founder's Day at St. John

(Continued from page 1)

ana State University. He retired from Regions Bank in December of 2000. He was elected Executive Director of the Department of Employee Security in July of 2000. He was pastor of Brown Chapel AME in Selma, Alabama for seven years. He formerly served as Presiding Elder in Alabama as well.

Dr. Harris joined Pastor McCall for the installation of the Trustees, Class Leaders, and Church Officers for the 2002-2003 Conference Year. These members were asked to come to the altar. Pastor McCall and Dr. Harris offered prayer as well as charged these individuals to serve and to be examples to those who observe them in the service of the Lord and their church.

Dr. Harris spoke on the topic of "Focus on Faith". The text was Matthew 15: 21-28, with an emphasis on verses 26-28. He indicated that life is a mysterious journey. He described this journey as ever-unfolding as well as containing trials and tribulations. Sometimes these trials and tribulations are sufficient to compromise courage and confidence, regardless of one's level of religiosity. He cited national and international tragedies such as the space shuttle and September 11th incidents as tests of faith. Often it takes this level of catastrophe to move people to seek the Lord. According to Dr. Harris, faith tells us "the Lord will make a way, somehow".

Referring to the text, Dr. Harris pointed out that the woman in the story sought Jesus' help for her daughter's illness of demonic possession. The illness tormented the woman and according to Dr. Harris, it may have been a mental illness or epilepsy, for which doctors had no answer. Her final act was to approach Jesus with her daughter's problem. There are too many times when instead of being the first choice, Jesus is the last resort.

Initially, Jesus did not respond to the woman's request for help. When he did respond he said, "It is not right to take the children's

bread and toss it to the dogs." According to Dr. Harris, the woman was not offended. Rather, she was on a mission to seek help for her child, so she was not deterred by the rebuff. In fact, she acknowledged that she was not worthy of being in Jesus' presence. Dr. Harris indicated that the woman had faith, in that, she knew that "just a crumb of God's grace would be sufficient to answer her prayer."

The result was that Jesus made the daughter "whole". Dr. Harris distinguished between healing and being made whole. He stated that only Jesus can do the latter. He pointed out that the woman's faith was the catalyst or change agent. He emphasized that when you focus on faith, all things are possible. Dr. Harris recounted the story of Richard Allen. It was when he was removed from the prayer rail that he was inspired to leave the worship setting that sorely restricted his religious freedom.

This event served as the catalyst for the founding of the AME Church.

Dr. Harris went on to give a litany of African American historic figures who achieved greatness because they focused on faith. He indicated that tribulations became testimonies. Faith is the difference between victory and defeat. One must focus on faith to lead slaves to freedom via the underground railroad, and to lead a civil rights movement where loss of life is a major risk.

Dr. Harris gave the ultimate example of trial and tribulation as he cited the cross on Calvary and Jesus giving a prayer on Friday which was answered on Sunday.

Dr. Harris' message was most appropriate for celebrating the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He gave a fitting tribute and reminder that out of trials and tribulations great things (such as the AME Church) can emerge. The trials and tribulations suffered by Christ gave us the ultimate answer to prayer: Jesus' resurrection after dying for the sins of others. The key is to *focus on the faith*.

He indicated that tribulations became testimonies. Faith is the difference between victory and defeat.

HIV/AIDS Ministry Sponsors Series of Services

By Charlsie Brooks

ST. JOHN RECEIVES "BALM IN GILEAD" TRAINING FOR HIV/AIDS MINISTRY

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). St. John sponsored a program to provide information about this serious syndrome that disproportionately impacts the African American community. On Saturday, February 22, 2003, the Missionary Society, the Christian Education Director, YPD Department and Class Leaders united for HIV/AIDS training conducted by Ms. LaTeisha Akin, Certified HIV/AIDS trainer, AIDS Action Coalition (AAC), Huntsville. After prayer by Pastor McCall, who emphasized that AIDS is now considered the world plague, he invoked the Holy Spirit to lead our membership to accept the charge in helping victims by receiving and implementing the training that we received this morning.

Mrs. Akin's expressive flip chart presentation and hand-outs stated that AIDS was identified in 1981. Some persons infected with HIV/AIDS may not have symptoms to show for a period of as much as 15 years. There are typically no visual symptoms in the infected person. She gave clarity regarding how HIV is spread. She stated that only a doctor can diagnose AIDS. Discussion and questions followed the HIV infection timeline hand-out. Specific identifiers were given showing how HIV is spread. Mrs. Akin stated that as Believers we stress ABSTINENCE; however, all should know how to care for themselves and loved ones, for this disease has become an epidemic in our society and is currently killing so many of our black brothers and sisters. In her closing she stated that the "Balm in Gilead" outreach is seeking churches that are unafraid to discuss this volatile disease and will accept the call to add HIV/AIDS training and assistance to the church's ministries.

COMMUNITY FAITH GATHERING
Held on Monday, February 24, at 6:00 p.m.

St. John was one of several churches hosting Community Services stressing Prayer and

Healing of AIDS. Reverend McCall opened the services with a warm welcome to the guest speaker, the gospel choir, staff from the AAC office, the ushers, and all present. A pungent opening prayer was offered by Sister Lillie Rivers which was followed by the responsive reading from the "Balm in Gilead Call to Commitment" led by Community Faith Gathering (CFG) Member, Mrs. Akin. Mrs. Erica Harbin gave an exceptional welcome that included some horrifying statistics. By the end of 2001 there were over 12 million young people aged 15-24 living with HIV/AIDS, world wide. Also in 2001, among African Americans who make up 12% of the U.S. population, 54% were newly infected with HIV. Since 1982, 563 people in Madison County have been reported as living with HIV/AIDS. Mrs. Harbin stressed that our role is to learn as much as we can about the disease and to help where we can.

The speaker of the hour, Elder Kenneth Anderson, a certified professional counselor was introduced by Ms. Wendi Williams, CFG member. Elder Anderson, a prolific speaker, used the text from Matthew 25:34-46, "What Type Christian Are You?" Only in the Anderson creative style could a truly picturesque description regarding how the devil chose the HIV/AIDS virus to reveal how some "so-called" Christians would react to the crisis of AIDS sufferers. He illustrated that this disease was a true brain storm of Satan, and many of us have not taken the banner to help. Some believe that AIDS sufferers are being punished for their lifestyles because many victims are homosexuals and drug users. Many religious groups refuse to take action because of the magnitude of Africans who are affected by the disease.

Elder Anderson then asked where would Jesus be if he were here? He said Jesus would form CARE teams. He would be walking through the community, helping. "Jesus, the bright and Morning Star," he said, "would stop by the Downtown Rescue Mission, and stop by 6th Avenue." He would wrap His arms around all the so-called untouchables. Jesus would stop by the Boys and Girls Clubs and give them

(Continued on page 12)

"What Type Christian Are You?"

Church Facts Quiz

1. Which candle on the communion table do you light first?
2. Which candle is extinguished first?
3. What do the three letters on the cross (IHS) mean?
4. What does the candle on the right of the communion table represent?
5. What does the candle on the left of the communion table represent?
6. What do the three steps at the foot of the cross on the communion table stand for?
7. How many seasons are there in the Christian year?
8. What is the first season of the church year?
9. What is the longest season of the church year?
10. Which side of the pulpit should the Christian flag be placed?
11. As a Protestant, do you wear a cross with Jesus on it?
12. How many sacraments do we recognize and perform in our church?
13. What is an Acolyte?
14. What is Ash Wednesday?

* Questions from The Journal of Christian Education. Answers are on page 12.

*Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark! How the heavenly anthems frown
All music but its own.*

*Awake, my soul and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless king
Through all eternity.*

- Matthew Bridges

Lay Organization Meeting Planned for March 15

"The Lay Organization in the local AME Church is usually composed of three (3) or more persons formed for the purpose of: instilling in its membership a love and appreciation for the history, tradition and principles of African Methodism; advocating respect and loyalty to constituted authority; encouraging the support of the total program of the local church; fostering systematic and regular study which will provide greater knowledge and participation in the church; organizing and training lay members concerning the goals and objectives of the Connectional Lay Organization."

- AME Doctrine and Discipline 2000

Anyone interested in joining the local AME Church Lay Organization at St. John is invited to meet at the church on Saturday, March 15, 2003, at 10:00 A.M. For further information, please contact ~ Ms. Cassandra Ingram at 837-8646.

If you are not a minister, you are a lay person. Join with us on Saturday, March 15, 2003 and become an active and involved lay member.

118th Church Anniversary Celebration Scheduled for April 13

The 118th Church Anniversary of St. John A. M. E. Church will be celebrated on Palm Sunday, April 13, 2003 during the 10:00 A.M. worship service. (There will be only one service.)

The preacher for this special event will be the **Right Reverend T. Larry Kirkland**, Presiding Bishop of the 9th Episcopal District, AME Church. Tell your family, friends, and co-workers. You do not want to miss hearing and witnessing the anointed, spirit-filled, evangelical preaching of Bishop T. Larry Kirkland.

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

ANSWER! God is to be depended upon, not distrusted.

Once upon a time, children were taught that *if you play with fire you will get burned*. Another lesson from the wilderness we can claim by God's grace is this: *"Stop it before it starts!"* God is to be praised and served not Satan. Let's keep our hearts open for the indwelling presence of Christ. Let's claim the power of HIS Anointing and simply say Yes, to JESUS and Get behind me, Satan! Let's worship and serve God with our bodies, minds, and souls! Let's praise the Lord with Christian precepts and Spirit-filled examples that affirm: Abstinence is best for those who live in Christ and postponement until marriage is best for those who are given another chance. God alone is worthy to be praised. Let's present our bodies as a living sacrifice to Him today. (Romans 12:1)

Finally, once upon a time, children were taught *character begins in Christ* not Hip-Hop, Rap, R&B, or any other artists past, present, or future. God is to be trusted not tested. Even though Israel attempted to test God at MERIBAH (Exodus 17:1-7) Jesus would not repeat the same faithless mistake the Israelites made. We don't have to make the same error either. We have the answer before the test is given. Jesus is the answer. God is to be trusted not tested.

The temptations of Jesus in the wilderness recorded in Luke 4:1-13 and Matthew 4:1-11 ended and the devil departed from Him until an opportune time. Let's apply by God's grace through faith in Christ the Scripture-Answer lessons from the wilderness: *Memorize before you evangelize*. It is written, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every WORD of God." *Stop it before it starts*. "Get behind me, Satan. It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.'" and *Character begins in Christ*. "It is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

Once upon a time, Christ was tempted and given the worst test of all, CALVARY. He passed through death to the resurrection perfectly. And He is coming again soon with His reward. Aren't you glad?

Lenten Observances Yield a Closer Walk with God

LENTEN SEASON covers the forty-six day period between Ash Wednesday and the eve of Easter. Lent itself excludes the six Sundays and is, therefore, only forty days. Our worship services on Sundays are weekly commemorations of the first Easter and the proclamation that Christ is risen. The date of the beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is determined by the date of Easter.

Palm Sunday, which begins the Holy Week preceding Easter, celebrates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Thursday of Holy Week is known as Maundy Thursday. It is the anniversary of the last supper Jesus ate with His disciples on the evening before the crucifixion. The name comes from the Latin term, mandatum meaning "Command." The command as originally given, was for the followers to continue to remember by washing feet as a sign of humility. However, the contemporary interpretation is that the meal itself is commemorated as an act of remembrance.

Friday in Holy Week is the anniversary of the crucifixion. The term, "GOOD FRIDAY," comes from "God's Friday," just as good-bye comes from "God be with ye."

In times past, observances associated with the Lenten season were preparation (preparing converts for baptism on Easter), penitence (mourning, solemnity, and sadness over sins), fasting (discipline), and special prayer (development of their spiritual lives).

The contemporary church observes the Lenten season with penitence (self-denial), teaching (growth in knowledge of the faith), outreach (special witness to the redemptive message, prayer (special personal and public prayer), and preparation for the victory of Easter. Through these spiritual exercises, a person is afforded a closer walk with God.

The liturgical color during Lent and Holy Week is violet or purple indicating the penitential spirit. Black is used on Good Friday. Lenten resources are the four Gospels and other Biblical passages depicting the meaning of "Bearing the Cross Redemptively."

AME Women in Ministry Were Trailblazers

By Judith Gardner

Our Women's History Month feature focuses on the lives of spirit-filled AME Women in Ministry.

"And it shall come to pass ... that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons, and your daughters shall prophecy." Joel ii. 28.

Women in Ministry bring a difference, which is unique, it's not superior or better, the difference allows them to reach the same goals and objectives concerning ministry unto the Lord. The role of women was limited by many societies to childbearing and keeping the house. They were viewed as the property of men along with the house, the land, and the animals. Throughout history women have been described as the weaker and not important sex, but they have always made a great contribution within their homes, their communities, and in their countries. Women have throughout the ages exercised leadership and pastoral skills from the pew and sometimes the pulpit. They served without denominational support or an office of ordination. They have started churches, led Bible studies, evangelized and headed organizations which were for women only. The road has not been easy or the burden light for pioneering women who faced criticism, rejection, isolation, excommunication, and even threatened with bodily harm. In the following, we lift up a few trailblazers.

Jarena Lee

Jarena Lee was born February 11, 1783 in Cape May, New Jersey. In 1811, she married Reverend Joseph Lee, an AME preacher. Six years later, Joseph died and Lee was left with two children and a commitment to preach in the place of her husband.

Lee is reported to be the first woman to request to preach in an AME church. This request was denied in 1809. In 1817 or 1818, Lee voiced her renewed intentions to preach. The Bishop Richard Allen of Philadelphia was convinced this time and even praised her gift for preaching.

In 1836, the publication of Jarena Lee's *Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee* is said to have started the rich autobiographical tradition for African-American women.

Amanda Berry Smith

Amanda Berry Smith was born into slavery in Maryland on January 23, 1837. By 1840, her father, Samuel, and mother, Miriam, had purchased their family's freedom. The family had moved to York, Pa. by 1850. Smith learned to read and write at home since she was unable to attend school. As the oldest daughter, Smith was expected to help her family financially. At the age of thirteen, she went to work as a domestic. Three years later, she married Calvin Devine. They resided in Columbia. Their unhappy marriage ended with Calvin's death early in the Civil War. Smith then married James Henry Smith, an AME Church deacon in Philadelphia. Smith worked in the mission field for forty-five years. She spent time on four continents and with many different groups of people. She was called "the singing pilgrim" and "God's image carved in ebony" by the newspapers of her time. She was an active member of the AME church even though she spent much of her time in North America preaching to white congregations. Though she was sometimes criticized for her work among whites, she was highly regarded as a leader of the AME church.

Harriet Baker

Harriet Baker was born in Havre de Grace, Maryland in 1829. She was born into a long line of strong and rebellious women. Her grandmother on the paternal side supposedly once killed two men with an axe after they severely whipped her. They whipped her so badly that strips of skin and flesh were brought away from her body, blood flowed, and by the time they were done, her

(Continued on page 9)

Women's History Month

Credit Due*

Phoebe our sister ... has been a helper of many and of myself also.

—Romans 16:1-2

Women have often gone unrecognized for their achievements and contributions. And sadly, it's also true in the church. But in Romans 16, we have an example of the importance of honoring women who serve faithfully. Paul praised Phoebe as "a helper of many and of myself also" (vv. 1-2). He commended Priscilla and her husband Aquila, who risked their lives for Paul's sake (vv. 3-4). Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis "labored in the Lord" (v. 12). Paul mentioned at least eight women for whom he had great appreciation.

Women of faith deserve honor for their service to God and others. Think of the women who are serving faithfully in your church. Why not give one of them a word of thanks and praise today?

—David McCasland

*O Lord, help me appreciate
The work that women do,
The service given from their hearts,
Their sacrifice for You. —Sper*

God never fails to give credit where credit is due.

* Excerpt from *Daily Bread*, March 2, 2003.

(Continued from page 8)

"very entrails had protruded." After being taken to jail, she was granted her freedom due to the severity of the crime against her. Though born free, Baker (her maiden name was Cole) did not have an easy life. Her father died when she was eleven. As was the custom then, a nearby slaveholder would come to claim the children from the widow if it was proven she could not provide. Luckily, the house was stocked with provisions so the children remained with their mother. In 1845, when she was only seventeen, Baker married William Baker, who was enslaved by Edward Gallop. Gallop "allowed" this marriage because he believed Baker to be a hard worker and that she would work for free around the house. After two years though, Baker found out that Gallop was planning to sell William to Georgia. So, two nights before he was to leave, Harriet and William set off for Pennsylvania with their seven-week old child in their arms. They then settled in Columbia. For many years, Baker believed she was called to preach. However, her pastor and her friends dissuaded her. It was not until a great time of need, after her home had burnt and her two teenage daughters had died within weeks of each other, that she heard the call, "Go now or you shall die." She would no longer be deterred. She began her ministry in Brownstown, Pa. After eighteen years of "arduous labors," it is estimated that she led five thousand persons to "realize salvation, and countless thousands of believers have been strengthened, and encouraged, and blessed."

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie

Rev. Vashti Murphy McKenzie walked through a door that was once closed to women. At the AME's quadrennial convention in July 2000 she was elected and consecrated the 117th bishop of the AME Church. She was assigned to the 18th Episcopal District, which comprises some 10,000 members and 200 churches in Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, and Mozambique. This, too, was a first for a woman. Bishop McKenzie became the first woman in the 214-year history of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) to walk through this door.

In 1990 Rev. McKenzie was appointed to Baltimore's Payne Memorial African Methodist Church, the first time in her denomination that a woman had been assigned to a congregation of that size. Payne Memorial was located in the city's urban core, with all the attendant problems of drugs, crime, and violence, but also in a neighborhood of other large and active religious institutions. The soon to be Bishop McKenzie assessed the needs of the church and its community, focusing efforts on spiritual growth, educational and economic development, and community revitalization. Payne Memorial, under her leadership, was able to institute 25 new ministries and increase its congregation from 300 to more than 1,700.



March for Jesus and Searcy Homes Block Party

On June 7, 2003, Pentecost weekend, millions of Christians in more than 2000 cities around the world will march to show their love for Jesus. The 2003 March for Jesus will once again be a part of Jesus Day- "A day on earth as it is in heaven...no one goes hungry, no child is fatherless, no one suffers alone, and the streets are filled with singing."

Huntsville has supported the March for 10 years and has promoted Community Evangelistic Block Parties in neighborhoods throughout the city as a demonstration of the love of God. This year we are promoting block parties during the weeks before the March, from April 26- June 7. Again this year, St. John and Church Street CPCA will sponsor an Evangelistic Block Party at Searcy Homes.

Theme: "Perfect Peace with No Fear"
Date: Saturday, May 31, 2003
Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Place: Grounds of Searcy Homes

Subcommittees and chairpersons from St. John are:

Stage & Sound	Brother William Bell
Set-Up/Cleanup	Brother Earl Fitchard, Brother Earl Griffis
Security	Brother Theodore Tyson III
Photography	Brother Everett Brooks, Sr., Brother Jason Brown
Prayer Committee/Prayer Walks	Sister Meriam Garrett, Sister Lillie Rivers
Evangelism	Pastor Homer McCall
Donations	Pastor Homer McCall
Block Party Activities/Booths	Brother Willie Sandifer
Registration/Bible Distributions	Sister Patricia Grier
Media/PR	Brother James Heyward
Food/Refreshments	Sister Benita Jackson
Program	Sister Nedra McDaniel
Drama	Sister Claudinette Purifoy

Please contact the chairperson for the committee on which you will serve or call the church office to let us know we can count on you.

We have received our second order of March for Jesus T-shirts. Purchase your T-shirt early and start wearing it now.

The March will be held on Pentecost Saturday, June 7. The March will begin at Big Spring Park, travel east on Williams, north on Franklin, west on Monroe (past St. John), and south on Monroe; ending at the Big Spring Park with a prayer and praise service. Assembly for the march begins at noon and the march begins at 1:00 PM.

Our goal is to have at least 100 participants from St. John. A registration list will be posted on the "March for Jesus" bulletin board outside the Fellowship Hall.

Peace be to these streets in the name of Jesus!



Church School Lesson Overview – April 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Agnes Bailey (1st Sunday) and Willie J. Sandifer (2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays).

Messiah Messiah

April 6, 2003

Lesson Title: Entering Jerusalem and Cleansing the Temple

Lesson Scripture : Mark 11:1 – 12:12

Print: Mark 11:1-9, 15-18

Key Verse: When they arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple and began to drive out all those who were buying and selling. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the stools of those who sold pigeons. Mark 11:15

In this lesson we examine Mark's account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and His cleansing of the temple prior to His Crucifixion. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey amid cheering crowds (Zechariah 9:9). He then engaged the religious establishment by disrupting the commercial traffic on the temple grounds. These were not random events. Jesus was nearing the end of His ministry. He was presenting Himself to Israel as the Messiah.

Do we enter the house of worship in the spirit of praise and prayer as God intends? Or have we turned God's house into a place to display our religiosity; a place to make business connections, a place to socialize? May this lesson serve as a reminder that we should treat God's House with respect and enter it in a true spirit of worship of the one in whose name the building is dedicated.

When worship degenerates to involve only what we can get rather than what we can give, we make the church a den of thieves. This lesson is a reminder that worship is a serious matter and everyone is encouraged to examine his or her attitude toward worship.

Passover Lamb

April 13, 2003

Lesson Title: A New Meaning for Passover

Lesson Scripture: Mark 14:1-25

Print: Mark 15:21-24, 34-37; 16:1-8

Key Verse: This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Mark 14:24

As the Jewish Passover approached, Jesus' disciples asked how they should prepare for this observance. He instructed the two disciples to follow a man carrying a jar of water and to make preparations for the Passover in a home where Jesus had arranged for using a large room upstairs (vv. 13-16). During the Passover meal, Jesus announced that one of the twelve would later betray Him (vv. 17-18). As each distressed disciple openly questioned Him, Jesus described and pronounced judgment on the one who would betray Him (vv. 19-21). Jesus blessed and broke a loaf of bread, giving it to the disciples as a symbol of His body (v. 22). Jesus gave thanks for the cup, passing it to all of the disciples and describing it as a covenant in His blood (vv. 23-25).

The meeting at the upper room was about the preparation for death of the Lord, but it also served as re-interpretive context. The Lord gave new meaning for old traditions. In terms of the celebration of life and death, Jesus raised for us the issue of having good plans, anticipating future needs, and addressing them successfully.

Suffering Servant

Suffering Servant

April 20, 2003

Lesson Title: The Cross and the Empty Tomb

Lesson Scripture: Mark 15:21-16:8

Print: Mark 15:21-24, 34-37; 16:1-8

Key Verse: Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look there is the place they laid him. Mark 16:6

The verses, in this lesson, tell of the crucifixion of Jesus and of some of the things that He had to endure on His way to the cross. The biblical text emphasis includes passages which tell us the following: 1) Simon of Cyrene was ordered to carry Jesus' cross to the place of the cruci-

(Continued on page 12)

Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 11)

fixion (Mark 15:21-22). 2) The soldiers offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh, but He did not take it (v. 23). 3) The soldiers crucified Jesus, drew lots, and divided His clothes among themselves (v. 24). 4) At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (v. 34). 5) Those standing around thought Jesus was calling for Elijah and waited to see if Elijah would come (vv. 35-37). 6) On the first day of the week, the three Marys found Jesus' tomb empty; and an angel told them that Jesus had been raised and to tell the disciples to meet Him in Galilee (vv. 35-37).

Victory Over Death Victory Over Death

April 27, 2003

Lesson Title: The Importance of Belief

Lesson Scripture: Mark 5:21-43

Print: Mark 5:22-36, 41-42

Key Verse: Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe". Mark 5:36

This lesson tells two well-known stories, each speaks of the belief in the power and the person that two people had in the Lord:

Jairus

Jairus was a leader in the synagogue who had heard of the healing power in the words and in the touch of Jesus. He asked Jesus to visit his home to cure his daughter. On the way back to his house, Jairus got word that his daughter died. Jesus looked into the eyes of this man who had just lost his child and told him not to fear but to only believe. Jairus did believe and when he, Jesus, and others made it to his house, his belief and faith in Christ were rewarded when his daughter was healed.

The Woman

As Jesus was trying to get through the crowd to Jairus' house, a woman touched the clothes He was wearing. She believed so much in Jesus' healing power that she knew that if she were to touch the clothes He was wearing, she would be healed. The power of her faith was seen in her not letting the crowd keep her from touching the one who could do something about her situation.

HIV/AIDS Ministry

(Continued from page 5)

encouragement. He would then go by Limestone Prison. Most importantly, He would ask what have you done to help? If you can help somebody, Elder Anderson concluded, your living will not be in vain.

After Reverend McCall opened the doors of the church, he asked for comments from the Missionary Society president, Sister Eleanor Burnett.

The service was exceptional. There was also outstanding music from the Gospel Choir. The sermon left the congregation challenged and charged to do the best we can to educate all and assist those who have this dreaded disease.

HIV/AIDS TEEN FORUM Saturday March 8, 2003

St. John A.M.E. Church, The Missionary Society, Christian Education Department, YPD and the HIV/AIDS Ministry co-sponsored a City-wide Youth AIDS Forum on March 8. This program offered educational information, teen panels, t-shirts, breakfast and lunch to over 250 youth and parents. It also featured National Speakers. This was an edifying and meaningful experience for all who attended.



Pray for Our Military Forces

As our nation prepares for the possibility of war, we are encouraged to pray unceasingly. Pray for our leaders, for our military, and for their families.

The AMEN will publish a special prayer list of loved-ones who are actively serving in the military. Please submit this information to the church office or e-mail to the church at stjohnameh@aol.com.

Military Prayer List

Mr. McLean Philadelphia, husband of Mrs. Claire Philadelphia

April 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast	Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir		10:00 a.m. Trustee Board Meeting
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline	50+ Auxiliary 9:30 a.m.		6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	Noon Prayer	8:00 p.m. Male Chorus	10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Palm Sunday Church Anniversary 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship Bishop Kirkland, Preacher			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	Noon Prayer Maundy Thursday 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	Good Friday 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Easter Sunday 9:00 a.m. Church School 9:45 a.m. Easter Pro- gram 10:30 a.m. Worship			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	
27	28	29	30			
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast			

Important Dates to Remember



March 15	March for Jesus/Community Block Party Planning Meeting & Workshop St. John AME Church, Noon – 3:00 PM
March 16	Stewards and Stewardess Candlelight March, 4:00 p.m., Rev. O. Wendell Davis, Pastor Union Chapel MB Church, Huntsville, Guest Preacher
March 21-22	9th District Mid-Year Convocation, St. Paul AME Church, Birmingham (Smithfield), Alabama
March 30	Heritage Sunday, Church School 9:00 AM, Worship Service 10:00 AM
April 6	Daylight Savings Time Begins
April 13	Palm Sunday/ 118th Church Anniversary, Bishop T. L. Kirkland, Guest Preacher, Church School 9:00 a.m., Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
April 20	Easter Sunday, Church School, 9:00 AM; Youth/Children's Easter Program, 9:45 Am; Worship Service, 10:30 AM

Thoughts for the Month –

"If we die, we die by our own hands." – Reverend Dr. William Hooper Council

"If my people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." II Chronicles 7:14

INDNJC

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Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
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Inside this issue ...

Founder's Day
Praise Dance Workshop
Pastor McCall Delivers Black History Speech
HIV/AIDS Ministry Workshops and Service
Women's History Month
Searcy Homes Block Party Plans



**"The Rejected
Stone – The Chief
Cornerstone"**

**Bishop Kirkland
Preaches for 118th
Church Anniversary**

By Bridget Floyd

The Right Reverend T. Larry Kirkland, Presiding Bishop of the Ninth Episcopal District was the guest preacher for St. John's 118th Anniversary Celebration. The 10 a.m. worship service was held on April 13, 2003 and the theme was "The Rejected Stone – The Chief Cornerstone". The gospel choir, under the direction of Mr. Cleveland Wilson provided inspirational music for the service. Mrs. Antoinette Wilson served as pianist and Mr. Talbert Cox served as percussionist.

The regular order of worship was followed with some additions for the special anniversary service. Mr. Otha Owens, Sr., gave the prayer of confession. The Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel readings were done by Reverend Dr. James R. Johnson, Mr. Carlos Clark, and Reverend Claudewell Campbell, respectively. Reverend Kenneth Johnson led the congregation in the Decalogue.

Mrs. Charlsie Brooks gave the welcome and occasion. Col. (Ret.) James R. Heyward read announcements and recognized guests. Mrs. Rosa Whitaker led the anniversary litany. Reverend Debra Woods gave the prayer of thanksgiving. Dr. McCall introduced the guest preacher.

Bishop Kirkland spoke on the topic "Weeping Over the City" from the text Luke 19: 41-48. He began by acknowledging Palm Sunday as the beginning of Passion Week. He laid the background regarding events that occurred during Biblical times. He cautioned that one should not become too excited while rejoicing because there will be problematic situations such as Jesus

(Continued on page 6)

**Pastor McCall's
Letter**

**"Working together with God
is the difference."**

Just think about it – It has been shown that the brain functions better when it works together – when the left or logical hemisphere and right intuitive hemisphere work together. It has also been shown that the brain works better with positive things than with negative, destructive criticism. As it is with the brain, let it be so in our homes, community, churches, nation, and the world.

Let us pray for healing in the human family. Since we are made in the image of God, let it begin with our working together with the Spirit of God in us: God is Love (John 4:8). Let there be healing by working together positively rather than apart negatively and destructive for God is Love. From the multicultural religious community of Abraham's family of Islamic, Jewish, and Christian believers that began in Genesis with Hagar and Ishmael and Sarah and Isaac, let there be healing in the human family. From India's Mahatma Ghandi and the Hindu faith to the Bahai's around the world and from the street corner, store front preacher to the corners of our hearts and minds, let there be healing as God works through you and me his plan of love for all humanity. God is Love. When we cooperate with God through prayer for guidance and un-

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**"Weeping Over the
City"**

Luke 19: 41-48

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Lay Organization Meetings

The Lay Organization of St. John will meet quarterly. At each quarterly meeting there will be a brief workshop. Mrs. Lorraine Parham, Director of Lay Activities will coordinate the workshops. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, June 28, 2003**.

Please contact Ms. Cassandra Ingram, Lay Organization President, for more information.

Missionary Day

The St. John Women's Missionary Society will celebrate Missionary Day on Sunday, May 18 during 10:50 AM worship Service.

The guest preacher for this Annual Day will be the Reverend Doris Marshall, pastor of St. Paul AME Church, Tusculum, Alabama. The Children/Youth Choir will render music.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Easter Programme

By Bittany Bell

This year's Easter Programme was wonderful and enlightening on the day set aside to celebrate our Lord and Savior rising from the dead. It was held on April 20, 2003 after the early morning sunrise service and Sunday School. The program started off with a dance from the Youth Praise Dance Ministry. After the dance we heard recitations from the children, after that the youth then performed a play.

This year's Easter program was coordinated by Mrs. Lorraine Parham, and the Master of Ceremony was Ms. Shanti Owens. If you missed this year's program you missed a blessing. I would like to congratulate all the children, and youth, who participated because they did an extremely good job. Thanks again to everyone for making this year's Easter Programme a great success.



THE CHANGING FACE OF MISSION WORK

By Eleanor Burnett

President, Betty E. Derrick Missionary Society

The work of missions will be the same, there will always be a need to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and elderly, provide hope when there is uncertainty, change the attitudes of those who are prison bound, and provide spiritual guidance to those who feel lost, hopeless or left behind. The work of missions has and will always be needed. We have come into an age that requires us to go about our mission work in different ways due to the various challenges that we now face. The result is the same— leading lost souls to Christ.

This new way of doing mission work, while it does not by any means leave out those who have gone before, requires certain skills. Skills that are a part of the daily life works of many of our young people. The skills are technological, medical, sociological and/or administrative. In order for the mission work of our church to grow and continue to be effective we must bring on board our talented young people.

The Women's Missionary Society (WMS) is appealing to our young people to join and participate in the Young Women's Initiative (YWI). The YWI is an Episcopal-wide effort to recruit young women between the ages 18-40 to not only join the WMS, but assist with our many issues that affect our community such as daycare, addressing the needs of persons living in Black Belt communities, homelessness, education, mentoring, etc.

Please come join us, bring your God given skills, ideas and talents into his storehouse to build up His kingdom here on earth. Give back to God for that which He has given you.

The Betty E. Derrick Missionary Society meets the second Saturday of each month at the Church at 1:30 pm. Join us!

For more information, please contact Mrs. Eleanor Burnett or Ms. Claudinette Purifoy.



Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Anita Burns

A Good Friday World with an Easter Faith

Who are we? We are the people who feel that we must take on all of the affairs of the world. We are the fix-it people.

The senior citizens are not getting a fair deal, a friend has just learned that she has cancer, a young couple is divorcing, children are killing other children, and people are being kidnapped, more and more often.

Yes, it is a world filled with pain and suffering. A recent Sunday School lesson referred to this kind of world as a 'Good Friday' world. This is the type of world in which we live today.

But remember, we did not create heaven and earth and we can't fix these problems on our own. God can and God did, with the empty Tomb. Therefore, neither can life's problems decide our determinations or destinations; nor can prejudices, poverty, wealth, education, racism, or terrorism be used as excuses. We have the right to pursue a joyous life. Although we live in a 'Good Friday' world, we have an 'Easter Faith'. Through the crucifixion and the resurrection, Jesus removed all limitations. He rolled the heavy stone from our sin entombed lives. Our HOPE is found in the empty tomb; our FAITH in a Risen Savior.

Thank you dear Lord for the 'Easter Faith' you have given us in Jesus Christ, our Savior.
AMEN.

Hold the Date! October 1, 2003

Pastor McCall will preach the **Annual Sermon** at the opening worship service of the 125th session of the North Alabama Annual Conference on Wednesday, **October 1, 2003, at 10:00 AM**. This year's conference will be hosted by **St. John AME Church, Birmingham**. The Male Chorus will render music.

District Conference

Rev. Claudewell Campbell

The members of the South Birmingham-Huntsville District met at Livingston Chapel AME Church April 11, 2003 for the District Conference. We were all warmly received by the pastor, Reverend Wilbur Marshall, first lady Reverend Eileen Marshall, and the entire Livingston Chapel family.

Presiding Elder Dillard called the district conference to order and organized the conference. The first order of business was electing two marshals. Reverend Kenneth D. Johnson and Bro. Willie Sandifer, both of St. John Huntsville, were elected and served as marshals for the entire district conference.

A short welcome program was presented by the pastor Reverend Wilbur Marshall, City Councilwoman Howell (who is the niece of our member Annette DeShields) and by James Townsend, the mayor of Guntersville. In the mayor's presentation, he mentioned that he knew the former presiding elder the late E. L. Blankenship and considered him as a friend. The mayor presented Presiding Elder Dillard with a key to the city of Guntersville. Jokingly, the mayor said that the key does not open anything in the city.

Reverend Dr. Farrell J. Duncombe, pastor of Payne Chapel in Birmingham, began the series of workshops with a very informative and enlightening workshop on "Music that will help the church to grow." Dr. Duncombe began by stating that the pastor is in charge of everything in the church, and that includes the music and director of music. According to Dr. Duncombe, the music should lift the heart, soul, and conscience of the worshipper. He also stated that Methodist people are "singing people". Dr. Duncombe further stated that the music director should keep in mind these three things when selecting music for worship: familiarity, appreciation, and music that turns attention to God. Finally, Dr. Duncombe reminded us "forget not the hymns of the church."

The second workshop was presented by Reverend W. N. Jackson, pastor of Grady-Madison in Madison and was entitled "How To Build A Church From Scratch." Reverend Jackson present a detailed chronology of dates and

(Continued on page 8)

October 1, 2003

Pastor's Letter

(Continued from page 1)

derstanding of His Word, when we allow His grace and love to be applied faithfully in the world through us, more souls will be won to His kingdom and for His glory.

Just think and pray about it. Just as the brain works better together and with positive things rather than negative destructive criticism, so we are the difference when we allow the God of Love to work through us for His own glory. "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity." (Psalm 133:1)

Mustard Seed

**The Lord has not lost His power,
but, His people have lost their faith.**

"And without faith it is impossible to please God,
for whoever would approach Him must believe that He exists
and that He rewards those who seek Him."

Hebrews 11:6 (NRSV)

by JAG

Student Recognitions

We will recognize students for their accomplishments during the 2002-2003 school year in the next issue of the St. John AMEN. Please submit information regarding honor roll and all special awards by Sunday, June 7. Forms will be available in the church office and vestibule.

AMEN Staff



Graduate and Retiree Recognition

Graduates and Retirees will be recognized during worship service in June. All graduates and retirees are requested to submit their resumes to the church office as soon as possible.

Usher's Corner

By Agnes Bailey

On Saturday May 3, 2003 the Senior and Youth Usher Boards met for a joint training session. After breakfast and a time of fellowship, the training began with an introduction of the officers for this conference year. Everyone present received a handout about the purpose and duties of the church usher. There was a question and answer period and hands on instructions.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Senior Usher Board Jackie Grier
Dawn Lewis
Mattie McKinney

Junior Usher Board Geoffrey Brown
Malcolm Ifekauche
Brittney Davis
Ashley Lewis
Meagan Speight

Thanks to all who participated in the training and to each individual usher for their commitment to serve. May the following always be our watchword: "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psalm 84:10)

New Members' Corner

By Cora Speight

Tracy Spiegner is St. John's newest member. Tracy has returned to Huntsville after living in New York for several years. Tracy has a degree in Psychology from Columbia University. After graduating, she remained in New York, working in the New York school system.

While in New York, Tracy was a member of Antioch Baptist Church. Tracy plans to further her studies at Alabama A & M this fall.

Tracy enjoys the church services and Bible Study at St. John. She has completed the New Member's Class and was read into full membership on Sunday, April 27.

Exercise daily — walk with the Lord.



MOTHER'S DAY MAY 11, 2003

Patrice S. Ruffin

Excerpts from *Proverbs 31*:

A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. (verse 10)

Her Children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her. (verse 28)

Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate. (verse 31)

For me, Mother's Day has always been especially unique. I was born on Mother's Day and this year I will celebrate my 23rd birthday on Mother's Day. But, even in spite of the personal blessings that are connected to that day, this holiday is always a reminder of one of the greatest blessings the Lord has given me yet - a mother. Actually, she is much more than a mother. She is a friend, a confidant, a sister.

And since we are all someone's child, I thought it would be interesting to ask some of the children of St. John to express what Mother's Day means to them. This is what they had to say:

"I love her. She is a special mommy." - Sapphire Rochelle, 6

"Mother's Day is a day to thank your mothers for everything they have done for you." - William Bell, 12

"Mother's Day is special to me because it gives me a chance to show my appreciation to my mom because I know some children grow up without one." - Geoff Brown, 13

"Mother's Day is a day that you give thanks for your mother. You can give them a special thanks for giving you life." - Adrina Sconiers, 12

To all of the mothers at St. John - biological and otherwise - we would like to wish you a very happy and blessed Mother's Day.

M is for the million things she gave me,

O means only that she's growing old,

T is for the tears she shed to save me,

H is for her heart of purest gold;

E is for her eyes, with love-light shining,

R means right and right she'll always be.

By Jason Brown

Church Anniversary

(Continued from page 1)

in the Garden of Gethsemane and the crucifixion; which in turn can be followed by hopeful outcomes such as the resurrection. Bishop Kirkland indicated that historically, this was the only time Jesus allowed a public demonstration on his behalf. The point being, Jesus "had no ego problems". Bishop Kirkland indicated that there were two reasons for this: 1) To answer and fulfill the prophecy in Zechariah ("Behold your king is coming for you ... humble and on a donkey"; 2) To force Jewish religious leaders to act immediately, rather than wait until after Passover as they had planned. Again the prophecy was that God's son would be killed during Passover.

Another unusual event was Jesus weeping (noted only twice in the scriptures). The first time was at the tomb of Lazarus and the second was when Jesus looked into Jerusalem and "sobbed loudly" as he lamented their lost opportunity in not realizing that they had the Son of God in their midst. Bishop Kirkland elaborated that there was a lost opportunity for peace that Jesus was offering. He distinguished between material goods and the peace that is not disturbed by the negativity of others. This is an opportunity that he urged Huntsville area residents to take because it is still available because of the resurrection. According to Bishop Kirkland, the second issue that caused Jesus to weep was seeing religious activity accomplishing nothing (of a religious nature). This caused Jesus to drive out those who were commercializing the temple, because this angered Him. Bishop Kirkland quoted the scriptures, "My house shall become a house of prayer" (not preaching, teaching, offering). He expounded on the power of prayer in terms of changing things and people as well as easing a troubled mind.

Bishop Kirkland ended by admonishing those present to not make Jesus cry. That is, come into church sincerely, "make Him rejoice over what you are doing for Him. Make sure your activity means something to Christ". Bishop Kirkland cited current political, economic, and wartime issues that make this a trying time. Despite this potential time for weeping, he reminded listeners, through song, to not complain because in reviewing the good and bad

DIRECTIONS TO HIS HOUSE

Make a Right onto "Believe Blvd."

Keep straight and go through the Green Light, which is Jesus Christ.

From there, you must turn onto the "Bridge of Faith," which is over troubled water.

When you get off the bridge, make a Right turn and Keep Straight. You are on the "King's Highway" - Heaven-bound.

Keep going for three miles: One for the Father, One for the Son, and One for the Holy Ghost.

Then exit off onto "Grace Boulevard" From there, make a Right turn on "Gospel Lane."

Keep Straight and then make another Right on "Prayer Boulevard."

As you go on your way, Yield Not to the traffic on "Temptation Avenue."

Also, avoid SIN STREET because it is a DEAD END.

Pass up "Envy Drive," and "Have Avenue." Also, pass "Hypocrisy Street," "Gossiping Lane," and "Backbiting Boulevard."

But you have to go down "Long-suffering Lane," "Persecution Boulevard," and "Trials and Tribulations Avenue"

But that's all right, because VICTORY Boulevard is straight ahead!

-Anonymous

Church Anniversary

days "I Won't Complain".

Pastor McCall offered an invitation to discipleship to those present. He highlighted Bishop Kirkland's history in expanding his church and cited a similar effort toward expansion and enhancement of the Ninth Episcopal District as he embarks on a new phase of service to the A.M.E. Church.

Thank You God for Our Church Families

Charlie Brooks

There is no doubt that Jesus ordained the concept of family. He loved His very own family and remained with them until He was 30 years old. (Luke 3:28) Jesus followed in His earthly father's profession and was obedient to his parents. (Luke 2:51) Jesus blessed the marriage feast at Cana with wine (John 2:1), and blessed little children and identified their childlike qualities as the gateway to the kingdom of heaven. (Mark 10:11-16) Jesus also formed one of the most diverse forms of family formations ever known. His immediate extended family consisted of the twelve disciples, the group of men he handpicked to follow Him and establish His Church. JESUS LOVES FAMILIES!!

St. John is blessed to have a multiplicity of wonderful families, all striving to make their homes Christ centered. Our parents and guardians know that love begins in the home and that they teach by example. "Familiar are small communities in which we receive countless opportunities to learn how to love in the nitty-gritty of daily life. Families call us to learn the way of Christ not only in the endless round of dirty dishes and diapers, but in the face of broken promises and shattered trust." (Marjorie J. Thompson)

Our church families reach out to help others as is exemplified in our sharing with others during our community block parties, food share programs geared to feeding the hungry, and numerous other means of outreach carried out through our fifteen church ministries. "Nearly everyone in Ibiza was related. They all knew each other, the tales of one another's ancestors, their ancestors; their histories and heroic deeds. Nothing was hidden. It was the duty of every member of the town to find out and know his neighbor's business." (Buchi Emecheta) Our church family lovingly reaches out to others.

We indeed realize we are only as strong as our next generation; therefore, we all focus on enriching activities for our youth. We are so blessed to have leadership from our Pastor and family, church ministerial staff, officers, and members. Specific thanks are extended to Missionary President, Ms. Burnett; YPD Advisor, Mrs. Sconiers; Christian Education Director, Mrs. Parham; Youth Choir Director, Sister Washington; Youth Praise Dance Directors, Mrs. Whitehead and Dr. Brown; Usher President and Usher Youth Coordinator, Mrs. Bailey; Church School Superintendent, Mr. Sandifer and Teachers, and countless others who spend many hours working with our youth, locally, connectionally and with young people in general. GOD BLESS YOU FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK!

What is our wish for the beloved families of St. John during this month's National Family Week Celebration?

May you have enough happiness to keep you sweet,
Enough trials to keep you strong,
Enough sorrow to keep you human
Enough hope to keep you happy,
Enough failure to keep you humble,
Enough success to keep you eager,
Enough friends to give you comfort,
Enough wealth to meet your needs,
Enough enthusiasm to look forward,
Enough faith to banish depression,
Enough determination to make each day better than yesterday!

And a non-ending walk with GOD OUR FATHER AND CHRIST OUR REDEEMER!

District Conference

(Continued from page 3)

events from the first organizational meeting until the present time. Reverend Jackson mentioned the hard work involved when you start a church with no money, no members, and no place to meet. He thanked everyone who assisted them with financial gifts and other items for the church that helped them get to where they are currently. Reverend Jackson said it takes a lot of prayers and patience to start a church.

The Word of God was preached by Reverend Vicki Sanders, pastor of Matthew Chapel A M E Church in Fackler, Alabama. Reverend Sanders took her text from Matthew 26: 36-46 and spoke from the subject "In the Need of Prayer". Reverend Sander's sermon was spirit filled, informative, inspirational, uplifting and biblical based.

We were blessed during the morning session with the presence of Presiding Elder Albert L. H. Hyche and the Revs. Bobby Cox, Richard Davis, Levi Billups, Sheryl Shipman, and Ron Sterling from the Birmingham-Florence District.

The afternoon session began with devotion led by Reverend Claudewell Campbell, Sis. Rhonda Tolliver and Sis. Mary Garrett. Dr. H. L. McCall began the first workshop on "Spiritual Formation" GOD (Grow Or Die). Dr. McCall asked the question: What are your vitals? He then talked from the four Bible passages Luke 2: 49-52; Luke 22: 39-46; Luke 4: 1-11; and Luke 23:33-34. These four passages of scripture represented lessons from the temple; lessons from the wilderness, lessons from Gethsemane; and lessons from the Cross, respectively. This workshop was highly informative and spiritually fulfilling.

The second workshop was conducted by Reverend James A. Rumph, Pastor of Grant Chapel Birmingham and was entitled "Becoming A Healthy Church." Reverend Rumph listed several things that will make a church healthy such as: busy exalting the name of Jesus; equipping the saints; evangelizing to win souls; inviting others to Christ, giving testimonies so sinners can hear them; being involved in tithing; engaging in worship service; and encouraging the pastor.

Reports were given from the New Initiative and Projects that were formulated at the planning meeting in December 2002 to look at the feasibility of planting new churches on the district. Reports were made from the Huntsville-Madison area, Center Point-Roebuck area, Fultondale-Gardendale area, and Project Overton area. A follow up written report is expected from each committee at the Sunday School Convention.

Presiding Elder Dillard asked that all pastors and ministers meet him at Bethel Overton on May 18, 2003 at 4:00 PM. Rev James A. Rumph was asked to be the speaker and St. Luke's choir was asked to sing along with the choir from Grant Chapel. Each pastor was asked to bring a liberal offering to help this church.

The evening session sermon was preached by Reverend W. N. Huggins pastor of St. Paul A M E Church in Scottsboro. Reverend Huggins' text was from Luke 22: 31-32 and his sermon title was "Jesus is Praying for You."

We were also blessed by the presence of Bishop T. Larry Kirkland and Mrs. Mary Kirkland.

Sis Ellen Washington, Sis Meriam Garrett, Bro. Raymond Nomel, and Reverend Claudewell Campbell met with the Board of Examiners.

Attending the district conference from St. John was: Sis. Margaret Ballard, Sis. Eleanor Burnett, Sis Mary Powers, Bro. Willie Sandifer, and Sis. Rosa Whittaker. Ministers present were Reverend Debra Woods and Reverend Kenneth D. Johnson.

America's Calling To Free Oppressed People

By James R. Johnson, Sr. Chaplain USA Retired

Recent polls in the United States demonstrated that Americans support the soldiers involved in the conflict with Iraq. It is not enough for them to know that the people back home support them. Do we know their cause is needful, necessary and just?

Our forefathers have not left us morally adrift regarding our responsibilities to the freedom entrusted to us. Perhaps you recognize this quote from the Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

As I turn these words over in my mind, I am struck by the clarity of their intent. Men and women are not meant to be held under an oppressive government. They are to be free to pursue all that is good and virtuous, to live free without fear of their governments.

I read in the newspaper of people being able to worship again. Then I think of my visit to see the Berlin Wall that separated East and West, and how people were tearing pages from the Bible and hiding to read their treasure. The wall was in place for a lifetime, seventy years, and it came tumbling down without a shot being fired.

As an Army Chaplain, I also am concerned about the religious issues surrounding war. Many assume that a godly person never would want war and that God must prohibit war outright. In fact, God commands his people to go into battle on numerous occasions in the scriptures.

A well-known verse of scripture that sums up the Ten Commandments is, "you shall love the Lord God with all your heart, soul and mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself." If I love God with all of my heart, mind and soul, then I love all that He loves



Pray for Our Military

Pray for our leaders, for our military, and for their families.

Military Prayer

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen."



Military Prayer List

Private Vince Edwards, nephew of Lorraine Edwards-Parham

Major Angelo William Johnson, Special Forces Unit; son of Mrs. Mary A. Johnson & Mr. Ollie Johnson, brother of Ms. Barbara Johnson & Mrs. Janice Hereford

SPC Christopher Quimbly and SPC Roderick Quimbly, godsons of Sgt. Major and Mrs. Theodore Tyson, III

SSG Keshya L. Tyson, daughter of Sgt. Major and Mrs. Theodore Tyson, III

Please submit information on loved ones deployed to the Middle East to the church office or e-mail to the church at stjohnameh@aol.com.

America's Calling

(continued)

and I hate what He hates. I hate injustice. I hate murder against the innocent. I hate genocide. I hate deception and lies. I hate men who plot to deceive and destroy others for their own ambitions.

Instead, I love compassion, righteousness, truth, justice and the opportunity to grow and serve.

Pentecost Weekend 2003

**Saturday, June 7, 2003 is the March for Jesus/
Jesus Day 2003**

The March will start at the corner of
Williams and Lowe Street (Hilton Downtown Hotel)

Please assemble at 12:00 PM for prayer.
March begins at 1:00 PM

The 2002 march route will be approximately 1.6 miles. The March for Jesus will begin by lining up on Lowe Avenue (Hilton Hotel), turn right on Williams Avenue, turn left on Franklin Street, turn left on Monroe Street, turn right on Williams Avenue and end at Big Spring Park where a Prayer and Praise Service will be held. Jesus Day service and ministry projects will continue throughout the day, followed by a community service to be held in Big Spring Park.

40 days of Prayerwalking for the 2003 March for Jesus route began on April 26. During these 40 days, people are asked to walk (or drive) the route, pray for the March, the city, our nation and whatever else the Lord lays on your heart. This is a wonderful way for prayer teams, Sunday school classes, or other groups to become involved.

Contact Nedra McDaniel or William Bell for more information.

March for Jesus Huntsville · P.O. Box 8780 · Huntsville, Alabama 35804-8780
(256) 859-6738

Web Site: www.marchforjesus-hsv.org Email: info@marchforjesus-hsv.org

Sunday, June 8, 2003 is Pentecost Sunday

**Pentecost Service
St. John AME Church
8:00 AM**

"Allowing the Fruit of the Spirit to Yield Joy and Peace"

The Annual Pentecost Service will be held during the 8 AM worship hour.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23



Church School Lesson Overview – June 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer.

Journey Home

June 1, 2003

Lesson Title: The Exiles Return

Background Scripture: Ezra 1

Print: Ezra 1

Key Verse: Anyone of his people among you - may his god be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, the god who is in Jerusalem. Ezra 1:3

The Lord's prompting (through Cyrus) motivated about fifty thousand people to return, along with vessels of the temple.

This lesson relates the circumstances behind the decision of many Israelites to make a nine-hundred-mile move from their settled situations in Babylon. This journey would take them back to Judah, the land of their roots. We witness the struggles of ancient Israelites as they decide to leave a land in which most had been born to return to an ancestral homeland that only a minority had ever seen.

Rebuild

June 8, 2003

Lesson Title: Beginning to Rebuild

Background Scripture: Ezra 3, 4

Print: Ezra 3:1-3, 6, 7, 10-13

Key Verse: Ezra 3:11

Key Verse: All the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. Ezra 3:11

The returnees wanted God's blessing so one of their first acts was to rebuild the altar of burnt offerings.

In this lesson, God shows us his providential care on a repentant people, a people ready to rebuild. God is not far from any of us, and he

specializes in rebuilding. The people wanted to rebuild the temple and gave generously: about eleven hundred pounds of gold and three tons of silver.

Priorities

June 15, 2003

Lesson Title: Returning to the Work

Background Scripture: Haggai, Ezra 5:1, 2

Print: Haggai 1:2-14

Key Verse: Is it time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin? Haggai 1:4

This lesson is about priorities. The Israelites who had returned from Babylonian exile had started well in their task to rebuild the temple, but then they found reasons to rearrange their priorities. They put first things last. After the rebuilding stopped, God raised a prophet, Haggai, to challenge the people to evaluate their priorities. It worked.

Hope

June 22, 2003

Lesson Title: God Gives Hope for the Future

Background Scripture: Zechariah 8

Print: Zechariah 8:1-13

Key Verse: I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the Lord Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain. Zechariah 8:3

In this lesson, God speaks again through the prophets after the exile. It started with Haggai on August 29, 520 BC. Two months later, the voice of Zechariah was also heard in Jerusalem.

The prophet Zechariah then teamed with

(Continued on page 12)



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 11)

Haggai to assure the people of God's concern for them. Both men provided encouragement to those who were building the temple. The temple was finished and dedicated on March 12, 515 BC, and the people prospered under the preaching of these two prophets.

Celebration

June 29, 2003

Lesson Title: The Exiles Dedicate the Temple

Background Scripture: Ezra 5, 6

Print: Ezra 6:13-22

Key Verse: The people of Israel - the priests, the Levites and the rest of the exiles - celebrated the dedication of the house of God with joy. Ezra 6:16

The people who had returned from exile in Babylon had been back in Jerusalem for twenty years. Outside enemies and inside selfishness combined to delay the rebuilding of the temple. The people had provided well for their own homes, but the temple of God had been neglected.

The preaching of Haggai and Zechariah motivated the people again to put first things first - to give first place to the things of God. As a result, they resumed building and finished the temple. The entire nation was delighted that the temple was completed. A thousand years had passed since the Israelites had received God's covenant. They promised again to obey it.

Church School

9:45 AM each Sunday

Willie J. Sandifer, Superintendent

Classes for all ages!

Grow in Grace

"Grow in grace and understanding."

2 Peter 3:18

Here are ten principles to help you grow in grace toward yourself.

1. Hate your sin, but never hate yourself.
2. Be quick to repent.
3. When God gives you light, walk in it.
4. Don't say negative things about yourself.
5. God loves you as you are, it's wrong to hate what He loves.
6. He has great plans for you; therefore you're in conflict with Him when you speak negatively about your future.
7. Never be afraid to admit that you've made a mistake but don't always assume that when things go wrong it must be your fault.
8. Don't meditate excessively on what you've done, right or wrong; both of these activities are self-centered. Instead center your thoughts on Christ: "You will guard him and keep him in perfect and constant peace whose mind [both its inclination and its character] is stayed on You..." (Isaiah 26:3 Amp).
9. Take care of yourself physically. Make the best of what God gave you to work with, but don't be obsessed with your appearance.
10. Never stop learning; but don't allow your education to become a point of pride. God doesn't use you because of what's in your head, he uses you because of what's in your heart.
11. Realize that your talents are a gift, not something you have manufactured yourself, so never look down on people who can't do what you can.
12. Don't despise your weaknesses - they keep you dependent on God.

Reviewing these principles regularly will help you grow in grace toward yourself.

June 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 50+ Auxiliary 9:30 a.m.	3	4 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast	5 Noon Prayer	6 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	7 10:00 a.m. Trustee Board Meeting MARCH for JESUS 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
8 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline	9	10	11 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	12 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	13 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	14 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
15 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Father's Day Steward Board 4:00 PM	16	17	18 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	19 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	20 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	21
22 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	23	24	25 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	26 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	27	28
29 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	30					

Important Dates to Remember

May 17	Youth Crusade for Christ, St. Paul AME Church, Montgomery, AL
May 28	Annual Missionary Day
May 31	Searcy Homes Block Party, 1:00 – 3:00 PM
June 7	March for Jesus, Noon
June 8	Pentecost Sunday, Pentecost Service, 8 AM

Searcy Homes Evangelistic Block Party

Theme: "Perfect Peace with No Fear"
Date: Saturday, May 31, 2003
Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Place: Grounds of Searcy Homes

Thought for the Month –

"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is Love." (1 John 4:8)

INDNJC

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Mrs. Mary Kirkland, Episcopal Supervisor
Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810



Peace is Focus of Block Party

For the third year, St. John AME Church and Church Street CPCA have sponsored an Evangelistic Block Party at Searcy Homes. This outreach ministry is in conjunction with the Huntsville March for Jesus Celebration. Churches throughout the city sponsor Evangelistic Parties at various Huntsville housing areas.

This year's Searcy Homes Block Party was held on May 31 from 1 to 3 PM. The theme was "Perfect Peace With No Fear." The Good News was spread through the participation of several ministries from the two churches. Reverend Lenwood Purce and Minister Jennifer Williams were the praise leaders. The Church Street E.D. White Men's Choir rendered three selections. St. John's Male Chorus rendered two selections. Praise dancers included the Church Street Praise Dancers, St. John Youth Praise Dancers and St. John Women's Praise Dancers.

The message of the Good News was also told through drama. The Church Street Puppet Ministry delivered a message full of humor and Biblical instruction. The St. John drama team presented skits, "Dr. Jesus" and "Witness."

Prayers and the call for decisions for Christ were led by Pastors McCall and Walker.

A delicious lunch of hot dogs and hamburgers (grilled onsite), chips, cookies, and soft drinks was served. Booths were sponsored by the Fifty Plus, health committee, literary committee, prayer and evangelism committee and the Church School.

It is a joy to see the response of the members of both churches who volunteered their time to support this outreach and the response of the Searcy Homes residents.

Pastor McCall's Letter

"A man is praised according to his wisdom, but men with warped minds are despised."
Proverbs 12:8

The wisdom literature of Israel provides numerous examples and timeless illustrations of behavior codes that exemplify a life lived by grace through faith in GOD. We are taught in verse eight from whence comes a good name. During our celebration this month of Father's Day, Recognition Day and Youth Day, why not honestly ask yourself this following question: What has been and is the primary focus of my life: 1. To attend a good school 2. To get a good job, 3. To have a good name or some other concern. The scripture teaches a good name is more desirable than great riches... (Proverbs 22:1)

Many crucial concerns and viable choices in this postmodern generation are deleted by those who seek lasting relationships in the wrong places. Many also still seek stability, strength and security without any reference to fixed moral law. As we celebrate transitions this month, let us be thankful that by grace and through faithful obedience to God's wisdom, we remain blessed. Choosing a good school and a good job are important. Choosing a good spouse for life and good friends are important concerns. Choosing a good purpose and good relationships are good. Choosing a good location to live and making good preparations for retirements are all valid concerns. But let us remember that with all

(Continued on page 10)

"Perfect Peace With No Fear"

"Peace Be To These Streets... in the Name of Jesus!"

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Usher's Corner

By Agnes Bailey

"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psalm 84:10).

The youth usher board is happy to welcome **Ashley Love**. Thanks to all those young persons who serve faithfully each 2nd and 4th Sunday. The Senior Usher board is still looking for members to serve. No experience is necessary. You will receive on the job training.

Tip of the Month: The role of the church usher is one of ministry. The usher is to represent Jesus Christ to members and visitors. As Christ's representative the usher should prepare spiritually for service through the study of God's word, prayer and meditation.

Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Christine Meriwether

LIFE

THEY TOLD ME that Life could be just what I made it-

Life could be fashioned and worn like a gown;
I, the designer, made the decision
Whether to wear it with bonnet or crown.

And so I selected the prettiest pattern-
Life should be made of the rosiest hue-
Something unique, and a bit out of fashion,
One that perhaps would be chosen by few.

But other folks came and they leaned o'er my shoulder,

Somebody questioned the ultimate cost;
Somebody tangled the thread I was using;
One day I found that my scissors were lost.

And somebody claimed the material faded;
Somebody said I'd be tired ere 'twas worn;
Somebody's fingers, too pointed and spiteful,
Snatched at the cloth, and I saw it was torn.

Oh! Somebody tried to do all the sewing,
Wanting always to advise or condone.
Here is my life, the product of many;
Where is that gown I could fashion-alone?

NAN TERRELL REED

One Day Church School Convention Filled with Teaching and Worship

By Willie J. Sandifer

The members of The South Birmingham-Huntsville District Church School and Christian Education Convention came together on Friday, June 13, 2003 to worship and praise God. Reverend Dwight E. Dillard is the Presiding Elder of the South Birmingham-Huntsville District. The teaching and ideas exchanged will be remembered for many years to come. It is hard to believe that the following was packed into one day:

Workshops: (Early Morning)

Youth

Early Preparation for College
Church Decorum
Getting to Know Me

Adults

Developing a Healthy Sunday Church School

Ministers

The Christian's Walk in the Church and in the World

Service of Word and Table

Bishop Kirkland preached from Hebrews 11:24 a message entitled "Making the Right Choices." He stated that there is confusion of right and wrong. He expounded on how people make wrong choices in marriage, food, and educational pursuits. Although Moses had the best education and was cultured, he refused to follow the sinful when he became of years. He chose to follow the affliction of the people. In contrast, Egypt represented pleasurable and materialistic things like Escalades and "Bling Bling" and the affliction of the people represented the new way (Jesus). He closed the sermon with "I Want Jesus to Walk With Me" and communion was served.

Workshops: (Afternoon)

Youth:

Christian Teen Relationships
Choices (7-11)
The Sock Club (6 & Under)

Adults

Biblical Parenting Principles
in an Age of Technology

Ministers

(Continued on page 12)

As the Twig is Bent, the Tree is Inclined

Everett E. Brooks, Jr.

It is the sacred duty of a father to instruct and train his children.

Every father instructs his children, mostly by example.

It is the sacred duty of a father to instruct and train his children. Ephesians 6:4 instructs us; "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." Slightly translated, it is up to us as fathers not to irritate and provoke our children, but rear them tenderly, and in my estimation, firmly in the training, discipline, counsel and admonition of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is a noble and worthy goal to build in our children the strongest sense of character and lay the foundations for a useful and wholesome life. This is our responsibility as parents and as fathers.

Every father instructs his children, mostly by example. In the case of his daughters, in the way a man should treat the females in his life – the example of self love and reverence to his wife, the respect and love that can only exist between a son and a mother, the honoring of a grandmother and, of course, the special love and relationship that a father has for his daughter. Ultimately, one should ask "Am I, as a father, living the kind of life I would want the man who may one day marry my daughter to live?" Raising boys is extremely special and challenging for fathers. Fathers and sons share a bond that has the highest example – John 3:16 is perhaps the most well know Bible passage, telling us how important God's son is to the world. Am I teaching my son in the way the Lord would have me to teach him? Am I the type of father I would want my son to grow up to become?

Our children, the future servant-leaders of our world, will be shaped through a process of cultivation – a comparison might be to flowers or music. The wild rose is beautiful, but not as pretty as the cultivated one. Amateurs can make stirring music, but not in the same class with master musicians, whose ability and genius has been enhanced by dedication and practice. The child should receive intellectual, physical, religious and social rearing – as did Jesus. Read Luke 2:41-52 when you get a chance. Being about "My Fathers business" does not, and did not, happen by accident.

I believe that the responsibility of training and nurturing our children has world-shaping consequences. Just imagine if your child is to become the next Michael Jordan or Venus Williams? Sports heroes are wonderful and, in most cases, beneficial contributors to society. But imagine if your offspring's destiny is a little more important than being a sports hero? What if your daughter or your son has the potential to be a future President of our country, or Bishop of our church, or Beethoven, or Langston Hughes, or the first human to walk on Mars, or finder of the cure for cancer. What if the potential is something seemingly unconnected to importance or greatness, as just another loving human being - who just happens to positively influence someone else to achieve greatness? Just like the ripples that form when a rock is thrown in the water, we have no idea the forces of change for good (or bad) we set in motion as we grow (or neglect our responsibilities to grow) our children.

As I father, I very rarely wake up and plan the "lesson" for the day for Emerson and Evan – up to this point, they have learned a great deal from the keen observation that exists on the part of our children. For those opportunities where lessons and planned counsel are appropriate, the following 10 points may be useful to other fathers and par-

(Continued on page 4)

As the Twig is Bent, the Tree is Inclined

Everett E. Brooks, Jr.

(Continued from page 3)

ents, as they have been for me. I pray they will continue to help me and others in the growth and nurturing of our gifts from God.

10 Points of Counsel (to Children) from a Fathers Heart:

1. Shape your life by a great ideal. The first step toward realizing a great character is to imagine one.
2. Plan to serve humanity rather than be served. Jesus taught us that greatness comes through service: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant: Matthew 23:11"
3. Have Ambition. Make plans to achieve, reach for higher things. Much mediocrity is due to lack of ambition, not lack of ability.
4. Remember the world has a way of giving back to you what you give it. Love, and you will be loved; hate and you will be hated. Extend love and kindness to others and it will be returned.
5. Be yourself. There is no better way to impress the world than by being genuine, sincere and honest, which are portrayed by being you.
6. Be true to self. Love yourself and be good to yourself. Anytime you mistreat either acquaintance or stranger, you mistreat yourself.
7. Remember, in the long run, no one can really hurt you but yourself. Make sound judgment and decisions – they will affect you as soon as you make them and, in some cases for the rest of your life.
8. Develop good habits. Habits are hard to break, try to establish good ones early.
9. Build your character well. In youth, lay a foundation for your "building" which is your character. These should be rooted in honesty, integrity, truthfulness, fairness, goodness, sympathy, righteousness and devotion.
10. Have faith, pray without ceasing and trust Jesus Christ as your Savior.

Modified from "A Father's World" by Leroy Brownlow, 1965 as presented to the author from Rev. and Mrs. HL McCall and Family at his wedding, November 25, 1989.

Shape your life by
a great ideal.

Have Ambition.

Develop good
habits.

Have faith, pray
without
ceasing....

Searcy Homes Evangelistic Block Party



Praise Leaders Purce and Williams



Front row seats at the Block Party



Church Street CPCA Praise Dancers



Enjoying the fellowship and food



Tyson and Brownlow grill hamburgers



Harvey and Speight grill hot dogs

Searcy Homes Evangelistic Block Party



Church Street E.D. White Male Choir



St. John Male Chorus



"Dr. Jesus" Drama



"Witness" Drama



St. John Youth Praise Dancers



St. John Women's Praise Dancers

Pictures were taken by Jason Brown, William Bell, and Everett Brooks, Sr. More pictures are displayed on the Block Party Bulletin Board outside the Fellowship Hall. A slide show of the Block Party and the March for Jesus will be presented at the next Quarterly Conference.



Walking for Peace ... in the Name of Jesus

St. John members joined hundreds of Huntsvillians on Saturday, June 7, 2003 for the Annual March for Jesus. This International event is held each Pentecost Saturday. Believers around the world walk through city streets proclaiming the matchless name of Jesus.

St. John's participants ranged from a 10 month old child to an 84 year old Deaconess. The 1.4 mile walk was an outward celebration of Jesus as well as a prayer walk for the city of Huntsville. Following the march, a praise service was held at Spring Park. Pastor McCall was among the ministers who participated in the service.

Let us continue to pray "Peace be to these streets ... in the name of Jesus."



Pictures were taken by William Bell and Everett Brooks, Sr. More pictures are displayed on the Block Party Bulletin Board outside the Fellowship Hall. A slide show will be presented at the next Quarterly Conference.





Pastor McCall Gives Sermon for Pentecost Service

By Bridget Floyd

The Pentecost Service for 2003 was held on Sunday, June 8th at the 8 a.m. worship service. Pastor Homer L. McCall served as worship leader and offered the sermon. Stewards Nedra McDaniel and Clifton Pearson were program coordinators. Inspirational music was provided by the gospel choir, directed by Cleveland Wilson, accompanied by Antoinette Wilson on piano and percussionist, Talbert Cox.



Praise Dancers singing during congregational hymn.



The Gospel Choir rendered two selections and led the congregational hymns.

This year's service began with an instrumental performance by James E. Jamar, saxophonist. Clifton Pearson led the congregation in the Pentecost Season call to worship. Reverend Claudewell Campbell gave the morning prayer. The hymns and musical selections focused on the coming of the Holy Spirit. This was also true of the scripture readings, which were done by the McIntosh family. The New Testament (Acts 2:1-21), Epistle (1Corinthians 12:4-13), and Gospel (John 20: 19-23) were read by Ronald, Patricia, and Patrice McIntosh, respectively. Phyllis Conner led the congregation in "A Special Decalogue". Glenn Pippen, Sr. led the Pentecost responsive reading and announcements were read by Jeannette Jones. The St. John Adult Praise Dancers transitioned the services to the emphasis on the Holy Spirit after Brother Raymond Nomet gave thanks for the offering.

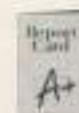


Reverend McCall spoke on "Growing a Vital Church" with the text taken from Acts 2:1-4. He emphasized the point that a saved people have a sanctified mind and should be growing in grace. He stated further that on Pentecost Sunday one should analyze one's spiritual vital signs. He noted that Pentecost is the 50th day after the resurrection of Christ. He encouraged celebrating the power of God's Son, who came to "save us from sin in redemption".

Dr. McCall described the service as "a party" and the Holy Spirit as "an unseen guest" at the party. He stated that the Holy Spirit helps to focus the mind on pleasing God; that is, "a sanctified mind". He emphasized that a vital church does not grow without the Holy Spirit. He reminded worshippers that the coming of the Holy Spirit was the birthday of the Church. Dr. McCall indicated that Christ is the gift of salvation. He asked the congregation what they were bringing to the party. He went on to say that sanctification is a gift that cannot be earned and there is no need to develop a list of deeds or accomplishments for God to consider in determining entitlement to this sanctification. "God freely gave His son to save the corrupt mind", according to Dr. McCall. He suggested a gift that should be brought to the "party" is "the desire to build and grow a vital church".

(Continued on page 12)

SCHOOL



Learn And Enjoy

Honor Roll & Award Recognition 2002-2003

A Honor Roll

Kevin Anderson
Michaela Brown
Talisha Rice
Jacquelyn Thompson

Dean's List/Honor Roll

Gale McCall
Patrice McIntosh

Perfect Attendance

Evan Conner
Talisha Rice
Jacquelyn Thompson

Other Awards:

- Kalon Anderson

One out of three 5th graders with artwork displayed at Panoply
National Physical Fitness Award
Certificate of Achievement for ACE

- Kevin Anderson

Monrovia Middle School Scholars Bowl Team
Top 20 of 8th grade graduating class

- Phoebe Bowser

Presidential Award
Outstanding Senior Advanced Art Student
Zora Neale Hurston Essay Contest Award
Most Individual Student Award
Spanish Award, Outstanding Reading Award
Who's Who Among American Students

- Geoff Brown

8th Grade Citizenship Award
2nd Place overall State Destination Imagination
1st Place Music Fest, Orlando Florida
Discovery Middle School Wind Ensemble
2nd Place, Discovery Middle School Boys Soccer Team

- Michaela Brown

Good Citizen
3rd Place Overall State Destination Imagination
2nd Place Overall Junior Tap Line
Duke Talent Search

- Evan Conner

Athletic Award
Choir Award

- Phillip R. McGraw

Science Fair Participant - First Baptist CDCA

- Tamela E. McGraw

Advanced band - Huntsville Middle School First chair Trumpet
Concert Band - Huntsville Middle School - Superior rating, Festival of Champions, Panama City, Florida

A-B Honor Roll

Kalon Anderson
Phoebe Bowser
Geoff Brown
Evan Conner

Phillip R. McGraw

Tamela E. McGraw
Shanti Owens
Adrina Sconiers
Kyle Speight
Meagan Speight

Honor Roll & Award Recognition 2002-2003

Other Awards (continued)

- **Talisha Rice**
National Junior Honor Society
One of the top three averages in Social Studies
Presidential Physical Fitness Award
- **Adrina L. Sconiers**
National Junior Honor Society
Outstanding Music Achievement
Outstanding English Achievement
- **Kevin Speight**
National Physical Fitness Award
1st Place, 4X100 Relay Race, Toy Bowl, Birmingham, AL
- **Kyle Speight**
Student of the month
- **Meagan Speight**
1st Place, Discovery Middle School Color Guard, Orlando, Florida
1st Place Music Fest, Orlando Florida
Discovery Middle School Wind Ensemble
2nd Place, Discovery Middle School Girls Soccer Team
- **Jacquelyn Thompson**
Presidential Physical Fitness Award

(Graduates (from all levels) will be recognized in the July issue of the St. John AMEN.)

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

of our getting and choosing to get (godly) wisdom and understanding "to be born again". For the grace withers, the flower fades away but the word of God stands forever. (Isaiah 40:8) The wages of sin is death (Quit before payday) but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

As you remember the blessing of praise for all who choose to accept God's grace daily and follow faithfully His wisdom in thought and deed and as God makes you also aware of the consequences of disobedience, a perverse heart and crooked mind, choose this day whom you will serve! For where your treasure is there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:21)

Prayer

Do not have your concert first and
tune your instrument afterward.
Begin each day with God.
- James Taylor Hudson

Lay Organization

The Lay Organization of St. John will meet quarterly. At each quarterly meeting there will be a brief workshop. Mrs. Lorraine Parham, Director of Lay Activities will coordinate the workshops. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, June 28, 2003.**

Please contact Ms. Cassandra Ingram, Lay Organization President, for more information.

Hold the Date!

October 1, 2003

October 1, 2003

Pastor McCall will preach the **Annual Sermon** at the opening worship service of the 125th session of the North Alabama Annual Conference on Wednesday, **October 1, 2003, at 10:00 AM.** This year's conference will be hosted by **St. John AME Church, Birmingham.** The Male Chorus will render music.



Church School Lesson Overview – July 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer.

Jump Start Jump Start

July 6, 2003

Lesson Title: Nehemiah Begins Work

Background Scripture: Nehemiah 1,2

Print: Nehemiah 1:1-4; 2:4-5, 13, 16-18

Key Verse: They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work. Nehemiah 2:18

The returned exiles had been in Jerusalem for more than ninety years; the temple had been completed, but the city's walls remained in ruins. Nehemiah was serving in the palace of the king of Persia when the distressing news came: Jerusalem needed walls! The condition of the walls left the city, the temple, and the people vulnerable to attack and gave their enemies cause to ridicule.

Nehemiah was successful because he had God's blessing and a key to that blessing was his faithful exercise of prayer in his planning. Upon hearing Nehemiah's report, the people were ready to build and committed themselves to the task.

Finished Finished

July 13, 2003

Lesson Title: The Wall Completed

Background Scripture: Nehemiah 6

Print: Nehemiah 6:1-9, 15-16

Key Verse: When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God. Nehemiah 6:26

Most projects have those who oppose it. But Nehemiah prayed, resisted the enemies, and succeeded.

In spite of external and internal problems, the Israelites soon completed the rebuilding of the wall. When word of their accomplishment

reached Israel's enemies, they knew they would have to devise a more devious method of attack. Rather than concentrating on intimidating the populace, they would try to destroy the people's leader.

When the enemies of God's people heard of it, all the nations around them were afraid and fell in their own esteem; for they sensed that the word had been done with God's help.

Obedience Obedience

July 20,

2003

Lesson Title: Called to Obey the Law

Background Scripture: Nehemiah 8

Print: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-12

Key Verse: They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read. Nehemiah 8:8

After the returned exiles were settled, the people met in the square before the Water gate in Jerusalem and asked Ezra to present the Law of Moses. From early morning to midday, Ezra read the Law; the people listened attentively.

The Bible, the living Word of God, can be viewed as a manual on how to live our daily lives. This lesson is about getting acquainted with the manual, God's Word. We cannot obey what we do not know. As Christians, we are admonished to read the manual.

New Covenant New Covenant

July 27,

2003

Lesson Title: Renewal of the Covenant

Background Scripture: Nehemiah 10:28-39

Print: Nehemiah 10:28-33, 35-38

Key Verse: We are making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it. Nehemiah 9:38

After recounting their blessings in a prayer of gratitude, the returned Israelites entered into an

(Continued on page 12)



Church School

oath with their creator and redeemer. The people are now ready to rededicate themselves and their nation to the Lord. A thousand years had passed since the Israelites had received God's covenant. They promised again to obey it.

They renewed their allegiance to God by vowing to follow the commandments of the Lord. To violate this oath would mean their death as a nation.

Pentecost

(Continued from page 8)

He went on to suggest how this can be done. First, one should have a praying house, go to church, and attend Bible Study. That is, "choose you this day whom you will serve". He pointed out that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that one's associates influence beliefs and behaviors. As such, one should choose those who believe and their behaviors demonstrate this. Secondly, "choose to take up the cross...because He saved me...and we should be glad to serve Him unto death". The third suggestion was to choose to think in your heart that Jesus is Lord and to *thank God* for the gifts of God which began with the saving of three thousand (3000) souls on the day of Pentecost. Reverend McCall urged those present to "get out of the comfort zone and get in the 'salvation zone'". While earthly friends may forsake, the "Holy Spirit will wrap you and bring you through...the stormy banks of Jordan". In closing, Reverend McCall urged those present to "bring a saved heart, sanctified mind, desire to live a vital life in Jesus". Pastor McCall offered the invitation to discipleship.

The recessional song was "Where the Spirit of the Lord Is."

Once again the Pentecost Service focused on the spirit of worship, the spirit of the living God, the Holy Spirit. The service allowed those present to focus or refocus on the significance of the Holy Spirit and the true meaning of this gift from God.

Church School Convention

(Continued from page 2)

Evangelizing Postmoderns

Workshops: (Evening)

Youth

Christian Teen Relationships

Adults

Vacation Bible School 2003

The Director's kit presented comes from Urban Ministries, is based on Matthew 28:18, and has the theme: "All Power Given to me on Heaven and Earth". It is divided into Stars, Cadets, Crew Members, Juniors, Teenagers, and Adults. The presenter noted that if one is just now starting to plan for VBS, it is too late. The planning should have started back in January by choosing a director, in March by planning and putting together. We also discussed ways to Plan, Promote and Strategize.

Church Decorum

The discussion was on how one should act and behave in a Worship Service and behavior during different segments.

Measuring Ministerial Success in the 21st Century

Evangelizing Postmoderns

To the Jew, Paul became as a Jew, to the Greek as a Greek, and to the Roman as a Roman. Likewise, we can change and be seemingly like a person as we lead that person to Christ. The presenter of this workshop accidentally read the reading for July 13, 2003 instead of June 13, 2003 in *Our Daily Bread*. Grab your *Daily Bread* and read for yourself how it tied in with this topic.

Youth Extravaganza:

After going all day through a series of workshops, rehearsals, and worship services, our youth presented a combination of Songs and Dances that showed they are very creative and full of energy. There is no better way to top off what was already an awesome evening than to just relate what others have said.

"[The] praise dancers were excellent."

- Rev. McCall

"Our Youth are very talented, everything they did they 'DID'"

- Anonymous

July 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast	Noon Prayer	Fourth of July	10:00 a.m. Trustee Board Meeting
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship Women's Day	Vacation Bible School					
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Steward Board 4:00 PM			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	
27	28	29	30	31		
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship			6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast			

Important Dates to Remember

June 28	Lay Organization Meeting
June 30 – July 3	Ninth District Christian Education Congress, Adams Mark Hotel, Mobile, AL
July 13	Women's Day, Church School 9:00 AM, Worship Service 10:00 AM
July 14-18	Vacation Bible School

Thought for the Month –

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- Matthew 22:39

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Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
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Huntsville AL 35810

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Searcy Homes Block Party / March for Jesus
Father's Day Feature
Pentecost Service
Student Honors and Recognition

ST. JOHN A.M.E.N. NEWSLETTER



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 8 Issue 7

July 2003

Seize Moment, Listen to Seniors

By Pastor Homer L. McCall

Mrs. Eloise Sterrs was a graduate of Alabama A&M University during the tenure of Dr. William Hooper Council. She was an elderly lady respected throughout the community and country.

She owned and operated a boarding home on South Jackson Street in Montgomery where blacks traveling across the country could find room and board in a segregated society. It was next door to the Dexter Avenue Church parsonage where Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr. lived. My family and I lived just a few doors up at 285 South Jackson Street.

As a child growing up in Montgomery, it was always inspirational to chat with Mrs. Sterrs. She was always elated over the very special care and treatment she received as the oldest alumna upon returning for the Founder's Day activities at Alabama A&M.

If I knew then that I would spend most of my adult life as an employee of A&M, I would have asked Mrs. Sterrs more questions concerning the founder, who also, in 1885, organized St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church in Huntsville.

If I could have an imaginary conversation with Mrs. Sterrs, perhaps some of my priority questions would be her knowledge of Dr. Council's involvement in organizing St. John A.M.E. Church and his work as an ordained elder in the A.M.E. Church. For certainly, Dr. Council's social consciousness was influenced by such renowned Episcopal leaders in Alabama as Bishop Henry McNeil Turner.

Why did Dr. Council turn to the A.M.E.

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor McCall's Letter

"Spending Time with Christ"

Romans 12:1-2, I Thessalonians 5:23-24

"How much time do you spend with Christ?"

We spend much of our time: working, sleeping, reading, meditating, playing, traveling, planning, R and R, meeting, eating, praying, exercising, and in many other ways. But do you say "Yes" to the Holy Spirit as He moves in mysterious ways to renew your mind through which your inner spirit is changed into the likeness of Christ?

Paul told Roman believers: "Be transformed by the renewing of your minds." (Romans 12:2). As you also know and as all of us are reminded in Scripture: As our Christian life progresses, we should gradually notice that our thought-life is being changed from Christlessness to Christlikeness. Transformation does not happen overnight. Our regeneration is instantaneous, but our transformation is continuous. We are conformed to Christ's image gradually as we spend time in intimate fellowship with Him. Therefore, an important question for each of us not only during the weeks of summer vacation, but also throughout the year remains: "How much time

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Usher's Corner

By Agnes Bailey

The Senior Usher board will have its next regular meeting on Saturday August 2nd at 9:00 a.m. All members are encouraged to be present.

Tip of the month: The church usher must be a friendly person, concerned about helping others. The Church Usher must have a desire to serve the Lord and s/he must be faithful in his/her work.

Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Sarah Bell

SHARING

There's nothing as good as sharing.
No pleasure can take the place
Of joining in common effort
Of loving all colors and race.

Our Father has given us beauty
Of natural creation to partake,
To each a portion of heaven
In His kingdom we all have a stake.

Whether praying or working we gather
The fruit of the seeds that are sown,
By our lives which we offer to Father
We make all that we touch His own.

Theresa Brown

*Because of the service by which you have proved yourself,
men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession
of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them
and with everyone else.*

2 Corinthians 9:13

*The shortest distance between a problem and
a solution is the distance between your knees
and the floor.*

*The one who kneels to the Lord can stand up
to anything.*

Mustard Seed!

**Salvation was freely provided
for you,
but you must work and do
something to manifest it.**

"I PRAY THAT THE EYES OF YOUR HEART
MAY BE ENLIGHTENED,
SO THAT YOU WILL KNOW
WHAT IS THE HOPE OF HIS CALLING,
WHAT ARE THE RICHES OF THE GLORY OF
HIS INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS."
Ephesians 1:18

by JAG

Seize Moment

(Continued from page 1)

Church, the first black freedom movement in America?

In his 1903 edition of "The Souls of Black Folk," Dr. W.E.B. DuBois noted that the A.M.E. Church, founded by Richard Allen in 1787, was the most powerful organization for blacks in America. My constant thirst and hunger for more detailed knowledge about the founder and organizer of two institutions that I have served for most of my life could be satisfied by an interview with Mrs. Sterrs, the elderly matriarch of South Jackson Street.

As she would sweep her walkway and speak proudly of her alma mater and "life on the Hill," I would also ask her about Dr. Council's family life – his wife, children, and whether there are any living relatives of one of the most unsung heroes of America – educator, ordained clergyman, social activist, politician, attorney, orator, etc.

While our loved ones, family, friends, and significant persons are here with us, let's delete the "if" and seize the moment. Let us put in more time listening to our elderly. Let's listen beyond the ordinary, polite and expected with aggressive questions that would startle our own imagination.

This article was written by Pastor McCall and published in the Saturday, June 14, 2003 "Faith & Values" section of The Huntsville Times.

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

do you spend with Christ?

As Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52), we should grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). For as we are also reminded in Proverbs 23:7: "As a man thinks in His heart so is he." Through the power of the Holy Spirit and through the ministries of the church we can grow inwardly and spiritually through listening faithfully and obeying His WORD. How much time do you spend with Christ in reading, prayer, worship, fellowship, service, etc.? God grows what He makes. God will make us scriptural thinking, trusting and thankful transformed Christians. "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." (Romans 12:2) Let's spend more time with our families in Church School, worship, Prayer Meeting/Bible Class, VBS and let's encourage others to do the same.



Evangelist Returns for Third Consecutive Year

Dr. James L. Davis, D. Min, Senior Pastor of Big Bethel AME Church, Atlanta, Georgia will be the evangelist for St. John's summer revival. This year's revival will be held August 11-12, 2003, at 7 PM nightly.

Dr. Davis is a fifth generation African Methodist Episcopal minister. He was trained in the public and private schools of Birmingham, Alabama. He received the Bachelor of Science degree from Morris Brown College, the Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Pastor Davis has served as pastor of Big Bethel AME Church since October, 1992. As a visionary, Dr. Davis is actively engaged in developing new ministries and acquiring new properties and/or facilities to meet the expressed needs of members of the Church and the downtown urban community.

Annual Missionary Day Celebrated

By Jackie Grier

The Betty E. Derrick Women's Missionary Society of St. John led in the celebration of their Annual Missionary Day, on Sunday May 18, 2003 during the 10:50 am worship service. Missionary Day is an opportunity for the WMS to raise awareness within the congregation of its work and activities. Activities such as adopting a needy family, collecting clothing and food for the less fortunate, visiting the sick and shut-in and training the youth through the YPD.



This year's speaker was Reverend Doris Marshall, pastor of St. Paul A.M.E. Church, Tusculumbia, Alabama. She delivered an inspirational and soul-stirring sermon entitled "Commissioned to Evangelize the World". Her scripture reference was taken from Matthew 28:16-20. She emphasized that we all are "missionaries", commissioned by God to go beyond the church walls and draw those who are outside. Those present were also blessed by her spirit-filled singing of the hymn "Beams of Heaven".

The members of the missionary society participated in the order of service and the Children/Youth choir provided the music.

We were blessed to have five (5) of Rev. Marshall's members from St. Paul, Tusculumbia as guests for the service.

The WMS meets monthly on the Saturday after the first Sunday at 1:30. New "laborers" are always welcome. Sister Eleanor Burnett is President.

Searcy Homes Block Party Outreach Continues with Food Distribution

Searcy Homes residents who registered during the Searcy Homes Block Party on May 31 received boxes of food on Thursday, June 12. Reverend Claudewell Campbell coordinated the purchase, sorting and distribution of the food boxes. Funds for the purchases were donated by members from St. John AME and Church Street CPCA. Both perishable and nonperishable items were included in the food boxes. Over 25 boxes were prepared. Pictures were taken by Mrs. Mable McCall.



2003 Graduates Honored Elementary and Middle School Graduates

Everett Emerson Brooks, III

Emerson graduated from kindergarten at Madison Academy, Madison, Alabama. He is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Everett Brooks, Jr. and the grandson of Mr. & Mrs. Everett Brooks, Sr.

Phillip R. McGraw

Phillip graduated from the fifth grade at the First Baptist Child Development and Academy on May 15, 2003. Phillip is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Rickey McGraw.

Kevin Anderson

Kevin graduated from the 8th grade at Monrovia Middle School. He will attend Sparkman High School this fall. Kevin is the grandson of Sister Meriam Garrett.

Talisha Rice

Talisha graduated from the 8th grade at Meridianville Middle School. She is the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. David Russ.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



Pastor McCall, Phoebe Bowser, Shayla Gibson, Shanti Owens, Judge Sherrod

Phoebe Rochelle Bowser



Phoebe graduated from J. O. Johnson High School. She is the daughter of Mary and Robert Bowser. Phoebe was an A-B Honor Roll Student. She received numerous awards and recognitions including the Good Citizen Award, Presidential Award, Outstanding Senior Advanced Art Student, Zora Neale Hurston Essay Contest Award, Most Individual Student Award, Spanish Award, Outstanding Reading Award, and Who's Who Among American Students. Phoebe plans to attend college.

(Continued on page 6)

2003 Graduates Honored

*(Continued from page 5)***Shayla Voncile Gibson**

Shayla is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. John T. Gibson. Shayla graduated from Bob Jones High School with an Advanced Diploma, a 3.8 G.P.A., and as number 76 in a class of 482 graduates. While in high school, she was a member of P.R.I.D.E., Bob Jones' A and A-B Honor Roll Program. Her extracurricular activities included National Honor Society, National Beta Club, Key Club, Peer Mediator and office aide for the work study program. She was a member of Bob Jones' Freshman Basketball team that won the county championship. She was selected to participate on the tournament team, was captain of Bob Jones JV Basketball team, and selected to play on the all tournament team. Shayla was a 2002-2003 Debutante for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She plans to attend Spelman College, with a major in English, and minor in Psychology. Ultimately she plans to pursue a career as an Entertainment Lawyer.

Shanti Nechele Owens

Shanti is the daughter of Edna and Otha Owens, Sr. She graduated from Sparkman High School on May 28, 2003. At Sparkman she participated in both beginning and advanced choir, the choir ensemble, drill team, peer leadership, FBLA, and sang the national anthem at two basketball games. At St. John AME Church she is a member of the Youth Choir, Sanctuary Choir and Youth Usher Board. She is worship leader for the Youth Praise Dance Ministry and president of the YPD. She is a member of the North Alabama Conference Praise Dance Ministry. Her hobbies include, talking on the telephone, dancing, singing and having fun with family and friends. She will attend the University of North Alabama to pursue a degree in social work.

2003 COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY GRADUATES



Pastor McCall, Carl Lewis, Brooke Rankin, Lauren Teague, Carolyn Russ, Willie Sandifer, Judge Sherrod, Col. Heyward.

Sister Judith Ann Gardner, B. Sc.
Bachelor of Science, Psychology/Sociology, Alabama A. & M. University

(Continued on page 7)

2003 Graduates Honored

*(Continued from page 6)***Jana Michelle Goggans, B.Sc.**

Bachelor of Science, Sales and Marketing, Tuskegee University

Carl Lewis, B.S.

Bachelor of Science, Computer Information Systems, Columbia College, Redstone Arsenal Extension Division. He is employed as a Calibration Technician by SIMCO Electronics, a contractor at Marshall Space Flight Center.

Brooke Deanne Rankin, B.Sc.

Bachelor of Science, Management Information Systems, University of Alabama at Birmingham. Brooke is the first co-op student with Honda, Inc. in Birmingham. A graduate of Lee High School, she plans to pursue a master's degree at Samford University.

Lauren Gerri Teague, B.A.

Lauren is the daughter of Gerald and Lauretta Teague. She graduated from Spelman College on May 18, 2003 receiving a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics. While enrolled she received honors as a Bonners Scholar, Daimler Chrysler Citizen Scholar, Spelman Independent Scholar, Spelman College Honor Roll, and National Dean's List. As a Bonners Scholar, a service oriented scholarship, she was committed to providing service to others. She served as a Facilitator for the organization AID Atlanta--Unity Project. As facilitator, she trained youth and adults in HIV/AIDS and substance abuse awareness emphasizing cultural sensitivity and community participation. Lauren is interested in health policy and regulation. She would like to gain valuable experience and knowledge of health economics and fluency of another language through the Peace Corps. Her plans include law school with a specialty in Health Law.

GRADUATE DEGREES

Carolyn L. Russ, M.Sc.

Master of Education, Business Education, Alabama A. & M. University

Joe Malik Sales, M.Div.

Master of Divinity, Harvard Divinity School

Willie J. Sandifer, M.Sc.

Master of Science, Logistics Management, Florida Institute of Technology

Andre R. Elliott, Ph.D.

Doctor of Philosophy in Education, Walden University

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL GRADUATES!

AWARD/RECOGNITION COMMITTEE - Col. (Ret.) James O. Heyward, Mrs. Mable Jones McCall, Nedra McDaniel, Judge Martha Lynn Sherrod, Dr. Jeanette Jones, Pastor Homer L. McCall, Jason Brown, photographer.

Youth Reflect on Ninth District Christian Education Congress

Reflections by Rakita Sconiers

The Ninth Episcopal District Christian Education Congress took place June 30 – July 3, 2003 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Mobile, Alabama. The workshops were informative and the services were uplifting. This year a great effort was made to maintain the youth's attention. The facilitators of the workshops were able to relate to us on our level. They let us know that it does not matter what has gone on in our past, as long as we make a change and follow the Lord. God can use anyone.

The Consecration Service was held at Bethel AME Church. Rev. Dr. Leslie Raphael White provided the sermon which was entitled "Jesus Believes in You." He talked about having a maturity of faith in your life. Dr. White also stated that you should not back into growth with God, but should take forward steps to God.

On Tuesday, the workshops began. The first youth workshop was "Learning to Pray Scripture." The presenter was Reverend Carla Stallworth. The points of her discussion were 1) Why does God want us to pray? 2) How can we pray effectively? 3) The effectiveness of prayer. This was a very helpful workshop. The second workshop was "Sharing Your Faith." The presenter was Reverend Chekibe Holman. His message included references from hip-hop culture. He stated "even thugs can change and be used by God." He informed us that many people in the Bible were not always the way that they came to be. Moses and Paul were examples. God changed them and they were blessed.

Rev. Dr. Leslie R. White also delivered the sermon at the Keynote Service. His title was "Keep Up the Good Work." The scripture text was Hebrews 12:1-3. Important points in his message were: 1) It is by being open to God that we can be what God wants of us. 2) In order to be closer to God, we can look to those who have made it in their lives, look at ourselves and lay aside any weights and sins. 3) We must do what we can to please God right now.

Reverend Bobby B. Cox, Jr gave the Youth Night sermon. The message was entitled "It's a Process." Scripture text was Philippians 3:12-14. He emphasized that becoming what God wants for us is a process. Everything that we go through is connected to something that will take us to another level with Christ. Three things that can prevent us from tapping into God's purpose for us are: 1) remaining in a comfort zone, 2) failure to relinquish control to God, and 3) failure to remember the Lord. At the conclusion of the service, there was a social hour for the youth, where a Gospel Rap group performed.

The Christian Education Congress was enjoyable, and it was a blessing that one hundred and fifty youth gave their lives to Christ during one of the workshops.

Reflections by Phoebe Bowser

The theme for the Ninth District Christian Education Congress was "Evangelism – 'Reach-Teach-Keep'" and the theme song was "I Am on the Battlefield for the Lord."

The Consecration Service was a long, inspiring service. There was a good sermon and message brought to the young people. The workshops were interesting. Workshop I was presented to the youth by Reverend Carla Stallworth entitled "Learning to Pray Scripture." She explained how prayer can make a difference in your life and you are never too old or too young to pray. Workshop II "Sharing Your Faith" was presented by Reverend Chekibe Holman. He ministered and embraced hip-hop culture by comparing "biblical things" such as Moses and David to Tupac and 50 cent. He says, "sometimes you can minister to a hip-hopper who does not know the Lord by telling them that, there were people in the Bible just like you. They were thugs but God called them and used them in a mighty way."

Overall, it was a good trip and I am glad I went.



Church School Lesson Overview – August 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer.

August 3, 2003

Lesson Title: Edom's Condemnation

Background Scripture: Obadiah

Print: Obadiah 1-4, 10-11, 15, 21

Key Verse: As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your head. Obadiah 1: 5

Obadiah, serving as a prophet from Judah received a message from the Lord regarding the judgement to come upon Edom. The Edomites were descendants of Esau who was Jacob's twin brother, blood relatives of the Israelites. Jacob stole Esau's birthright when he gave Esau food. Obadiah gave God's message to the Edomites. He told them that they believed that Edom was invincible because of its location; it was high up in the mountain region. Obadiah told them that they were arrogant toward God and that they were guilty of persecution of God's children – the Israelites. God's judgment would fall on them for this. Edom had stood by and gloated when Jerusalem was completely destroyed by the Babylonians. They could have come to the aid of their northern brothers, but instead they helped the enemy and were glad to see Israel in trouble.

August 10, 2003

Lesson Title: Call for Repentance

Background Scripture: Joel 1, 2

Print: Joel 2:1, 2, 12-14, 28, 29

Key Verse: "Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Joel 2:12, 13

The book of Joel begins by describing a terrible plague of locusts that covers all the land, and devours the crops. Joel is describing a terrible, devastating event, but it will be nothing compared with the coming of the "Day of the Lord."

Joel called on the elders of the land, the leaders, to "Pass this information to your children and your children's children. This is what will happen if you don't repent and turn to God."

Many people fail to acknowledge God's hand in their prosperity. They begin to believe that they did it on their own. The people of Judah were beginning to act the same as the Edomites in the previous lesson. Joel told Judah that when "The Day of the Lord" comes, it will be judgement. It will be too late to repent. Now was the day of repentance. Now was the time to put God back into their lives.

August 17, 2003

Lesson Title: Promise to the Faithful

Background Scripture: Malachi 3, 4

Print: Malachi 3:1-4, 16-18; 4:1-6

Key Verse: "You will see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not." Malachi 3:18

Malachi is predicting the coming of a "forerunner" of Christ - John the Baptist. Malachi is also predicting the coming of Christ. God says, "I will send my messenger who will prepare the way for me." Malachi then speaks of the messenger of the covenant, who is Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

Judah is still "messing up." They have brought blemished animals for sacrifice on the altar. God was not pleased. God promised to "curse their blessings." The priests were to be intermediaries between God and the people, but they were the ones accepting imperfect animals for sacrifice. They were leading the people to believe that God was accepting those sacrifices. God was displeased with the actions of the priests.

God deserves the best that we have. God refused the offerings of Cain because of their imperfections. God was pleased with Abel's offerings because Abel brought his "first and best".

August 24, 2003

Lesson Title: Prophecy of an Eternal Kingdom

Background Scripture: Daniel 2

(Continued on page 10)



Church School Lesson Overview

(Continued from page 9)

Print: Daniel 2:26, 36-45

Key Verse: "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever." Daniel 2:44

In this lesson we get a glimpse of Daniel's prophetic powers. Having a close relationship with God made Daniel the courtier, statesman, man of business and prophet that he was.

Nebuchadnezzar had troubling dreams; he couldn't sleep; he was very disturbed. He called for his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers. Nebuchadnezzar refused to tell them his dream, but insisted that they tell him what he had dreamed and then interpret its meaning. The astrologers could not tell him what his dream had been. The king became highly agitated and threatened to have them all executed. In fact, he ordered that all the wise men in Babylon be executed.

Daniel went to the king and asked for time to interpret the king's dream. The king granted the request. Immediately Daniel went to his friends and asked that they pray with him for a revelation of the king's dream. God granted their request. That night the dream was revealed to Daniel.

Daniel gave praise to God for allowing him to interpret the king's dream. It is true the prayers of the righteous avail much.

August 31, 2003

Lesson Title: Prediction of the End

Background Scripture: Daniel 12

Print: Daniel 12-1-9

Key Verse: Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 12:2

Daniel's vision revealed that at the resurrection both the saved and the lost will rise, but the fate of the lost will be drastically different from those who belong to God. Before this time there had been no teaching about the resurrection of the saved and the unsaved. It was the

belief that only the saved would be in the resurrection.

Those who have not lived in accordance with God's commands will be condemned to everlasting contempt. They will forever be banished from God's sight.

God gives all revelations to Daniel in a vision. No one knows neither the day nor the hour, but time is winding up. Although Daniel did not understand the exact meaning of what was happening in his vision, he will understand when God chooses to reveal it. In the meantime, it appears that "the power of God's holy people, was being crushed continually." Throughout history, God's people are constantly in turmoil because of their disobedience. God allows this to happen. They must accept Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and turn from their disobedient ways.

MUSTARD SEED!

**What you believe about God
will determine what you
receive from God.**

But he must ask in faith without any
doubting,
for the one who doubts is like the surf
of the sea,
driven and tossed by the wind.
For that man ought not to expect
that he will receive anything from the
Lord,
being a double-minded man, unstable in
all his ways.
James 1:6-8

by JAG!

August 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 10:00 a.m. Trustee Board Meeting
3 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline	4	5	6 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	7 Noon Prayer	8 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	9 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
10 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	11 Summer Revival	12	13 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	14 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	15 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	16
17 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Steward Board 4:00 PM	18	19	20 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	21 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	22 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	23
24 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	25	26	27 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	28	29	30
31 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship						

POTPOURRI

Students Immersed in Rigorous and Stimulating Harvard Classroom Environment

By Gale McCall

The 2003 Summer Venture in Management Program (SVMP) was held by the Harvard Business School (HBS), June 14-20 in Boston, Massachusetts. As a participant in this worthwhile exposure to general management in the business world, each SVMP participant became immersed in a rigorous and stimulating classroom environment that mirrored the learning environment of Harvard's MBA Program.

The experience gained from SVMP was to complement our professional and career development through interactions with MBA students, alumni, faculty, and administration.

Harvard Business School faculty led class discussions-using the case method of instruction- of current management issues in marketing, finance, organizational behavior, and operations. We spent tireless evenings analyzing real business cases and developing solutions to the problems presented, by placing ourselves in the role of the case protagonist. Through this process, we were able to play the role of a key decision-maker.

The morning study groups and class time were spent to examining and debating ideas through interaction among peers and faculty. The academic program was enhanced by visits from MBA alumni who provided information about the impact of the HBS degree on their lives. Our experience was intensified by a variety of social activities, including a tour of the city.

Participants were highly encouraged to consider a graduate degree after completing their undergraduate education. Information was offered by the admissions office about the business school in general.

At the end of the program, each participant was able to leave with a clear picture of the impact a graduate management degree can have on our professional and personal lives.

During this unique educational experience, we gained a broader understanding of the challenges business leaders face, the innumerable opportunities that exist in business, and the impact we can have on the community and the world through business leadership.

POTPOURRI

THE HOLY ALPHABET

Although things are not perfect

Because of trial or pain

Continue in thanksgiving

Do not begin to blame

Even when the times are hard

Fierce winds are bound to blow

God is forever able

Hold on to what you know

Imagine life without His love

Why would cease to be

Keep thanking Him for all the things

Love imparts to thee

Move out of "Camp Complaining"

No weapon that is known

On earth can yield the power

Praise can do alone

Quit looking at the future

Redeem the time at hand

Start every day with worship

To "thank" is a command

Until we see Him coming

Victorious in the sky

We'll run the race with gratitude

Xalting God most high

Yes, there'll be good times and yes some will be bad, but...

Zion waits in glory...where none are ever sad!

Love and peace be with you forever, Amen.

- Author unknown

Important Dates to Remember

August 2-3
August 11-12

Fourth Quarterly Conference
Revival, Rev. Dr. James L. Davis, Evangelist



That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. Romans 10:9-10 NIV

Hold the Date! October 1, 2003

Pastor McCall will preach the **Annual Sermon** at the opening worship service of the 125th session of the North Alabama Annual Conference on Wednesday, **October 1, 2003, at 10:00 AM**. This year's conference will be hosted by **St. John AME Church, Birmingham**. The Male Chorus will render music.

Thought for the Month -

"Do not quench the Spirit." - I Thessalonians 5:19

INDNJC

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6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

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Women's Day 2003 Celebrated

By Bridget J. Floyd



Reverend McElroy, Pastor & Mrs. McCall

St. John A.M.E. Church, Huntsville, AL held its annual Women's Day celebration on Sunday, July 13th at a combined 10 a.m. worship service. The guest speaker was the Reverend Florance McElroy, assistant minister of St. Paul A.M.E. Church in Detroit, Michigan. The theme for the event was "Focusing on God in Times of Transition". Mrs. Laurretta Teague served as Chairperson. Inspirational music was provided by the Women's Day Choir, directed by Mr. Cleveland Wilson & accompaniment by Mrs. Antoinette Wilson. Their daughter, Ms. Danita Wilson, served as guest soloist with the group. The service followed the traditional A.M.E. order of worship after ministry in dance by the Adult Praise Dancers.

Mrs. Voncile Gibson led the call to worship and Ms. Agnes Bailey offered the prayer of confession. Scriptural readings were provided by Ms. Tracy Spiegner (Old Testament), Mrs. Regina Pippen (Epistle), and Ms. Geneva Fontenot (Gospel). Ms. Vivian Humphrey led the congregation in the Decalogue. Mrs. Lorraine Parham gave the welcome and occasion, and Mrs. Pamela Whitehead led the litany of praise. The memorial tribute was conducted by Judge Lynn Sherrod and Ms. Laura Sherrod. Mrs. Gwendolyn Baldwin

(Continued on page 4)

Pastor McCall's Letter

Is Gay Ok?

What do you tell the children? What do you tell the youth? Scripturally, what do you tell the people? Does God approve of homosexuality? Is homosexuality merely a matter of lifestyle preference? Is it simply an act or union of consenting adults? The crisis centered in the recent elevation of a confessed homosexual Episcopal minister to the office of Bishop has caused serious concerns throughout the world.

The proclamation of God's Word is clear and unequivocal. The purpose or plan of God prescribed in Scripture for male and female created in His image is that for "man to leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they shall be one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) The Law, Prophets, Writings, Epistles and Gospel all support from Genesis to Revelation the Pentateuch: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination (sin)." (Leviticus 18:22) One of the most scripturally graphic depictions of the confused spiritual mental state of the homosexual is Romans 1:18-32. Rather than glorifying, worshipping and serving the Creator, they worship and serve the creature. God has given them over to a debased mind. (By shamefully refusing to honor the Creator with their minds and bodies. They receive in themselves the penalty of their error.)

(Continued on page 3)

"Focusing on God in
Times of Transition"

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Deaconess Corner

Deaconesses, ordinary women called to an extraordinary ministry. Our duties and organization are described and outlined in the A.M.E. Discipline. We pray and strive daily to be worthy of the call to service.

As described in the Discipline, we are...

- D** - Dutiful and diligent in our service
- E** - Elderly, but still young at heart
- A** - Always compassionate to the needy and down-trodden
- C** - Consecrated by the Bishop of the District
- O** - Ordinary widows or unmarried women of good repute
- N** - Neatly attired in a uniform of plain gray material
- E** - Encouraged to foster and improve the general interests of the church
- S** - Soliciting and seeking the friendship of the congregation and public
- S** - Selected by the Pastor and the Official Board

But above all, we are serving for God's Glory. ... "But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins'. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (I Peter 4:7-10)

MOMENTS

*Happy moments, praise God.
Difficult moments, seek God.
Quiet moments, worship God.
Painful moments, trust God.
Every moment, thank God!*

VBS Explores the Power

By Lorraine Parham

Vacation Bible School was held at Saint John during the week of July 14 through 18. The theme for this year's study was **Explore the Power...Jesus**. "All Power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28:18.

The VBS experience featured classes, crafts and recreational activities for all ages. St. John's members and guests were able to experience the power of praise, the power of study and the power of prayer while enjoying the fellowship of Christians.

The Adult class blasted off with an in-depth study of the book *Experiencing God* by Henry Blackerby and Claude King. The adult study group was led by Mrs. Lillie Rivers who was supported by Dr. Thalia Love-Brown and Mr. Bernard Powers. The students in this class were challenged to experience the fullness of a life based in knowing and on doing the will of God.

The children and teen lessons focused on the power of Jesus through the study of His miracles and parables. The youth lifted off from the launch pad each night with a lesson that was reinforced with a craft project selected especially for that class by Sister Meriam Garrett with the assistance of Mrs. Cheryl Anderson.

The youth and teen classes were taught by Ms. Patrice McIntosh, Ms. Gale McCall, Ms. Kimberly Fitzgerald (Preschool); Mrs. Erica Harbin and Ms. Brenda Lott, (Primary); Mrs. Pat McIntosh and Mrs. Lauretta Teague (Juniors); Brother Raymond Nomel and Mrs. Shanika Nomel (Teen I); Ms. Erin Lott and Ms. Patrice Ruffin (Teen II).

The registration committee, which consisted of Agnes Bailey, Tami McGhee and Yvette Cooper, greeted participants daily upon arrival. Nutritious refreshments were provided each night thanks to the generous contribution of the Church boards and the coordination of Mrs. Benita Jackson and Mrs. Agnes Bailey.

The fun and fellowship of VBS culminated on Friday night, with hamburgers and hot dogs grilled by Mr. Theodore Tyson.

Sincere thanks is extended to Ms. Jackie Grier
(Continued on page 3)

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

Yes, Culture without Christ is spiritual delusion and mental confusion. No matter what your plight is today, no matter where you are spiritually or mentally, by His grace and mercy, by faithfully saying, "Yes Lord" to the Savior, Jesus Christ, by truly yielding to Him in prayer, "Not my will but thine be done," the victory over sin and Satan is yours.

For more information about the One who came to seek and to save the lost and the transformation into the image of Christ, log into and prayerfully, read daily the BIBLE. (Luke 19:10; Romans 12:1-2) Let's pray in the spirit knowing that as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Therefore, let us be ready for the Lord is coming at an hour we do not expect. (Matthew 24:36-44)

"I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained."

Philippians 3:14-17 NIV

Usher's Corner

By Agnes Bailey

"Serve the Lord with gladness." Psalm 100:2a

This month we salute Shanti Owens and Phoebe Bowser. They have served faithfully on the youth usher board for the past four years. Our prayer is that God will bless each of you as you head off to college. Remember to always: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Tip of the Month: Ushers should be on duty at least fifteen minutes before service to be sure everything is in readiness and to greet early arrivals.

Lay Convention

By Cassandra Ingram

The 28th Biennial Session of the Lay Organization met in New Orleans, Louisiana July 6-11, 2003. The theme for the convention was "Lait Sowing Seeds Beyond the Walls: An Agenda of Ministry and Service." The goal of this convention was designed to guide Lait in becoming better informed about the A.M.E. Church. Also, the workshops were set up to help motivate members to become involved in the different ministries of the church.

There were numerous workshops at the convention and I was assigned to the following: (1) Comfort Ministry- Providing comfort to the bereaved and understanding the need to educate the bereaved on biblical perspective on loss, (2) A.M.E. V-Alert - This workshop's key purpose was to inspire, encourage and create a sense of urgency for a strong voter turnout in the states, cities, towns, communities and neighborhoods where the churches are planted for ministry and (3) Lait Sowing Seeds - The scripture reference for this workshop was I Peter 4: 7-11. It contains practical duties of the Christian love, which glorifies God.

In addition to the workshops, there were spirit-filled praise services. Bishop Henning, Presiding Prelate of the 8th District, delivered the consecration service message titled "Breaking the Silence." His text came from Luke 19:32-40. Attorney Vernon L. Jordan was one of the keynote speakers and he encouraged us to follow the advice of his mother, "Don't get too big for your britches." Rev. Jamal Bryant delivered the sermon on the Youth Explosion night. The title of his sermon was "Please Don't Put Me Out." His text came from St. John 9:20-23. Rev. Dr. Floyd Flake delivered an enthusiastic message entitled "New Birth and Living Hope." His message text came from I Peter 1-5.

Thank you Reverend McCall and St. John Church for giving me the opportunity to attend this great convention. The information will certainly aide me as I continue to work with the Lait on all levels of the A.M.E. Church.

"Leaders don't attain greatness by giving orders, but by serving others."

Women's Day 2003 Celebrated

(Continued from page 1)

read announcements and recognized visitors, who included the Honorable Loretta Spencer, mayor of the city. Mrs. Katherine Campbell gave the prayer of thanksgiving after the presentation of the tithes and offerings.

Remarks were made prior to the sermon in order to allow the spirit of the message to continue to impact the congregation as they dispersed. Dr. Jeannette Jones, co-chair of the Women's Day Committee, commented on the program and the willing participants. Ms. Karen Stanley spoke on the Tax Reform Referendum of September 9th. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to speak to this congregation during this special worship service. She focused on the religious principles that support the Governor's tax plan. Pamphlets were available in the vestibule for members and guests to read about these principles in depth. Following this, Ms. Tami McGhee made a presentation to Reverend McElroy, asking all sorors of Delta Sigma Theta to stand at that time.

After an introduction by Mrs. Vicki Cox, Reverend McElroy provided an inspirational and challenging message, entitled "Finally". She based her sermon on Ephesians 6:10. She began by mentioning a "dream" of a "true church" which embodied people and behavior that would make God proud. That is, one which ministers to the community, does not allow evil to thrive/survive, places no restrictions on membership, but does restrict gossip. Essentially she dreamed of a church that is built on the foundation of God and leans on Jesus, according to Reverend McElroy. Other characteristics of a "true church" that were cited by Reverend McElroy included honoring the leadership or pastor of the church, building lives that make a difference and grateful lives that spread the good news and connects families.

Reverend McElroy then transitioned to a key word in the scripture as well as the title of the sermon; that is, finally. She highlighted well-known terms and phrases in popular culture such as, the "final answer, final exam, final four". She indicated that "finally" brings forth change and gives peace and "finally" comes with consequences. She suggested that there were four (4) steps to getting to "finally".

According to Reverend McElroy the first step is to finally accept your situation. Instead of seeking perfection, which is the typical in today's world (beauty parlor, barbershop, fitness center), people should take an inventory of who they truly are. They should accept their faults and failures, realizing that Jesus can only work with the real you, according to Reverend McElroy.

Secondly, Reverend McElroy suggested that a person must acknowledge his/her past, realizing that there are consequences for one's actions. She urged that one should "tell the truth and let it go." For example, admit marrying or becoming sexually active too soon, or that parents were right. Also important is accepting responsibility for mistakes, to not hold on to anger which is likely to contribute to depression and illness. She urged letting go of "baggage".

Related to this is the third step, which is to "let it go". Reverend McElroy urged those listening to "stop waiting to exhale", rather, "let Jesus be Jesus". She suggested instead, wait for Jesus to fight the battles, "finally", trust and obey Him.

The fourth step is to "Finally, let God be God in our lives". Reverend McElroy cited biblical examples of how one should trust and obey God. She warned to never look back, as did Lott's wife. She reminded of God's keeping promises as He did with Sarah. She concluded that it is necessary to "realize that God is finally in control."

Reverend McElroy asked all females, and others who wished to make a pledge to "finally" take steps toward the "true church."

Reverend McCall extended the invitation to Christian discipleship. The congregation responded enthusiastically to the speaker and the message for this special day.

Vacation Bible School

(Continued from page 2)

for scheduling the activities, Mr. Theodore Tyson and Mrs. McKinney for the certificates, Mr. William Bell and Mr. Jason Brown for assisting with the class recreation and to the entire VBS committee for ensuring that everyone had Fun, Fun, Fun!!!



Pictures were taken by Jason Brown.

The Debate over the Alabama Tax Reform Plan

By Patrice S. Ruffin

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. - Luke 12:48

Over the past several months, citizens all across the state of Alabama have been debating about Governor Bob Riley's proposed Tax Reform Plan, which will be voted on this September 9, 2003. This referendum will affect all Alabama residents, from children to senior citizens, from Medicaid recipients to state troopers, from school systems to prison systems.

As with any vote, it is our responsibility to educate ourselves on the pros and cons of the proposed plan. The key questions for members of the Christian community are "What is my role as a Christian in this debate?" and "What action should I take as a Christian?"

The following items are some basic issues plaguing the state of Alabama and how the Riley Administration's Tax Reform Plan proposes to address them:

- ❖ **Underfunded educational system.** The plan proposes funds set aside for primary, secondary, and post-secondary public schools and institutions, which would improve schools, encourage more college attendance, and positively impact the state socially as well as economically.

- ❖ **The level of taxation.** The plan seeks to reduce taxes and to ensure fair taxation. The Campaign for Alabama, notes on its website that 67% of Alabamians will pay the same or lower taxes if the plan is accepted. They also note that property taxes will rise slightly for most property owners, but the benefit here is the improved educational system for the state (<http://www.campaignforalabama.com>).

- ❖ **Accountability of legislators handling funds.** Through the plan, any movement of funds without the knowledge of the citizens of the state would be illegal and punishable by law.

Caroline Novak, chairman of the Alabama Partnership for Progress, a "grassroots" association made up of various business, education, religious and civic groups as well as individuals, states that the Riley Administration's plan "allows us to achieve excellence in education, government accountability and tax fairness all at once." (A Better Alabama website, sponsored by the Alabama Partnership for Progress <http://www.abetteralabama.org>)

Susan Pace Hamill, professor of law at the University of Alabama School of Law, in an editorial titled *The Least of These: Tax Reform and the Commands of Faith* based on her article "An Argument for Tax Reform Based on Judeo-Christian Ethics", seems to agree strongly with Caroline Novak. She discusses several reasons why we as Christians need to participate actively in the referendum vote on September 9th. According to Hamill, there are several Biblical scriptures, specifically in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, which clearly state the expectations of God when it comes to the treatment of the poor and powerless. She then goes on to identify the ways in which Alabama is not living up to these expectations.

Hamill clearly states that the role of Christians across Alabama is to assist in the improvement of the system the best way we can. She closes the editorial by challenging Alabamians to "rise up and insist on a fair and just tax structure for all of us, but especially for the poorest Alabamians and their children, who lack the power, knowledge and resources to effectively speak up for themselves". On September 9th, this is the charge that Christians should be keeping in mind!

See you at the polls!

Voters are urged to educate themselves regarding the pros and cons of this and any issue prior to casting a vote. This article is a summary of one position /argument in support of the plan.



Church School Lesson Overview – September 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer.

September 7, 2003

Lesson Title: Endurance in God's Strength

Background Scripture: James 1:1-18

Print: James 1:1-8, 12-18

Key Verse: My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. James 1:2, 3

The focus of this lesson is on faithfulness that is necessary for joyous living, which only comes from God. James, the writer, was probably the brother of Jesus and wrote as a "servant" of God and the Christ.

James did not indicate that Christianity would be easy. It was not easy for him. Being the brother of Jesus, James was probably a special person. And yet, he desired no special recognition or privilege, because being a "Servant" of God would give him all he needed for endurance through life.

The heavier the burdens placed upon us, the more intensified our training in faith becomes, the more we become encouraged because we have the assurance that victory lies ahead. These burdens are only stepping-stones to the upward way.

September 14, 2003

Lesson Title: Faith and Action

Background Scripture: James 1:19 - 2:26; 5:7-20

Print: James 1:22-27; 2:8-9, 14-17; 5:13-16

Key Verse: Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves James 1:22

The lesson in these passages seems to be attacks upon the teachings of Paul and his followers by James. Paul's teachings were based on the fact that salvation comes by faith alone, while James stressed that faith must be accompanied with work. Faith without work is not good. And work without faith is useless. James indicates that if we possess one with the other, we deceive ourselves.

James was intensely practical. He challenged readers to be doers of God's word and not hearers only. Being doers of the word means to live after the pattern of Jesus Christ. This pattern is deeply rooted in God's love and should bear good fruit among those who He touches each day. The "doer" is one who looks carefully at the liberating law of Christ to fulfill God's requirements and his own needs and opportunities.

James describes two kinds of religions, and control of one's tongue was the first test of real religion. If one cannot control his tongue, then his religion was considered "vain". The religious person takes great care to make sure everything concerning worship is in proper order.

James teaches that fulfilling the law means loving our neighbor, and showing partiality is sinful. Wise living is to love God supremely, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

September 21, 2003

Lesson Title: A New Beginning

Background Scripture: James 3

Print: James 3

Key Verse: Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. James 3:13

This lesson challenges us to cultivate the minds of laymen and apostles and to help them in developing an adequate sense of their responsibilities to the ministry of teaching.

Those who teach have greater accountability than those who do not. The office of teacher in the early church was held in high esteem, yet some who held the office then were not qualified. For James, a very important qualification was one's ability to control the tongue. Naturally, this applies to us today. The tongue is considered the worldiest of all parts of the body, and therefore can defile the whole body. A responsible teacher who can control his/her speech can control the whole body, because the tongue wields enormous influence on the direction and character of his life.

We sometimes say things we wish we could

(Continued on page 8)



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 7)

take back, but God's people are called to use good speech. True wisdom leads to a godly life and the believer is to avoid envy and selfish ambition.

September 28, 2003

Lesson Title: Faith and Attitudes

Background Scripture: James 4:1 - 5:6

Print: James 4:1-10, 13-17

Key Verse: Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. James 4:10

James goes deep into the underlying causes of "war and fighting" in this lesson and quickly directs attention from peace to the hostility that developed among his readers. The war like the one in the Middle East is not the kind of war James addresses in this lesson. It is the kind of war that often springs forth among congregations in our churches.

This lesson teaches us that the conflict in church, family, and the work place is inappropriate for true Christians. But God extends His grace to those who come to Him in true humility.

James focuses on the conditions that would exist, if all men sought divine wisdom with situations such as those we are experiencing today, when men and nations give way to evil, lust and greed, and also to wars that develop within us as individuals.

Ninth District Ecumenical Relations Award

Pastor McCall was awarded the **Ninth District Ecumenical Relations Award** by the 9th District WMS at the Christian Education Congress Awards Luncheon at the Adams Mark Hotel on July 30, 2003.

Congratulations Pastor McCall!

Build Blitz Scheduled for September

The Habitat for Humanity Blitz Project is just around the corner and volunteers are needed. Pre-Assembly and Site Preparation will begin August 21, 2003 and the Official Kick-Off Ceremony will be held Saturday, September 20, 2003 at 6217 Melrose Drive, Huntsville, AL.

Please contact Eddie Whitehead, Sr. to sign-up and receive further details.

Habitat for Humanity

Join Us ...

St. John will lead in the celebration of the **Mothers, Deacons and Deaconesses Candlelight March at Owens Chapel Missionary Baptist Church**, 2520 Elton Road, NW (851-0702) on Sunday, August 17, at 6:30 PM. Reverend Dr. Wendell Thompson is pastor. **Pastor McCall** will preach, the **Male Chorus** will sing and the **Senior Ushers** will serve. The entire St. John Family is asked to attend the celebration.

St. John will lead in the celebration of the **Pastor's Day**, for **Reverend Vicki Sanders** at Matthew Chapel in Fackler, AL on Sunday, September 21. **Pastor McCall** will preach, the **Sanctuary Choir** will sing and the **Senior Ushers** will serve. The entire St. John Family is asked to attend the celebration.

Flowers on the Altar

Please contact Mrs. Pearlean Myhand at 852-8265 if you desire to donate flowers for the Church Altar during the year from September 2003 through August 2004.

September 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day	2	3	4	5	6 10:00 a.m. Trustee Board Meeting
7 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline	8	9	10 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class Tax Reform Referendum	11 Noon Prayer	12 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	13 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
14 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	15	16	17 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	18 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	19 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	20
21 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	22	23	24 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	25 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	26 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	27
28 Men's Day 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship	29	30				

Important Dates to Remember

August 17 Owens Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, 6:30 PM, Pastor McCall will preach

September 9 Tax Reform Referendum

September 20– October 4 Habitat Build Blitz, 6217 Melrose Drive

September 21 Matthew Chapel, Fackler, AL, Reverend Vicki Sanders, Pastor

Hold the Date! October 1, 2003

Pastor McCall will preach the **Annual Sermon** at the opening worship service of the 125th session of the North Alabama Annual Conference on Wednesday, **October 1, 2003, at 10:00 AM**. This year's conference will be hosted by **St. John AME Church, Birmingham**. The Male Chorus will render music.

Thought for the Month –

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which is lost" - Luke 19:10

INDNJC

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Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

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6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

Inside this issue.....

Women's Day 2003
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Alabama Tax Reform
Vacation Bible School



Revival Services are Inspirational

By Bridget J. Floyd

Reverend Dr. James L. Davis, Sr. Pastor of Big Bethel A. M. E. Church returned as the evangelist for St. John's revival. The two-night revival was held August 11th and 12th and was preceded by a pre-revival worship service on Sunday, August 10th.

The pre-revival service featured sermonettes on The Beatitudes from the St. John ministerial staff. Licentiate preached on one verse, while each of the ordained ministers provided sermonettes on two verses. Songs, scripture, and prayer accentuated the program. The sermonettes were as follows: Matthew 5: 3, Sister Ellen Washington; Matthew 5: 4, Brother Raymond Nomet; Matthew 5: 5, Sister Meriam Garrett; Matthew 5: 6-7, Reverend Johnathan Richardson; Matthew 5: 8-9, Reverend Claudewell Campbell; and Matthew 5: 10-11, Reverend Kenneth Johnson.

Monday night revival featured the Male Chorus, directed by Mr. Rufus Gilmore III, Director of Music, and the Tuesday night service featured the Gospel Choir, directed by Mr. Cleveland Wilson and accompanied by Mrs. Antoinette Wilson, pianist. Nightly devotion was led by members of the ministerial staff (Sisters Meriam Garrett and Ellen Washington and Reverend Johnathan Richardson) and Mrs. Lillie Rivers.

Dr. Davis began with a sermon entitled "Trees and Bushes" taken from Judges 9: 6-15. He highlighted the negative impact of inadequacy and inferiority and the associated efforts to camouflage these feelings via beauty treatments and cosmetic enhancements. While it is normal to have doubts at times, it is important to not let them stand in the way of successful experiences due to unwillingness to step out on faith. He indicated that a little doubt is good because no one can do everything; however, it is important to re-

(Continued on page 3)

"Trees and Bushes"

Pastor McCall's Letter

- Reflections on 911 -

"I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all." (Ecclesiastes 9:11)

A year ago, September 5, 2002, was a clear sunny day much like the climate on September 11, 2001. I was driving to Montgomery safely, swiftly and securely for the celebration of the opening worship service of the Alabama Annual Conference. Suddenly, within a moment, there was a traffic jam in north Birmingham. I turned on the radio and discovered that it was due to a major accident in the downtown area. I exited at Fultondale without knowing the miles of pileup would be clearing up before I made my way around it. Inwardly, I began claiming even in the delay, there must be a message from the Lord right now. I found a spiritual meaning in the road sign on Hwy 31, that said: SPEED ZONE AHEAD. Immediately three types of zones emerged in my mind:

Speed Zone
Comfort Zone
Safety Zone

There must be a text that should fit those ideas. And I asked the Lord for it. As soon as I sat for worship at St. Paul A.M.E. Church, Montgomery,

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ONENESS

As the soot and dirt and ash rained down,
We became one color.

As we carried each other down the stairs of
the burning building, We became one class.

As we lit candles of waiting and hope, We
became one generation.

As the firefighters and police officers fought
their way into the inferno, We became one
gender.

As we fell to our knees in prayer for
strength, We became one faith.

As we whispered or shouted words of en-
couragement, We spoke one language.

As we gave our blood in lines a mile long,
We became one body.

As we mourned together the great loss,
We became one family.

As we cried tears of grief and loss, We be-
came one soul.

As we retell with pride of the sacrifice of he-
roes, We became one people.

We are One color, One class, One genera-
tion, One gender, One faith, One language,
One body, One family, One soul, One peo-
ple.

We are The Power of One.
We are United.
We are America.

—author unknown

Building Blitz Scheduled for September

Volunteers are needed for the Habitat for Hu-
manity Blitz Project. Pre-Assembly and Site
Preparation began in August and the Official
Kick-Off Ceremony will be held Saturday, Sep-
tember 20, 2003 at 6217 Melrose Drive,
Huntsville, AL.

Please contact Eddie Whitehead, Sr. to sign-up
and receive further details.

Sep. 20 (Sat) Kick-off ceremony, erect walls,
erect trusses

Sep. 21 (Sun) Frame porch, deck roof, install
hurricane brackets, install
sheathing, install windows,
exterior doors & attic access

Sep. 22 (Mon) Rough-in electrical, install
blocking and bracing, attic
floor, insulation baffles, finish
roof-install barge rafters/facia,
drip edge

Sep. 23 (Tue) Finish electrical rough-in, in-
stall wall insulation, install vinyl
siding

Sep. 24 (Wed) Catch up day (Sheetrock
installed by sub)

Sep. 25 (Thu) Continue vinyl siding, con-
struct porches, insulate floor

Sep. 26 (Fri) Vinyl siding, porches, clean up
Sep. 27 (Sat) Paint, two coats, clean floors,
landscape

Sep. 28 (Sun) Open

Sep. 29 (Mon) Install underlayment, land-
scape

Sep. 30 (Tue) Install flooring, landscape
Oct. 1 (Wed) Install cabinets, electrical fix-
tures, plumbing fixtures,

interior doors, window/door
trim, caulk, wash windows

Oct. 2 (Thu) Install baseboards, door hard
ware, caulk, door/window trim,
closet shelves

Oct. 3 (Fri) Clean and wax floors, touch up
paint

Oct. 4 (Sat) Clean porches and driveway,
hang blinds, final touch-up,
finish landscaping, **Dedication
Ceremony**

Habitat for Humanity

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

Alabama the thoughts of studying the scrip-
tural 9:11s throughout the Bible came across
my mind. The one I focused on immediately
was Ecclesiastes 9:11. I thank God for his
guidance in selecting this verse to explicate,
illustrate and celebrate our speed, comfort and
safety zones but also any other zones we may
go through in life. In this verse, with verse 12,
the preacher gives further proof of the vanity
of the world and he shows us that all our
works are in the hand of God, and not in our
own hand. He shows us also the uncertainty
and contingency of future events and how of-
ten they contradict the outcome we have of
them. He also reminds us that when we have
done all, we must leave the issue with God.
(Matthew Henry Commentary)

The Hebrew word for time in verse eleven,
eth, is equivalent to the Greek word for time,
kairos. For all of our seasons, hopes, disap-
pointments, goals, and accomplishments are
in God's hand and not mere chance as some
would reason. As we remember 911, let us
find hope in knowing that no matter what zone
we are in now – speed, comfort, war, hospital,
school or business zone, when we succeed
we must give God the praise. For the race is
not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but
to the one who perseveres in praising the
Lord.

Usher's Corner

By Martha Smith

"I would rather be a door keeper in the house
of my God than dwell in the tents of wicked-
ness." Psalm 84:10

The reward of grace is bestowed upon the
church usher who performs his/her work faith-
fully and in the right spirit. They will have the
satisfaction of knowing they have rendered
service unto the Lord Jesus.



POP
(Power of Praise)
Fall Festival

on the Grounds of Searcy Homes

Sunday, October 19, 2003

4:00 PM

Music

Drama

*Refreshments will be served after
the Praise Service.*

Sponsored by:

*St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church
Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church
in America*

*Let everything that has breath praise the
Lord. Praise the Lord.*

Psalm 150:6

Join Us ...

St. John will lead in the celebration of the **Pas-
tor's Day**, for **Reverend Vicki Sanders** at Mat-
thew Chapel in Fackler, AL on Sunday, Sep-
tember 21 at 4:00 p.m. **Pastor McCall** will
preach, the **Sanctuary Choir** will sing and the
Senior Ushers will serve. The entire St. John
Family is asked to attend the celebration.

Men's Day

St. John will celebrate Men's Day on Sunday, September 28, 2003, at a combined 10 a.m. worship service. The Reverend Terence R. Gray will be the guest speaker. The theme is "Christian Men Standing On The Promises Of God."

Reverend Gray has served as pastor of St. Paul A. M. E. Church in Macon, Georgia, for the past fourteen years. He is a graduate of Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia. He earned a Master's of Divinity in Homiletics from the International Theological Seminary in 1989.

Reverend Gray was licensed to preach at the age of 12 and admitted to the African Methodist Episcopal Church at the age of 16.

Mustard Seed!

**Treat your friends as you do your picture,
and place them in their best light.**

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.

Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:10

JAG

Church School Anniversary & Promotion Day

**Twilight Church School Service
October 12, 2003
4:00 P.M.**

Willie J. Sandifer, Superintendent

A&M Athletic Department Begins Season in Worship at St. John

For the second consecutive year, members of the Alabama A&M University Athletic Department were special guests of St. John at the 10:50 AM worship service on Sunday, August 24, 2003. The delegation included athletic director, Mr. James Martin, along with the coaches and players of the football, basketball, soccer, and volleyball teams. The Male Chorus rendered music for the service. Pastor McCall's sermon was entitled "It's All About Worship" with text from Exodus 3: 11 and 12; Exodus 20: 3. He indicated that worship is not "going by worship" or attending a service to meet people or hear good music. Worship is responding to God's grace, according to Dr. McCall.

He emphasized that God is "never through with you," giving the example of Moses being "called out of retirement" to lead the people from Egypt. Although Moses doubted his ability to speak, he responded to God's call. The athletes were encouraged to embrace the attitude of "I may not be the best, but I will give it the best of my energy."

Following the service, guests and members were served a dinner of chicken (baked and fried), dressing, gravy, green beans, corn, potato salad, macaroni and cheese, rolls, iced tea, cake and peach cobbler.

We pray God's blessing on the athletic department and all departments of Alabama A&M University as they begin a new academic year.

Mustard Seed

STACK EVERY PIECE OF CRITICISM BETWEEN TWO LAYERS OF PRAISE.

"Correct, rebuke and encourage with great patience and careful instruction."

2 Timothy 4:2 NIV

JAG

Revival Services are Inspirational

(Continued from page 1)

member that there is no failure in God. He emphasized leaning on the Lord and remembering that "with God we can do everything". Dr. Davis encouraged using God's gift that He has given everyone, whether it is the talent of cooking, cleaning, or singing; and to use God's gift "with an attitude". He emphasized that "God never leaves us without a gift". One must have that faith. He pointed out that "if you think so little of yourself, you think too much of somebody else". He went further to say it is important to see God above them.

Returning to the text, Dr. Davis described this period as a time when there was no prophetic voice, unlike the times of Moses and Samuel. Therefore, every man did as he thought best. Dr. Davis compared it to the television evangelists of present day. In biblical times, the king had died and Abimelech was made king over the people. Jotham spoke out because this was not a God-fearing person. Dr. Davis indicated that it is essential that someone stand up for what is right in the name of the Lord. The method used by Jotham was to "tell them off in a holy way"; that is, he told them the story in the text about the trees choosing inappropriate plants to "reign over them". His goal was to help them see that the leader selected had inappropriately accepted the position of leading/guiding the people. In Jotham's story, neither the olive nor the fig tree accepted the role of ruling over the trees. While they were not as lofty, they each highlighted their respective gifts (fatness and sweetness, respectively) and the important roles that they would not relinquish in order to rule over the trees. However, the bramble bush which was "good for nothing", was most willing to take on this inappropriate role. Dr. Davis emphasized that the bush grew low to the ground and could not compare to a tree.

In day-to-day living, he drew comparisons to individuals who are not embracing lofty goals, but wish to "reign over your house". He cautioned that "when you hang with a bush you become a bush", and further, to "stay away from the bushes". In the text, the bush required bowing down to its low shadow. Dr. Davis spoke of persons in the workplace who are promoted over individuals who have superior skills/abilities, but there may be a reason those in authority wish an unqualified person to hold such a role (e.g., one can look good by comparison and thusly not feel threatened). He cautioned that the bush can disease the tree and emphasized positive self worth, remembering the gifts/talents given by God.

His points were enthusiastically received by the congregation. He chose to lead the congregation in singing "Have Thine Own Way, Lord", as a hymn of invitation. Dismissal occurred with benediction reserved for the final night of revival.

On Tuesday night, Dr. Davis' sermon was entitled "The Man from Gadara" and was taken from Luke 8: 26-37. This familiar text about a man possessed by demons, inspired a unique emphasis on saving the young African American males in the context of the plight of urban/inner city dwellers and the special interests of suburban dwellers.

"The Man from Gadara"

He began by noting the statistically troubling plight of the African American male with large numbers in prison, labeled as underachievers and non-supporters of their families. He hypothesized that this is likely attributable to insufficient attention given to "our boys", and consequently calls for more nurturance from the community. Dr. Davis cited the importance of a father serving as a model of "how to be a black male"; that is, serving as an authority figure while honoring "his queen", the boy's mother. Additionally, other males in his life/community can serve as models, ranging from uncles to someone else's father. Dr. Davis urged women to "pray him up". The key point being, "Men are a part of God's plan".

In the text, Jesus had been on a preaching exhibition and had disembarked from a ship on the coast of Gadara. Dr. Davis pointed out how Jesus was typically drawn to where problems existed; that is, "Jesus would leave the beaten path to get to the one person who needed Him". In this story, Jesus approached a man who was most unusual in that he was unclothed and resided in the

(Continued on page 12)

Grandparents' Day

By Charlsie Brooks

HAPPY GRANDPARENTS' DAY!

Remember when you were learning your ABC's—the thrill you felt when you realized that every new thing that crossed your path began with one of those wonderful letters. Alphabetizing is one of those great little techniques that helps us simplify our complex world and focus on what's important to us—like grandparents. A mother of three from Oregon created her delightful alphabet of thankfulness.

We encourage parents and grandparents to make their own Sampler of Thankfulness. A few of her letters are: E= Emotions and energy and enthusiasm

F= Faith and family and friends.

G=Grandparents and grandchildren and God.

From Beliefnet.com

WALKING WITH GRANDPARENTS

I like to walk with my grandparents
Their steps are short like mine
They don't say "Now hurry up"
They always take their time.

I like to walk with them
Their eyes see things like mine do
Wee pebbles bright, a funny cloud,
Half hidden drops of dew.

Most people have to hurry
They do not stop and see—
I'm glad God made Grandparents
Unrushed and young like me.

Unknown



Preparing for School with Prayer and Scripture

We Pray for Students Returning to School!

By Sister Judith Gardner

Going back to school should be a fun time as our children make new friends, as they obtain new teachers, and as they gain new learning experiences. But with all of the school shootings, violence, drugs, and negative peer pressure, going back to school has turned into a scary time.

We pray daily for our students as they return to school.

We pray for parents, teachers, and school staff of all schools.

We pray for God's protection, His care, and His guidance over their lives.

We pray for students who are battling forces that our eyes can't see.
Whose classrooms have been transformed into battle fields,
And their playgrounds are being used for drug deals.

We pray for students whose minds are absorbing what their teachers do and say,
For the future of our nations is in the classrooms of today.

Many students have been lost along the way,
Overwhelmed by worries, cares and dismay.
Their dreams have been shattered, their hope destroyed.

And in this moment of prayer, let us be still,
because God is still God.

We pray for students, as they receive new dreams to dream.
Who break the rules
And pray in school.

We pray for students as they stand tall against the forces of the enemy,
Finding strength in the blood of the lamb,
Pulling down strongholds, destroying walls,
And gaining victory through prayer for all.
We pray for our students.

Preparing for a New School Year

To get ready for school, I needed pencils, paper, notebooks, crayons, crayon box, markers and, glue. I got all these things from Wal-Mart. And I also needed my uniforms.

I pray at night for God to help me do good in school.

- Wallace Parham
2nd Grade
Oakwood Elementary School

Hide the Word of God in Your Heart

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.
Psalm 119:11

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Psalm 119:105

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:14 NIV

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.
Proverbs 3:5-6

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
Psalm 23:1

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.
Romans 12:2

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the father through him.
Colossians 3:17

College Devotional Group Travels to Six Flags

By Patrice McIntosh

On August 8th, the College Devotional Group traveled to Six Flags over Georgia for a day of fun and fellowship. Needless, to say a fun time was had by all. Our advisor, Mrs. Rivers kept us on track spiritually by giving us Biblical games to play. Following is one that I enjoyed.

CAN YOU FIND 16 BOOKS OF THE BIBLE?

I ONCE MADE A REMARK ABOUT THE HIDDEN BOOKS OF THE BIBLE IT WAS A LULU. KEPT PEOPLE LOOKING SO HARD FOR FACTS AND FOR OTHERS IT WAS A REVELATION SOME WERE IN A JAM ESPECIALLY SINCE THE NAME OF THE BOOKS WERE NOT CAPITALIZED, BUT THE TRUTH FINALLY STRUCK HOME TO NUMBERS OF READERS. TO OTHERS, IT WAS A REAL JOB. WE WANT IT TO BE A MOST FASCINATING FEW MOMENTS FOR YOU. YES THERE WILL BE SOME REALLY EASY ONES TO SPOT. OTHERS MAY REQUIRE JUDGES TO HELP THEM. I WILL QUICKLY ADMIT IT USUALLY TAKES A MINISTER TO FIND ONE OF THEM, AND THERE WILL BE LOUD LAMENTATIONS WHEN IT IS FOUND. A LITTLE LADY SAYS SHE BREWS A CUP OF TEA, SO SHE CAN CONCENTRATE BETTER. SEE HOW WELL YOU CAN COMPETE. RELAX NOW FOR THERE REALLY ARE SIX-TEEN NAMES OF BOOKS IN THE BIBLE IN THIS STORY.

(A PREACHER FOUND 15 BOOKS IN 20 MINUTES, BUT IT TOOK HIM 3 WEEKS TO FIND THE 16TH ONE!!!)

A special thanks goes to Mr. Earl Griffis for driving the bus for us, and Gale McCall for coordinating this outing.

Mustard Seed!

**MY BUSINESS IS NOT TO REMAIN MYSELF,
BUT TO MAKE THE BEST OF WHAT GOD HAS MADE.**

*"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,
that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,
holy, acceptable to God which is your reasonable service."*

Romans 12:1 NIV

JAG



DEACONESS CORNER

(Submitted by Deaconess Anita Burns)

Paths to Knowledge

Calling all young adults, youth, teenagers, and all who are young at heart.

It is, once again, that season of the year set aside to formally rededicate, redirect, and reset one's steps on the path to knowledge. It matters not whether the concentration is centered in school, church, home, the job place or any other points of interest throughout the institution of learning, just remember that God is the Light unto your path! So be it!

Right here, just take a pause on that path to read and take heed to some sage, witty, and also, some fitting advice that is taken from a collection of quotes found in a book titled: "Advice...Southern Style"(*). It is very certain that these quotes and other similar ones can most assuredly serve as guideposts, along your pathway.

1. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.
2. You won't win if you don't begin.
3. There is no right way to do the wrong thing.
4. Wishing without working accomplishes little.
5. God feeds the birds, but He doesn't throw it in the nests.
6. If at first you don't succeed, you're running about average.
7. You never learn anything while you are talking.
8. A person all wrapped up in himself, makes a small bundle.
9. A narrow mind has a broad tongue.
10. If you want to be miserable, hate someone.
11. Make your words sweet, you may have to swallow them.
12. You are judged by the company that you keep.
13. The easiest way always goes down.
14. What hurts today will feel better tomorrow.
15. You find your best people in the churches.
16. Never let a problem become an excuse.
17. Those who are on their knees are in good standing with God.
18. You grow up the day you have your first laugh at yourself.
19. Your Mother is your best friend.
20. Be what you wish others to become.

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever! Amen." (2 Peter 3:18)

(* -By Authors Jane W. McLeyea and Pam McLeyea Barnard)

NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT African Methodist Episcopal Church

2003 Annual Conference Agenda

The Right Reverend T. Larry Kirkland, Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Mary L. Kirkland, Episcopal Supervisor, WMS

North Alabama Conference**Tuesday, September 30, 2003 – The Women's Missionary Convention****Wednesday, October 1, 2003**

7:30 AM BREAKFAST
 9:15 AM Pre-Conference Session with Ministers
 10:00 AM Opening Worship Service
Annual Sermon – Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall
 Holy Communion, Acknowledgement of Visitors
 1:00 PM LUNCH
 2:45 PM Business Session – Roll Call, acknowledgement of transfers, organization of conference, Summary Report of Presiding Elders
 5:00 PM DINNER
 7:30 PM Missionary Night in White
Missionary Sermon

Thursday, October 2, 2003

7:30 AM BREAKFAST
 8:45 AM Conference Institute
 10:00 AM Business Session – Report from Pastors
 12 Noon The Hour of Power
 1:00 PM LUNCH
 2:30 PM Business Session – Report from Board of Examiners
 5:00 PM DINNER
 7:30 PM Lay Night

Friday, October 3, 2003

7:30 AM BREAKFAST
 8:30 AM Conference Institute
 10:00 AM Business Session
 11:00 AM Ordination Service
 1:00 PM LUNCH
 2:30 PM Business Session
 6:30 PM Evening with YPD

Saturday, October 4, 2003

8:00 AM YPD Business Session
 9:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Morning Worship Service
 Presentation of Certificates
 Reading of Appointments
 Benediction

**Church School Lesson Overview – October 2003**

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer (1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays) and Claudette Purifoy (3rd Sunday).

October 5, 2003**Lesson Title:** Called to be God's People**Background Scripture:** 1 Peter 1:1 - 2:10**Print:** 1 Peter 1:3-5, 13-21; 2:4-5, 9-10**Key Verse:** As he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct, for it is written, "you shall be holy, for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15

The focus of this lesson is on the positive effects of loving with a purpose in life and hope for the future. Peter writes to connect the resurrection of Christ with that hope and meaning in the midst of sufferings.

After addressing praises to God and His son, Peter encourages his readers to understand that a Christian's hope is deeply rooted in divine blessings. Peter states that it is most beneficial to remember that: When trials and tribulations distress us, Jesus offers new life - and this new life is imperishable. The Spirit sets Christians apart from all others, by the word and by the grace of God.

Christian hope is based on the resurrection of Christ that makes our hope "living." We are protected by God's power and not through power of our own. Whatever happens in our lifetime, we can live with the assurance that trials are only for a season. They are only opportunities to deepen our faith commitment to Jesus Christ.

October 12, 2003**Lesson Title:** Be a Good Example**Background Scripture:** 1 Peter 2:11 - 5:15**Print:** 1 Peter 2:11-12; 3:13-17; 4:7-11; 5:8-10**Key Verse:** Conduct yourselves honorably ... so that, though they malign you as evil doers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God. 1 Peter 2:12

Instead of exhorting us to be brave and endure trials in this lesson, Peter focuses on us to keep on living in the distinctive Christian ways. Peter entreats us to be so upright that when we are maligned by unbelievers, our

good deeds will certainly bring praise to God.

Peter admonishes believers to abstain from desires of the flesh and to conduct themselves properly, even if one is accused of doing wrong. Peter presents areas of life in which the spirit of humble service should be executed. These areas include obligation to the community, employment, and family.

Peter advises that sometimes our own next-door neighbors can be our worst enemies. This is caused by being misinformed or from plain misunderstanding, false rumors, and malicious gossip attacks, often even about our worshiping procedures.

We can put silence to the ignorance of people when we show, through example, that we will not let our law-abiding obligations violate our Christian conscience or consent to things that are morally wrong and contrary to the laws of God.

October 19, 2003**Lesson Title:** Grow in Faith**Background Scripture:** 2 Peter 1**Print:** 2 Peter 1:3-15**Key Verse:** His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 2 Peter 1:3

Peter wrote his second epistle to counter the influence of heresy (false teachings) within the church. He appealed for spiritual growth as an antidote to defeat heresy and he urges us to live holy lives in anticipation of Jesus' return.

Peter felt strongly that his death was near and he wanted to leave a spiritual testament that would provide helpful instruction after his departure. He provided warning against the character and false teachings of heretics who would infiltrate the church. Peter urged a development of proper Christian virtues (faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness and love) and a constant growth in God's grace. An abundance of these virtues indicates a spiritual health and without these virtues we are spiritually lost. Accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior is the beginning of our growth. As our faith matures and we do

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Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 11)

the will of the Father, the testament is revealed that God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. God will and does provide everything we need.

October 26, 2003**Lesson Title: Trust God's Promise**

Background Scripture: 2 Peter 3

Print: 2 Peter 3:3-5, 7-15a, 17-18

Key Verse: Beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. 2 Peter 3:14-15

This lesson focuses on two main points of Peter's teachings: the fact of a "Day of Judgment," and how believers should live today in light of this fact.

Among things that were already known and remembered by early Christians, was that prophets and apostles had taught about a falling away from the true faith. There were many people, even within church congregations, who actually ridiculed the teachings of the Lord's return. They seemingly did not believe that this day would come, since year after year had already passed, and nothing had yet happened. Everything had gone along as usual without any divine intervention. Therefore, people lived as they pleased, with all disregards for morality. Scoffers simply made their own declarations that "the end has not occurred before, so where is the promise of the Lord's coming?"

Peter introduced the fact that many people simply refused to believe in the coming judgment, because they did not want to admit their lustful lives, and certainly they did not want to be exposed by the "Righteous Judge."

BELOVED, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

2 Peter 3:14-15

Revival

(Continued from page 5)

cemetery. He was chained perhaps to prevent his hurting himself. Jesus asked him his name. Dr. Davis pointed out that this man may have "acted crazy because he was called that", highlighting that people often behave or respond in order to fit the name or label they have been given. So if people had called him crazy, it is possible he had begun to act "crazy". As the man responded that his name was Legion (reflecting the numerous demons by which he had been possessed), Dr. Davis pointed out that Jesus was "in dialogue with the devil". Dr. Davis further commented that the devils asked permission to enter the swine and once done, the swine could not live with that much hell in them" and ultimately "committed hog suicide".

Dr. Davis went on to speak of the aftermath, including freedom for this young man who was purged of the demons. He characterized the cities in that day in terms of the inner city that is often neglected (e.g., crime goes unchecked), and the more "suburban" areas where they adhered to the religious practices of that day, which he described as behavior of the upper echelon.

Dr. Davis compared Legion to the black male who embraced the "hip-hop or street culture", but changed by going to school and realizing that "he is somebody". This type of transformation will frighten people. Dr. Davis stated "there is still hope for black men". He urged those present to "find a boy tomorrow" and impart the knowledge that he is "God's child" and is "going to be somebody's husband one day... prepare him to be a man". According to Dr. Davis, "our communities won't be better until we make them better". He encouraged raising boys and girls to be Christian and holy. He asked those present to reflect on their potential role in the life of a boy, who may be getting a negative message from significant people in his life, and may be essentially doomed without outside intervention.

During the hymn of invitation, Shayla Gibson came forward to indicate that she wished to be a part of Dr. Davis' congregation in Atlanta when she matriculates at Spelman College in the fall. The benediction was given and another inspiring revival.

October 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
			125th Session North Alabama Annual Conference St. John AME Church - Birmingham, Alabama			
5 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline	6	7	8 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	9 Noon Prayer	10 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	11 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
12 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	13	14	15 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	16 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	17 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	18
19 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship POP Fall Festival Searcy Homes 4:00 PM	20	21	22 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	23 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	24 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	25
26 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	27	28	29	30	31	
	GHIMF Annual Fall Revival First Missionary Baptist Church, 7 p.m.					

Important Dates to Remember



September 20– October 4 Habitat Building Blitz, 6217 Melrose Drive

September 21 Matthew Chapel, Fackler, AL, Reverend Vicki Sanders, (Pastor's Day), 4:00 PM.

September 28 **Men's Day, 10:00 AM; Church School 9:00 AM**
Reverend Terence Gray, Guest Preacher

September 30 WMS Annual Convention, St. John AME Church, Birmingham, AL

October 1-4 **125th Session of the North Alabama Annual Conference**
St. John AME Church, Birmingham, Alabama
Opening Session: 10:00 AM October 1, **Pastor McCall** will preach,
Male Chorus will render music.

October 12 **Twilight Church School and Promotion Day** 4:00 p.m.

October 19 **POP Fall Festival**, Searcy Homes, 4:00 PM

October 27-30 **GHIMF CITY WIDE REVIVAL, First Missionary Baptist Church**
Bishop T. Larry Kirkland, Evangelist

Thought for the Month –

And our elders and all those living in our country said to us, "Take provisions for your journey; go and meet them and say to them, 'We are your servant; make a treaty with us.'" (Joshua 9:11)

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Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

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Summer Revival
Habitat Build Blitz 2003
Grandparents' Day
Men's Day Planned



Delegate Reports on North Alabama Annual Conference

By Charlsie Brooks

THE 125th SESSION NORTH ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 30-October 4, 2003

**The Right Reverend T. Larry Kirkland,
Presiding Prelate
Mrs. Mary L. Kirkland,
Episcopal Supervisor**

The 125th Session of the North Alabama Annual Conference was held at St. John AME Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Reverend A. L. Hyche was Host Presiding Elder, Reverend Dwight E. Dillard was Associate Presiding Elder, and Rev. Bobby Cox was Host Pastor.

The Ninth Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Church began pre-conference services with the issuance of the Holy Spirit during the convening of the awesome Women's Missionary Society. The morning speaker was Mrs. Phyllis F. Wynn, President, Birmingham Board of Education. Her topic was "Education and How Missionaries Can Be Involved." Mrs. Wynn's speech challenged each missionary to volunteer for education. We should not ask "How much does it pay?" She stated "God says He paid the price."

The evening Missionary sermon was powerfully delivered by Reverend Sheryl Shipman, Hopewell AME, Florence, AL. The sermon was entitled "This Little Light of Mine" and the text was Matthew 5:14-16. Reverend Shipman's closing comments were: "Jesus says we are the light of the world and that the church is the most powerful body in the world. If we are to effect change, we must

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Pastor McCall's Letter

Sealed and Filled with the Holy Spirit

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of the redemption. — Ephesians 4:30

But be filled with the Spirit. — Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV)

As we begin a new conference year in the WORD and in prayer, I invite you to reflect on one of the major themes of Ephesians written to the believers in Ephesus by Paul while he was a prisoner in Rome. His message that God is at work in the world through His church is just as relevant today as it was then, around A.D. 60. Rather than focus on Paul's explanations of redemption (chapter 1) resurrection (2:1-10) and reconciliation (2:11-3:21) or to even attempt to examine all of chapters 4-6 where Paul states our response as believers in light of God's purpose, let us center on our sealing by and filling with the Holy Spirit. Our challenge today is to be both sealed by and filled with the Holy Spirit.

"Filling" is a step beyond the sealing of the Holy Spirit. For we do not obey God so that He gives us His grace, we obey Him in response to grace already given. *Sealing* is an action God took at the point of our new birth, regeneration. The tense of the Greek word translated *filled* indicates that *filling* is a moment-by-moment, repeatable action. It is something Paul commands the believers in Ephesus to do. In other words, not all Christians are Spirit-filled, but all have

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Tried To Stand Foundation-Shaking on Men's Day

By Everett E. Brooks, Jr.



"I hunger for your presence, O Lord. Not for fame, glory or reputation among men, but to show Jesus to thy people." This was the opening prayer to the Spirit-filled and Anointed preaching of Reverend Terence Renard Gray. Reverend Gray, the Senior Pastor of Saint Paul A.M.E. Church of Macon, Georgia, was our guest preacher for Men's Day 2003. The celebration was centered on the theme "Christian Men Standing on the Promises of God". All who were present witnessed living proof of the power of God's promises.

From the opening hymn, "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand," to the powerful and Spirit-filled Prayer of Confession; to the Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel readings; the tone of reassurance was set.

When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you will surely die,' and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself. Ezekiel 33:8-9

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Romans 12:10-11

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:19-20

The Men's Day Litany, as derived from several Psalms and from the Herbert Lockyer book *All the Promises of The Bible*, reflected on the richness of God's promises to us, how they embrace both time and eternity, and cover all temporal and spiritual needs. The powerful voices and music of the St. John A.M.E. Male Chorus continued to invite the presence of the Holy Spirit and served to uplift everyone throughout the service. Fittingly, a special tribute was extended to a recently departed man of St. John, Mr. Eric Thomas, whose strong handshake, constant smile, and ever-kind word seemed right there with us.



Mr. Pippen offers memorial for Mr. Eric Thomas



Rev. Gray delivers message.

The order of service, as organized by Karl Gullatte and Glenn Pippen, was excellent - wonderful appetizer to the main course, the preaching of God's Word. As Dr. Homer L. McCall introduced Reverend Gray through the reading of his background, it became very clear that St. John was in the presence of a Holy and Anointed messenger. Preaching since the age of 9 and licensed to

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The 125th Session of the North Alabama Annual Conference

(Continued from page 1)

leave our 'meet and greet' comfort zone. We must not wait for others to do good things."

The Missionary Service concluded with each Area giving special accolades to out-going Conference Branch President, Sister Doris Hardy. Sister Dorothy Davis was elected Conference Branch President. Our own local president, Sister Eleanor Burnett, was elected as Promotional Missionary Education (PME) Director.



Opening Worship Service

The 125th Session of the North Alabama Conference opened at 10 AM on Wednesday, October 1. The Opening Worship Service was delivered by our Pastor, Rev. McCall. Empowered from above, surrounded by Mrs. McCall, daughters Gale and Sonya, the dynamic Male Chorus of St. John led by Director of Music, Mr. Rufus Gilmore, many officers and members of St. John, and other prayer warriors, God sent a message through Rev. McCall. The sermon topic was "There is Something About the Name Jesus: Looking Back but Pressing Forward". The sermon text was Hebrews 13:10-16. A few main points included: (A) Many don't realize The New Covenant and think of going back to an eye for an eye. Jesus mediated the New Covenant. He is our Advocate, the High Priest, better than all. There's no one like Him. No one preceded Him nor has come after Him. (B) Jesus is also the Sacrifice, the Atonement. Don't second guess; He is the Author of our faith. Know who He is to you! As our advocate and our atonement, Jesus bore the reproach and died outside the gate. (C) The Anointing is the difference. Through faith in Christ we can apply the power of His Anointing in our lives; we can recognize the stop signs; we can recognize angels and overcome sin and Satan. He cautioned young people regarding so-called 'safe sex' which is a misnomer. Sex is safe only within the institution of marriage. Praise God for the Anointing and the power of the Anointing in church leaders. There's something about the name Jesus. Rev. McCall concluded by sharing Biblical and contemporary stories of many who called on the name of Jesus. He also shared the icy-travel experience when he called on Jesus three times. Jesus was there for him and brought him safely through. He also reminded us that we lose our power when we forget our real power, Jesus. Love lifted us and it came from Calvary.

The Wednesday Afternoon Session continued with Bishop Kirkland calling for the opening of the business session with the Official Roll Call by Conference Secretary, Rev. McCall. The Conference Agenda was approved. Summary Reports were given by Presiding Elders Hyche and Dillard, followed by the Certification of Delegates.

Nine ministerial delegates and nine ministerial alternates were elected to attend the General Conference, June 30-July 7, 2004 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Lay held their delegate election separately.

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The 125th Session of the North Alabama Annual Conference

(Continued from page 3)

The Sons of Allen Men's Ministry Worship Service was conducted on Wednesday evening. Music was presented by Grant Chapel's Male Chorus. The sermon was delivered by Rev. Dr. Eric Little, pastor, Mt. Zion, Florence. His sermon was entitled "Have You Dropped Your Water Bottle?" with text from John 4:5-10; 15-18; 25-30. Reverend Little talked about co-dependency, which was descriptive of the woman at the well. In conclusion, Jesus sought her, because he knew that she needed another kind of love. Only Jesus can provide that sense of self-worth that is empowering. When the woman of Samaria dropped her water bottle, loaded with her burdens, Jesus filled her life.

The Thursday morning session began with the Pastor's Institute. Rev. McCall served as facilitator for this dialogue. Discussion covered: (A) The Desires of Your Church; (B) Using Your Bible, It's the best "I Love You Notebook" in the world; and (C) A Pastor's Heart. Following the Institute, Bishop Kirkland called for The Report from Pastors. St. John's members stood with Pastor McCall as he gave his Annual Report using the theme "Tis The Promise of God."

The Hour of Power message was preached by Reverend Samuel Spencer, Pastor, Metropolitan AME Church, Mobile, AL. Rev. Spencer said that when ministers Preach-they Proclaim; When they Teach-they Explain. His job today was to preach a message from the Lord. This sermon was entitled "The Autopsy of a Dead Church," with sermon text from Revelation 3:1-2. Reverend Spencer concluded that the AME Church is not dead! We have to get back into the business of saving souls.

The Lay-Night concluded Thursday's session with a message from Mr. Thomas E. Green, 1st Vice-President Connectional Lay Organization. His topic was entitled "To Sow Seeds Beyond the Wall, You Must Tear Down Some Walls."

The worship leader for the Friday morning devotion service was Rev. Claudewell Campbell of St. John, Huntsville. Bishop Kirkland began the business session with the reading of the conference minutes by Rev. McCall. The minutes were approved and adopted by the conference. Bishop Kirkland then received various committee reports and recommendations. Included in these reports was the Presiding Elders' Assessment Committee recommendation that the Presiding Elders salaries be increased by ten percent. The recommendation was approved.



The Friday Ordination Service began at noon. This moving and sacred ceremony was led by Bishop Kirkland. Music was offered by the Ministers' Wives Choir. The guest minister was Rev. Al B. Shelton, Pastor, Sixth Avenue Baptist Church, Birmingham, AL. The sermon was entitled "I'm Not Ashamed of the Gospel" with text from Romans 1:8-17. We were reminded of Paul's tenacity and enthusiasm as he attempted to get to Rome. Paul felt that he had something to pass on. We as Christians should be willing to go the extra step to pass on the Good News, not material things, but the Gospel of atonement, of Jesus' Saving Grace. During this service,

Rev. Campbell was ordained an Itinerant Elder. After communion for the ordainees and their families, the services concluded with the Doxology and Benediction.

Friday night was the youth celebration. The theme for this service was "Generational Leaders: Building for Christ." The youth described the service as a Praise Party for Christ. The service was up-beat with praise music and praise dance. The service included supportive scriptures, poems and songs that had all in attendance on their feet. Program participants from St. John were Courtney Burwell and Rakita Sconiers. Ken Burwell was elected YPD Conference Level Historiographer and Statistician.

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The 125th Session of the North Alabama Annual Conference

(Continued from page 4)



Friday Night Youth Celebration "Generational Leaders: Building for Christ."

The closing worship service was held on Saturday morning, October 4, 2003. Church School was conducted by the Conference Church School Officers. The Worship Service closing sermon was delivered by Bishop Kirkland and was entitled "Situation Critical, But Not Hopeless". The sermon text was Acts 27:9-25. Bishop Kirkland ended the dynamic conference with words of resolution and resolve. He praised the ministers and lay persons for the outstanding jobs they are doing, but charged them to stay the course. Things are not hopeless. As a church of the future, members must rid themselves of the many crises we face: confidence, competence, character and accountability. WE MUST MAINTAIN COURAGE; ANGELS STILL FLY; GOD'S ANGELS ARE KEEPING WATCH OVER US. WITH GOD FIRST, WE'LL MAKE IT.

After the Commissioning Service and Reading of Appointments, the Doxology and Benediction, the 125th Session of the North Alabama Annual Conference was closed.

Rev. Dr. Homer L. McCall was appointed to serve as pastor of St. John AME Church, Huntsville. Brother Joe Sales was admitted to the North Alabama Conference and Reverend Johnathan Richardson's transfer was accepted. Brother Raymond Nomel and Sister Meriam Garrett were advanced to the next year of studies.

Mrs. Charlsie Brooks was the St. John delegate to the Annual Conference and Mr. Everett Brooks, Sr. was the alternate. Ms. Cassandra Ingram was the Lay Electoral College delegate and Gale McCall was the Youth Lay Electoral College delegate.

Copies of the Pastor's Annual Report are available in the church office for members who desire a copy.



Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)
been sealed." (Nelson, NKJV)

By studying the Ephesians better we note the balances in the Christian life between doctrine (chapters 1-3) and duty (chapters 4-6) i.e., divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Likewise, by looking to what precedes and to what follows (4:30) and (5:18), we may see what grieves the Holy Spirit of God and what is to be filled with the Spirit.

What are some of the sins Paul lists that invite Satan into your life and hurt you, harm the church and grieve the Spirit of God. He names such things as lying, losing your temper, stealing, corrupt speech, bitterness and an unforgiving spirit. Likewise, those who are full of drink are not likely to be filled with the Spirit. Throughout the conference year, may God empower us to move together day by day with:

A forgiving spirit in prayer
A thankful heart in service
A mind growing in grace daily with godly wisdom

Praise God! It is done.

Support the Girl Scouts!

St. John Girl Scout Troop 436 meets the first and third Saturdays of each month from 9 - 11 AM at the church. Please contact Mrs. Victoria Cox, Troop Leader, or Mrs. Carol Ball, Assistant Troop Leader, for more information.

Answer to Books of the Bible Quiz from September 2003 AMEN

CAN YOU FIND 16 BOOKS OF THE BIBLE?

I ONCE MADE A **REMARK** ABOUT THE HIDDEN BOOKS OF THE BIBLE IT WAS A **LULU**. **KEPT** PEOPLE LOOKING SO HARD FOR **FACTS** AND FOR OTHERS IT WAS A **REVELATION** SOME WERE IN A **JAM** ESPECIALLY SINCE THE NAME OF THE BOOKS WERE NOT CAPITALIZED, BUT THE **TRUTH** FINALLY STRUCK HOME TO **NUMBERS** OF READERS. TO OTHERS, IT WAS A **REAL JOB**. WE WANT IT TO BE A **MOST** FASCINATING FEW MOMENTS FOR YOU. **YES THERE** WILL BE SOME REALLY EASY ONES TO SPOT. OTHERS MAY REQUIRE **JUDGES** TO HELP THEM. I WILL QUICKLY ADMIT IT USUALLY TAKES A MINISTER TO FIND ONE OF THEM, AND THERE WILL BE LOUD **LAMENTATIONS** WHEN IT IS FOUND. A LITTLE LADY SAYS **SHE BREWS** A CUP OF TEA, SO SHE CAN CONCENTRATE BETTER. SEE HOW WELL YOU CAN **COMPETE**. RELAX NOW FOR THERE REALLY ARE SIXTEEN NAMES OF BOOKS IN THE BIBLE IN THIS STORY.

Bishop Kirkland Returns as Evangelist for GHIMF Revival

The Annual Greater Huntsville Interdenominational Ministers Fellowship (GHIMF) Citywide Revival will be held Monday, October 27 through Thursday, October 30 at the First Missionary Baptist Church on Blue Spring Road where the Rev. Dr. Julius R. Scruggs is pastor. The guest Evangelist will be our bishop, Bishop T. Larry Kirkland, Presiding Prelate of the Ninth Episcopal District of the AME Church. This will be the second time in three years that Bishop Kirkland has served as evangelist for this city-wide revival.

St. John's Senior Ushers will serve on Monday, October 27, along with ushers from other congregations. Bible Study and other church activities are cancelled the week of Revival. All officers and members are urged to attend.

Rev. John L. Clay is president of GHIMF. The public is invited to attend.

Usher's Corner

By Eleanor Burnett

An Usher should always be watchful

They who come to Christ do not only come to a resting-place after they have been wandering in a wilderness, but they come to a banquet-house where they may rest, and where they may feast. They may cease from their former troubles and toils, and they may enter upon a course of delights and spiritual joys.

By Jonathan Edwards

Tried To Stand Foundation-Shaking on Men's Day

By Everett E. Brooks, Jr.

(Continued from page 2)

preach at 12, Terrance Gray has been preparing most of his life to work in the Lord's vineyard and to bring the Good News to God's people everywhere.

After his opening prayer, Reverend Gray used the scripture from Luke 22, which contains several critical events in the last days of Jesus' physical presence here on earth. In Luke 22, you find the Betrayal of Jesus, the Last Supper, Jesus praying on the Mount of Olives, Jesus' arrest, Peter disowning Jesus, the mocking of Jesus by the guards, and Jesus standing before Pilate and Herod. From Luke 22, he focused on verses 31 and 32, in which Jesus tells Peter, by addressing him as Simon, that when Satan asked Jesus to tempt him, he prayed for Simon and prayed that Simon's faith would not fail.

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." Luke 22: 31-32

Key to this scripture and key to Reverend Gray's message was the request that Jesus had of Simon - "And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." As the soul-stirring preaching started, references to Christian Men and Women going through trials and tribulations after choosing to follow the Anointed One were sprinkled with references to faith, hope and love. Reverend Gray told the church that our choice to follow Christ, making us literally a part of Jesus, does not promise us a "flowery bed of ease". We will experience heartaches and tribulations and even though we are saved, these trials will come. He instructed us to not let the Devil's work or presence, even in the church, stop us from praising the Lord. He reminded us that, like in the last supper, the Devil is always around us, always present and always at work.

Why did God test Peter? The Devil wanted to tempt Simon, who, as Peter would literally be the head or the "rock" upon which Jesus would build his Church [Matthew 16:18]. Before Jesus left this earth to be with his Heavenly Father, He needed to be sure that Peter's faith was strong. Peter was to be the head of the church after Jesus' Resurrection; therefore Satan wanted to "cut off" the head before the body of the church formed. Reverend Gray compared the tempting and testing of Peter to us as Christian Men. If Satan succeeds in breaking our faith, he effectively cuts off the head of the family and future generations of the church. He reiterated that our trials, which will surely come as Satan tempted Job, are meant not to tear us down, but to build us up! Before we can sit as a judge, we must be tried and tested.

As Reverend Gray continued, his Anointed message and his spiritual connection with The Almighty was evident. His sermon's main point was that as Christians, we have a Divine Intercessor - Jesus Christ. We will be tested, and strengthened, that we will celebrate the strength of our faith in Christ Jesus, that we should "turn back and strengthen our brothers" after our trials and tell them about the goodness of the Lord. He left many impressions on our hearts and minds, with one in particular - we don't praise because everything is good, we praise because God is good!

The service, all those who attended, all who participated, every song, every prayer and every remark was a feast for the soul and contributed to what proved to be a blessed worship experience. The foundation-shaking Word as delivered by Reverend Terence Gray and entitled "Tried to Stand" was truly a fitting close to the Men's Day Celebration and the theme of "Christian Men Standing on the Promises of God."

Pastor McCall Preaches Annual Conference Opening Sermon

By Bridget Floyd



In the tradition of African Methodism and the profound structure established by the founders of this great institution, the Annual Conference begins with worship service. A pastor from within the conference is selected by the Bishop to deliver the Annual Sermon at this opening worship. It is a great honor to be selected for the sermon. Pastor Homer L. McCall was so honored by Bishop Kirkland. Dr. McCall preached the Annual Sermon at the opening worship service of the 125th session of the North Alabama Annual Conference on Wednesday, October 1, 2003, at 10 A. M. The conference was hosted by St. John A.M.E., Birmingham. The Male Chorus provided inspirational music for the service.

The Presiding Bishop, Rt. Reverend T. L. Kirkland introduced Dr. McCall. He highlighted Dr. McCall's education, but emphasized God's role in Dr. McCall's development. He noted that Dr. McCall has led St. John for thirty-two (32) years, increasing the membership from the seventy-five members found on his first Sunday at St. John.

Dr. McCall preached on the topic "There is Something About the Name Jesus: Looking Back but Pressing Forward". The text was taken from Hebrews 13: 10-16. This book in the Bible tells about the divine mediation, divine sacrifice, and the new covenant. It tells of a choice to "press on". Dr. McCall cautioned against going back to the old law (eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth). He questioned how one makes the right choice over one's carnal nature to seek revenge or exact punishment. The Old Testament did not provide "something to hold on to" when the Roman persecution of Christians occurred, according to Dr. McCall. However, the life and sacrifice of Jesus gave them something to sustain them.

The old law provided for animal sacrifices and there was a long history of upholding the Mosaic Law. But the new law brought about by Jesus and the ultimate sacrifice, allowed for atonement. Dr. McCall indicated that the theme of the book of Hebrews is faith and emphasis is placed on believing in Jesus and the ultimate sacrifice. He pointed out that the carnal mind is still present, which may think that a sinner should sleep in the hard bed made by his misdeeds. Dr. McCall cautioned that this type of belief-system must be relinquished, and instead the focus must be on the "power of the anointing".

While the author of the book of Hebrews is not known, Dr. McCall noted that what is known is the Author of one's faith who mediates; that is, "stands between the wrath of Satan". He pointed out the importance of the name of Jesus and His saving grace. Dr. McCall gave several examples in the Bible that demonstrated the power of Jesus (translation of Enoch, deliverance from a fiery furnace or a lion's den). He gave present day examples of healing from life-threatening illness and treacherous highway conditions that can literally cause one to spin out of control. The primary emphasis was on accepting Jesus and the anointing associated with His life and sacrifice.

Dr. McCall's message was well received. The hymn of invitation was "Just as I am". The opening service set an appropriate tone for the Annual Conference, where there is a recognition on the past, but the primary focus should be on the future, with particular emphasis on Jesus and His anointing.



DEACONESS CORNER

(Submitted by Deaconess Christine Meriwether)

Desiderata *A Poem for A Way of Life*

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others,
even to the dull and the ignorant, they too have their story.
Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter,
for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs,
for the world is full of trickery.
But let not this blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals,
and everywhere life is full of heroism.
Be yourself.
Especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;
for in the face of all aridity and disappointment
it is as perennial as the grass.
Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be.
And whatever your labors and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace in your soul.
With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

— Max Ehrmann, 1927

Found in Old Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore, U.S.A. Dated 1692



Church School Lesson Overview – November 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer.

November 2, 2003

Lesson Title: Enjoy Fellowship With God

Background Scripture: 1 John 1:1 - 3:10

Print: 1 John 1:5 - 2:6, 15 - 17, 29 - 3:1

Key Verse: If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

This lesson is complementary to the last lesson where the major focus was on our need to grow in a life of holiness, in preparation for the return of Christ. In this lesson we are given the incentive that comes from our personal relationship to God.

John said, "God is light." Not a speck of darkness is in Him, and, "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another." Spiritual people love the light, because darkness suggests hidden evils and light represents goodness, truth, and beauty.

John uses the idea of light in a moral and ethical sense. To live in the light is to live "according to the truth." God is light, because His activities in the world always express His basic nature of holiness. Because He is the light and the only true light, He is also the judge of all the activities of men.

John writes the instructions that those who are members of the body of Christ cannot deny sin in their lives. If persons say they have no sin, they deny the truth and discredit God. But if they confess their sins, God through Christ, will forgive them.

November 9, 2003

Lesson Title: Love One Another

Background Scripture: 1 John 3:11 - 4:21

Print: 1 John 3:11, 14-16; 4:7-16

Key Verse: Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 1 John 4:11

In this lesson we focus on the necessity of LOVE. Love is the Christian experience that stands out among all other Christian qualities.

The first test of assurance was that a Christian keeps God's Commandments. The next test of assurance is based on the first. Love is God's greatest commandment. Many times we feel that we can love or not, depending upon our own feelings. If few live under the lordship of Christ, we cannot determine our love by feelings of a moment. We love, because God commanded us to love.

Hatred of a brother or sister denies life, but Christ's sacrificial death sets the example of love. As separation of the body from the soul brings physical death, so separation of the soul from God brings spiritual death. When one is alienated from God, he lives in a state of death.

God's love became incarnate in a living person - His own Son became flesh. Here we can understand what God's love is all about. It is personal, unmerited, sacrificial, active and inclusive of all people.

Love for God and for others can never be separated. He who loves God must love his brother. When believers love one another, God's love is perfected in them, and they are assured of God's abiding presence.

November 16, 2003

Lesson Title: Live with Confidence

Background Scripture: 1 John 5

Print: 1 John 5:1-15

Key Verse: This is the testimony: God gave us eternal life and this life is in his Son. 1 John 5:11

One's relationship with Christ changes one's life more than anything else can. This lesson shows that faith in Jesus Christ alters our way of living and gives us eternal life. It teaches the importance of loving God in learning to love other people.

John makes sure that his readers have their priorities clearly arranged by reminding them the loving God is the first step in the new life. Being born of God through our faith is the changing force. Everything else springs out from that.

(Continued on page 11)

Church School Lesson Review

(Continued from page 10)

Although it is very difficult to decide which is first priority in providing love to God and love to people - they are strongly interrelated. John suggests we cannot omit either one. Believers love God; they keep His commandments that are rooted in victorious life that conquers the world... the belief that Jesus is the Son of God.

The Spirit affirms to believers that Jesus Christ has come, believers by water (baptism) and blood (crucifixion). John is attempting to make sure that his point is made concerning the reality of the Christ.

November 23, 2003

Lesson Title: Remain Loyal

Background Scripture: 2 and 3 John

Print: 2 John 4-9; 3 John 3-11

Key Verse: Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but imitate what is good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. 3 John 11

This lesson contains some of the same themes and communicates the same message, as have previous lessons. Love, commandments, and truth are still paired with warning against those who deceive us with false teaching.

Those who have faithfully followed the truth are commended and told that love is not a new commandment, but one that we are taught from the beginning of time - to love one another and to walk according to the commandment of love. The commandment "as you have heard from the beginning to follow love," is the secret to promoting loyalty among members of the church. John says that if we know the truth about love and loyalty, and do not practice it we are hypocrites.

Those who abide in the true teaching of Christ have both the Father and Son; those who depart from the teaching do not have God; their rejection of the teachings separates them from Him.

November 30, 2003

Lesson Title: Maintain Steadfast Faith

Background Scripture: Jude

Print: Jude 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13, 16-23

Key Verse: Keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. And have mercy on some who are wavering. Jude 21-22

This lesson, the book of Jude, confronts Christians who justify their shortcomings, rather than repent of them; and warns us that our faith must be practiced in order to be preserved. Strange doctrine still seems to exalt immorality, instead of trying to rise above it.

We will distinguish between loving the sinner and hating the sin; and between being judgmental of people with weaknesses that they are trying to rise above, and being so tolerant of immorality that we seem to approve of lifestyles more geared toward the world than lifestyles centered on Christ.

Jude warns believers against intruders who deny Jesus Christ as Lord and Master, and who pervert the message of faith. He felt a need for this warning, because people's faith had been threatened by unfaithful activities.

Many intruders that Jude spoke about distorted spiritual truths that they did not understand, and acted with animal passions, even joining in love feasts, as if they were true believers.

Believers are encouraged to build up their faith, keep themselves in the love of God, and live in hope of the eternal, while showing compassion and support to those who are inclined to stray away. Jude encourages us to discriminate between those who desire to do evil, and those who do evil by mistake. Only Jesus is available to keep all of us from falling and makes us stand without blemish in the presence of His glory.

*For God so loved the world
that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him
shall not perish but have eternal life.*

John 3:16

Twilight Church School Observes Anniversary and Promotion



Pastor and Mrs. McCall present Superintendent Sandifer an expression of love.

The St. John Church School's Anniversary and Promotion Day was observed with a Twilight Church School Service on Sunday afternoon, October 12 at 4:00 pm. The scripture for the lesson was 2 Timothy 2:1-15, with key verse 2 Timothy 2:15. Guest from community churches served as Superintendent and class teachers. The order of service was the traditional Church School order of service.

Mrs. Sandra Griffin of Grady-Madison AME Church was Guest Superintendent. The opening song was "Blessed Assurance." Christopher Butler served as pianist. Mrs. Lillie Rivers extended the welcome and Mrs. Lorraine Parham introduced the guest teachers. Mr. David Walker of Gravitts Chapel AME Church taught the Adult Class. Mr. Marc Lacy of Church Street CPCA was the teacher for the College Praise Class. Dr. Mattie Thomas of Phillips CME Church taught the Senior Class. Mr. Fred Richardson of Church Street CPCA was the teacher for the Intermediate Class. Mrs. Bernetta Pride of Owens Chapel MB Church was the teacher for the Junior Class. Ms. Barbara Coleman of Phillips CME Church taught the Primary and Beginners Classes. Mr. Craig Barrett of Union Chapel gave the lesson review. Promotion and Attendance Awards were given by the St. John Church School Superintendent and teachers. Mr. Willie Sandifer, Church School Superintendent, and Pastor McCall made closing remarks. Following the Doxology and Benediction, refreshments were served in the S. S. Hereford Fellowship Hall.



Adult Class



Junior Class



Intermediate Class



College Praise Class



Senior Class



Review by Mr. Barrett



Guest Superintendent Griffin



Church School enjoying refreshments

November 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9:00 AM Girl Scouts
2 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline	3	4	5 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	6 Noon Prayer	7 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	8 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
9 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	10	11	12 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	13 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	14 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	15 9:00 AM Girl Scouts 2:00 PM Fall Carnival
16 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship 50+ Harvest Service 4:00 p.m. Steward	17	18	19 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	20 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	21 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	22
23 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Downtown Thanksgiving Service	24	25	26 GHIMF Thanksgiving Service	27 THANKSGIVING	28	29
30 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship						

Important Dates to Remember

October 27-30 GHIMF CITY WIDE REVIVAL, First Missionary Baptist Church
Bishop T. Larry Kirkland, Evangelist, October 27-30 GHIMF City-
Wide Revival, 7:00 p.m.

November 15 Fall Carnival, St. John AME Church, 2:00 – 4:00 PM
Sponsored by St. John WMS and YPD

November 16 Fifty Plus Auxiliary Harvest Service, Reverend Johnathan Richardson,
preacher, 10:50 AM

November 27 Thanksgiving Day

December 14 Annual Taste Tea, following 10:50 AM Service
Co-sponsored by St. John AMEN Staff and Women's Praise Dance
Ministry

Thought for the Month – "A cup of cold water" – a little thing! But life is made up of little things, and he who would rise to a higher usefulness is wise if he cherishes the loving yet seeming trifles of daily living. – Selected

INDNJC

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Mrs. Mary Kirkland, Episcopal Supervisor
Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

Inside this issue.....

125th Session North Alabama Annual Conference
Men's Day 2003
Pastor's Annual Sermon
Twilight Church School



Stewards Confirmed at First Quarterly Conference



Presiding Elder Dillard, Pastor & Mrs. McCall

On Thursday, October 23, Presiding Elder Dwight E. Dillard held the First Quarterly Conference for St. John for this conference year.

The business of the conference was conducted by the presiding elder in his usual efficient manner. Pastor McCall answered the "pastor's questions" and representatives from boards and organizations gave financial and literary reports.

Stewards for this conference year were nominated by the pastor and confirmed by the presiding elder.

Steward Board 2003-2004

Jerry Baldwin
William Bell
Carol Cooper
John Gibson
Rufus Gilmore
Patricia Grier
James O. Heyward
Hanford Jones
Jeanette Jones
Nedra McDaniel
Ronald McIntosh
Otha Owens, Sr.

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor McCall's Letter

The Benefits of the Solitary Place at Thanksgiving

Mark 1:35-39

Let us remember the daily benefits of the *solitary place* not only during this season in which nationally we celebrate Thanksgiving but also with every heartbeat of our lives. The text reminds us: *Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place and there He prayed (1:35).* As we constantly focus on the life of Jesus as our example of planned, purposeful and productive living, why not get away daily to your own solitary place in your home, workplace, neighborhood etc., and be renewed by the benefits you find there with God:

1. An empowered prayer life with God (Pray the Scripture)
2. An empowered proclamation/sharing of the WORD of GOD with the people of God (PREACH THE WORD)
3. An empowerment to cast out demons in the name of JESUS, i.e. To conquer, cancel, nullify the influence of the negative, self-centered, envious, proud, self-exalters rather than exalters of God.

(Continued on page 3)

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Deaconess Corner

Submitted by Deaconess Sarah 'Granny' Bell

A Thankful Heart

Take nothing for granted,
For whenever you do
The "joy of enjoying"
Is lessened for you-
For we rob our own lives
Much more than we know
When we fail to respond
Or in any way show
Our thanks for the blessings
that daily are ours...
The warmth of the sun,
The fragrance of flowers,
The beauty of twilight,
The freshness of dawn,
The coolness of dew
On a green velvet lawn.

The kind little deeds
So thoughtfully done,
The favors of friends
And the love that someone
Unselfishly gives us
In a myriad of ways,
Expecting no payment
And no words of praise-
Oh, great is our loss
When we no longer find
A thankful response
To things of this kind,
For the joy of enjoying
And the fullness of living
Are found in the heart
That is filled with thanksgiving.

Helen Steiner Rice

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing
By prayer and supplication
With thanksgiving let your request
Be made known unto God.
Philippians 4:6

First Quarterly Conference

(Continued from page 1)

Clifton Pearson
Willie Sandifer
Eddie Sherrod
Martha Smith
Vanona Walton

Steward Emeritus
E. E. Brooks, Sr.
A. A. Burks, Sr.

At the request of the Presiding Elder, Pastor McCall shared his vision for this conference. He stated that his vision is threefold.

1. **Salvation** – Saving souls (new converts) "Launch out into the deep." Luke 5:4
2. **Study the WORD** – Spiritual Growth "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ" 2 Peter 3:18
3. **Service** – Meet the needs of the people with unselfish service. Matthew 5:16

We praise God for a productive and encouraging business session of the Quarterly Conference and pray for a blessed and fruitful conference year.

Usher's Corner

By Agnes Bailey

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, HELPS, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:28

Ushers Checklist: Are you as an usher making the grade?

1. Do you, as an usher, represent Jesus to unsaved people with a God-like manner?
2. Do you, as an usher, strive to make everyone feel special?
3. Are visitors treated with tender loving care and a follow-up greeting after the service?
4. Do you seat people safely and reverently?
5. Do you receive offerings with reverence and cheerfulness?

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

In the solitary place of our minds and lives, we can sin or we can allow His Holy Spirit in us to glorify and thank Him for being a Savior who saved us from death and our souls from hell. Aren't you glad that wherever you are, like Jesus, you can experience the powerful, productive benefits of a planned, private and prolonged prayer life and through Christ experience victory over demons, disease, and death?

Although our place of prayer may be interrupted by thoughts, things and people (1:36-37), we are empowered also inwardly in our solitary place to fulfill our common universal high calling as Christians, whether ordained or unordained i.e., to proclaim/preach the WORD. Tell and show the world in word and deed that Jesus Christ is both Savior and Lord. He is worthy to be praised. Let's continue, from our solitary places to give God thanks, not only this month but also day-by-day, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute. Tell a lost world that God showed up in your solitary place and He told you to tell others that JESUS IS LORD, PRAY THE SCRIPTURES AND SAVE THE LOST IN HIS NAME.

When God shows up in your solitary place, you realize that place is not one of solitary confinement but in prayer it is solitary empowerment by and through the Holy Spirit. Aren't you thankful for the benefit of an empowered prayer life that allows us to preach in word and deed and to exercise authority over the demonic, dark and destructive influences in our lives?

During Thanksgiving and with every heartbeat, let everyone who has breath praise the Lord.

For the Beauty of the Earth

For the beauty of the earth,
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth,
Over and around us lies;

Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.

Folliot S. Pierpoint

Girl Scouts.

St. John Girl Scout Troop 436 meets the first and third Saturdays of each month from 9 – 11 AM at the church. Please contact Mrs. Victoria Cox, troop leader, or Mrs. Carol Ball, assistant troop leader, for more information.



Prepare for Taste Tea 2003

For those of you who have asked, "When is it?"; "What shall I bring?"; and "Can I Help?"; the answers are here. **Sunday, December 14th after the 10:50 a.m. worship service** is the time for the annual taste tea. It will be co-sponsored by the A.M.E.N. staff and the Women's Praise Dance Ministry.

Again, we are asking members and friends to **bring a favorite dish and a copy of the recipe** (as well as any instructions for temperature and preparation for serving) to the fellowship hall prior to the worship service. There will be someone to receive your dish, recipe, and instructions. As in the past, we would like to have a variety in cuisine, ranging from appetizers and salads, to meat and vegetable dishes, and of course, delectable desserts. Soups and beverages of your choice are welcome as well. You are not limited to one entry, the more the merrier! (It will be the Christmas season after all!)

We are asking that you help us by letting a member of the planning committee know the name of your dish in advance. This will help us in preparing many of the labels prior to the day of the taste tea. There are still a few cookbooks left for those who would like to purchase one as a gift or for a friend, or if you have yet to purchase one of your very own – now is the time! **Cookbooks are \$6.00 each.**

The planning committee for the 2003 Taste Tea consists of Claire Philadelphia, Hazel Gilmore, and Bridget Floyd. If you would like to purchase a cookbook prior to the taste tea, please contact Claire Philadelphia, Meagan Speight, or Bridget Floyd.

Bishop Kirkland Offers Encouragement As GHIMF Guest Evangelist

By Bridget Floyd



The annual GHIMF City-Wide Fall Revival was held at 7 p.m., October 27-30, 2003 at the First Missionary Baptist Church on Blue Springs Road in Huntsville, where Reverend Dr. Julius Scruggs is the pastor. Reverend John Clay is president of the GHIMF. Reverend Dr. T. Larry Kirkland, Presiding Bishop of the Ninth Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Church, served as the guest evangelist. This was the third occasion that Bishop Kirkland has been invited to speak for a GHIMF-sponsored activity. This was not only a significant achievement but rather a testament to the dynamic sermons of Dr. Kirkland that strike an interdenominational chord in those who have the opportunity to hear him. This instance was no different in terms of the rousing response to his spiritual messages combined with a "down-home" delivery.

Various members of the Greater Huntsville Interdenominational Ministerial Fellowship (GHIMF) presided each night and participated in the order of worship. Various choirs from some of the churches pastored by members of the GHIMF served during the week. They set the mood with spiritually rousing worship in song. Representatives of ushers from the various churches served each night as well. On Monday night, Dr. Kirkland was introduced by Rev. Dr. Homer L. McCall. Dr. Kirkland maintained a stance of preferring an informal introduction, rather than listing the many accomplishments on his vita.



Dr. Kirkland spoke on the topic "An Encouraging Word to a Discouraged Servant", with text from the 18th chapter of Acts. In the text, Paul had seen the membership of the church he built to greater than eight thousand, dwindle by some 1500 under Paul's successor. Dr. Kirkland indicated that one of the strongest weapons in the devil's arsenal is that of discouragement, and that mankind is prone to discouragement. He indicated that God allows members of the clergy to become discouraged so as to "build empathy for their flock". He noted that "great people" have experienced discouragement, the likes of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Job, and Jeremiah. Returning to Paul, Dr. Kirkland indicated that while in Corinth God spoke to Paul in a vision, assuring him that God would be by his side.

According to Dr. Kirkland, God encouraged Paul in three ways: 1. *Through the companionship of friends* ("When you are down and out, God will bring you friends, sometimes from folks you don't even know"); 2. *Giving you the blessing of converts*, in that God will show you the fruit of your labor (God blessed Paul with some converts); and 3. *Make sure you have fellowship with God* (God spoke to Paul in the night, reassuring him).

On Tuesday night, Dr. Kirkland's sermon was entitled "A Church to be Proud Of" from the biblical text of 2 Thessalonians 1: 4. Again, Paul is featured as he is depressed but learns that one of his churches "was on fire". This was a time when Christians were persecuted and under siege. Membership in the church was a major commitment and at times risky due Roman persecution. In modern times there are the "megachurches" (memberships of greater than five thousand) with

(Continued on page 5)

Bishop Kirkland Offers Encouragement

(Continued from page 4)

a multitude of assets but limited association with spiritual growth. According to Dr. Kirkland, there are some ministers who preach "comfortable" sermons so as not to offend and risk decreasing the membership of these high profile, multimedia worship centers. He indicated that if everyone is agreeing with a pastor of a church, it is likely that the pastor is "not doing much". He compared this to biblical writings indicating that Paul was literally "run out" of town because he disturbed people with the truth. The evangelist expounded on what kind of church would make God proud.

He described features of the church of the Thessalonians which was characterized by 1. *Everyone in the church being genuinely saved* (In today's church there is not "true change" in enough people.); 2. *Their faith was increasing* ("It will require big-time faith to survive the times in which we live"); and 3. *They had love for one another*. Dr. Kirkland stated that the "church is not worth anything if your church does not have love. He cautioned that "classism" within the church is "destructive and divisive" and may ultimately lead to God's response of "class dismissed when we get to heaven."

On Wednesday, Dr. Kirkland preached on the topic "Get Over It! It's Time to Move On" from the text of 1 Samuel 16:1. God wanted Samuel to move on because 1. *He was neglecting his spiritual assignment*; 2. *Persistent grieving and mourning were transforming Samuel's personality*; and 3. *He was hindering God's Program*. Revival culminated on Thursday night with text from Matthew 6:25, with the title "Quit Worrying and Start Trusting". Bishop Kirkland highlighted three points: 1. *Worry is unnecessary because of your Father*; 2. *Worry is uncharacteristic because of your faith* (worry undermines scripture); and 3. *Worry is unwise because of your future*.

St. John members as well as ministers and presiding elders from the Ninth Episcopal District were present to offer support and be inspired by Bishop Kirkland. Additionally, Bishop Lawrence L. Reddick of the 7th Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church was present.



A Veterans Prayer

By Peter Marshall

*God of our fathers,
whose almighty hand
hath made and pre-
served our nation,
grant that our people*

*may understand what it is they celebrate to-
day.*

*May they remember how bitterly our freedom
was won, the down payment that was made
for it, the installments that have been made
since this republic was born, and the price that
must yet be paid for our liberty.*

*May freedom be seen not as the right to do as
we please but as the opportunity to please to
do what is right. May it ever be understood
that our liberty is under God and can be found
nowhere else. May our faith be something
that is not merely stamped upon our coins but
expressed in our lives.*

*Let us, as a nation, not be afraid of standing
alone for the rights of men, since we were born
that way, as the only nation on earth that
came into being "for the glory of God and the
advancement of the Christian faith." We
know that we shall be true to the Pilgrim
dream when we are true to the God they wor-
shipped.*

*To the extent that America honors thee, wilt
thou bless America, and keep her true as thou
hast kept her free, and make her good as thou
hast made her rich. Amen.*

POP Fall Festival Lifts the Name of the Lord in Praise



St. John AME Church and Church Street CPCA joined to "Lift up the name of the Lord in Praise" at the second annual Power of Praise (POP) Fall Festival at Searcy Homes on Sunday afternoon, October 19, 2003. Minister Jennifer Smith and Brother Joe Sales served as praise leaders. Members from both churches supported the festival in preparation, attendance, and prayer.

Kevin Anderson offered prayer and Mrs. Porter read scripture from Psalm 1. The Church Street Gospel Choir lifted the name of the Lord with the selection "Lord I Lift Your Name on High." The St. John Youth Praise Dancers ministered in dance with "Still I Rise" and "As Long As I Have King Jesus."

This year's POP Fall Festival included contemporary expressions of praise through skits, Christian Rap, and Kicking for Jesus. Brother Horace Wilson and Brother Marc Lacy presented a skit that dramatized the need for a life centered in Jesus instead of living a life driven by the use and sale of drugs. They followed this skit with Christian Rap. St. John, aka John Hampton, electrified the audience with rap selections "All Angles" and "Walk on Water." He even had the audience (those young and energetic enough) jumping for Jesus.



Elder Ed Adams and his wife Retha Adams presented students from Adam's Academy of Martial Arts and Christian Center in "Kicking for Jesus." This ministry of young men and women demonstrated the technique of martial arts and at the same time demonstrated their Christian training through recitation of scripture. These young people know that "giving up is not an option" and stand on God's word as they quoted "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD." Isaiah 54:17



Elder Ed Adams and company dramatized the redemptive, saving, and transforming power of Jesus in a skit "He Cares." The fall festival concluded with the selection "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" and a call for decisions for Christ by Pastor Walker.

Door prizes were given to those who registered and refreshments were served. Pastor McCall offered the closing prayer.

The planning committee expresses gratitude to the members of St. John who supported this evangelistic outreach. Pray that we continue to show our love for Jesus through our love for others and that all we do "lifts the name of Jesus."

Lord, I lift Your name on high. Lord, I love to sing Your praises. I'm so glad You're in my life. I'm so glad You came to save us.

You came from Heaven to earth to show us the way, From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay; From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky; Lord, I lift Your name on high.

The Debate over the Alabama Tax Reform Plan: The Results are In

By Patrice S. Ruffin

By now, we all know that the September 9th vote on Governor Riley's Tax Reform Plan ended with a loud, resounding "NO!" In the weeks after the vote, there were hundreds of news reports and articles across the state of Alabama with headlines such as "Some say plan never had a chance" and "Tough times ahead".

These reports highlighted only some of the sentiments held by the citizens of Alabama. When discussing the plan with people, it is easy to find both supporters and opposers of it. Whatever side any of us were on, the results of the vote took effect quickly, even as early as twenty-four hours later. On September 10th several state agency employees found themselves receiving pink slips. There were also many state supported programs that had their funding snatched.

Governor Bob Riley, as he opened a special budget writing session of the Alabama Legislature on September 15th, spoke about restoring the faith of the citizens in their state government. This lack of trust is the reason for the outcome of the vote, according to the Governor.

In order to get the state out of its deficit, something the plan was designed to do, Riley proposes "across-the-board" budget cuts for many state agencies (Chandler, *Birmingham News*, 09/16/03). Some believe that current and future budget cuts are inevitable, but others disagree. Senator Jeff Enfinger (D-Huntsville) noted that Alabamians "didn't vote against all revenue measures. They voted against his [Riley]" (Chandler, *Birmingham News*, 09/16/03).

The biggest issue that voters were concerned with was the increase in property tax. Historically, the citizens of Alabama prefer their significantly lower property taxes (Hollis, *Huntsville Times*, 09/10/03). If the Riley plan had not focused as much attention on raising these taxes, many analysts believe that the reform may have passed.

Even so, there was another major concern of many voters about the plan. There was a lack of earmarking on the taxes that were intended to be collected to support schools. This was another point that allowed voters to bring up questions about the trustworthiness of the Riley administration. If taxes are going to be levied, citizens want to know exactly where they are going. The plan did not specify where education funds would go and who would be administering and monitoring the funds. This raised a lot of red flags for voters.

Many citizens suggested that Governor Riley rewrite the plan, taking into account many of the questions raised, such as other forms of taxation and being more specific about what schools will receive which funds.

During the September 9th vote two major issues were to be addressed by the new tax plan. These issues were 1) Alabama's under-funded educational system and 2) level taxation across all classes. Due to the outcome of the vote, the Alabama education and tax systems will remain the same. What does this mean for the future of the state? Will the education system worsen? Will the poor continue to be overtaxed? Will the rich continue to be under-taxed? Whatever happens, we will all just have to continue to pray that the state of Alabama finds a way to improve the quality of life for those who need it and to ensure that the youth of the state receive the quality education that they deserve.

Thinking on Thanking

An Editorial by Reverend Johnathan Richardson

It would be absurd to declare that "thanks" is an outdated concept. However, I am inclined to think deeply about gratitude and its implications within the realm of our present day society. In the document to follow I will bring to light some crucial questions regarding thankfulness. Then I will attempt to engage my own questions with a view toward resolving the issues such questions raise. These questions are not evidence of any doubt that thankfulness is a necessary part of the Christian life. Rather these questions are evidence of my resolve to reflect deeply and seriously about giving thanks in a way that will be helpful and challenging.

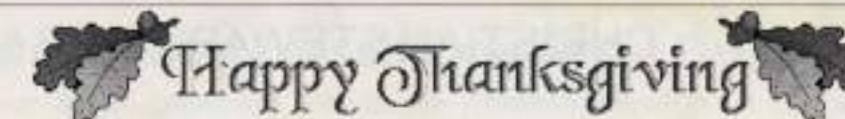
The first question that I want to pose is, "Does giving thanks begin and end with the individual?" Is the event of gratitude self-centered? To this question one may respond with a resounding no! They may affirm that giving thanks is not self-centered but God-centered. Such persons would agree with the statement, "I thank God for what God has done for me, to me, through me and with me." While this is definitely true, I would venture to ask should not the "me" be a "we" or an "us"? Is the "me" ever replaced with an "us"? I would argue, rarely if ever. Such a simple feel good answer to such a serious question is insufficient. One reason that this answer is wanting is because it disregards our innate need to feel safe. And this need for security and comfort, whether it is for ourselves or loved ones, plays a large part in the reason why we give thanks to God. The backdrop for giving thanks is most often from the standpoint of "it could have been me", as if those that "it" did happen to have no reason to be grateful. Such a frame of reference relegates gratitude to the dungeons of the "I" without the "thou", the "me" without the "you" and the "self" without the "other". Now I am not implying that we should stop thanking God for our individual blessings whatever they may be. However, there is incompleteness when this type of gratitude is the only one rendered. Giving thanks does have an individual component that is necessary for affirming and validating a healthy self-interest but giving thanks also has a social component - an edict of the communal. Our thanks giving should never come at the expense of others. Giving thanks is not self-centered but resides where God and our relationship with others and ourselves meet. Concerning this dynamic the words of Psalm 100 and Psalm 34:3 are clarifying:

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." (Psalm 100)

"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." (Psalm 34:3)

Is being grateful bounded? Do we have to be grateful every moment of the day and in every situation? These sorts of questions regarding the nature of being thankful I feel are helpful to understanding what it means to be ungrateful. Because only by fully understanding giving thanks can we guard against being otherwise. Again we have the individual that will answer the question saying that we should be thankful at all times and in all places. Gratitude is not bounded. If this is true, how then can we validate this claim in trying situations that visit human life? Surely we are not going to say to an individual who has been the victim of abuse or who has lost a loved one to death or incarceration, be thankful. What is at the heart of whether being grateful is bounded is the question of whether an individual, community or nation can be angry with God. Does being thankful trump every other human emotion? Well, in every life, social as well as single, being thankful is bounded but this boundary is porous, it is not consistent. In times of suffering, pain, and want we should be able to say with H. G. Spafford, "It is well with my soul". And make no mistake, this is hard to do. "Thanks" always has power but its meaning may be compromised by

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The Meaning of Thanksgiving

By Britteny Bell

During our past generations, Thanksgiving has been one of the foremost national holidays that has been celebrated on the fourth Thursday in the month of November for the nation to give thanks to God.

Thanksgiving began with Pilgrims and Indians coming together for their first feast as a sign of peace. Now in our present day we have also kept the tradition of Thanksgiving alive and have not only kept the peace, but have come together with families and communities.

Thanksgiving for some of us is a way of life, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior for daily life sustaining blessings of health, food, air, wisdom and the list of blessings goes on and on.

Thanksgiving to me is a time when you become one with your family and enjoy their company. This grand holiday is and should also be a time to be with friends and those you care about dearly. During Thanksgiving you should take time to thank God for all He has done through the year and help those who do not have families and those who are less fortunate. During this Thanksgiving take time to elaborate with family and friends on what Thanksgiving means to you.

Fifty-Plus Auxiliary's Harvest Service

The Fifty-Plus Auxiliary's Harvest Service will be celebrated Sunday, November 16, 2003 during the 10:50 AM Worship Service. The preacher for this occasion will be the **Reverend Johnathan Richardson**, Assistant to the Pastor at St. John. Members are asked to bring nonperishable food items to be donated to needy families during the Thanksgiving Season. The items will be collected in the church Narthax.

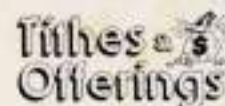
Everyone is invited to pray up this occasion and bring your family and friends

Annual Downtown Thanksgiving Service

The Annual Downtown Thanksgiving Service will be Sunday, November 23, 2003 at 5 p.m. in the First Baptist Church Sanctuary, 600 Governors Drive. There will be a reception following the service.

*Give thanks unto the Lord
for He is good
and His mercy endures forever.*

Psalm 136:1



CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP & TITHING

(Excerpts from the New Life Ministries New Members Manual)

When you tithe, you return to God one tenth of His money.

"Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."
Luke 6:38 (NRSV)

Tithing is a biblical term which means giving ones first fruits to God. It is the first tenth of one's income. Tithing is a voluntary and systemic way of returning to God part of what He has given us. It refers to the total gross income from any source including salary, stocks and bonds, interest income and dividends. For example, if you gross \$100.00 weekly, you would be expected to give \$10.00 of your earnings each week to the church as your tithe.

It is also necessary that we as a people begin to realize the significance of a "self tithe." This means that you give your tithe to God first and then you tithe 10% of your income to yourself and save your earnings. One then begins to learn how to live on less and experience a victorious life because you have been obedient to God, for you are sowing the seeds of a good steward. Basically, you are in charge of Gods gifts to you.

Tithing is a spiritual approach. Whenever we tithe, we are expressing faith in God and we are trusting God to keep His promise. Not to tithe is blatant disobedience to God's Word and is equal to robbing God and results in a curse. Malachi 3:8-10 (NRSV) states:

"Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, 'How are we robbing you? In your tithes and offering! You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me - the whole nation of you!'"

"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of Hosts; see if I will not open the windows of Heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing."

We recognize that there is a financial sacrifice involved, but we believe that God, in all His goodness, will not allow our obedience to Him to destroy or harm our family in any way. God says in His word, put Him to the test, to prove Him, but you will never know the fullness of God and what He can do for you until you put Him to the test and TITHE.

We believe that if you take care of God's church, God will take care of you. It may not be that you will get more money, although some have, but to know the rewards of Gods spiritual blessings of His love, grace and the peace that only He can give, is worth more than the sacrifice of giving. Whether our blessings are material or spiritual or both: "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."
James 1: 17 (NRSV)

November is Stewardship Emphasis Month in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. As we begin this conference year, pray that you will grow in stewardship. If you are already a tither, continue to tithe in time, talents and treasure. If you have not made the commitment to tithe, prayerfully consider making this decision during this conference year. If you have questions on tithing, please contact Pastor McCall. He will be glad to discuss tithing with you, provide resource material on tithing as well as refer you to other members who will share tithing testimonies with you.

Stewardship: Time, Talent, Treasure

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

James 1: 17
(NRSV)



Church School Lesson Overview – December 2003

The Church School Department provides the monthly lesson review for the St. John A.M.E.N. This month's lesson reviews were written by Claudinette Purifoy (1st Sunday) and Willie J. Sander (2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays).

December 7, 2003

Lesson Title: Samuel: A Child Dedicated to God

Background Scripture: I Samuel 1:1 - 2:10 and Luke 1:46-55

Print: I Samuel 20, 26-28; 2:1-8

Devotional Songs: #242, #251, & #243

Key Verse: I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given to the Lord. I Samuel 1:27-28

How many times have you prayed to the Lord to provide a particular blessing to you? Once you received the blessing did you share it with others? Did you thank the Lord for it? Did you return the blessing to him? The lesson gives the biblical account of the sacrifice and courage of Hannah and the birth of Samuel.

Hannah was a wife of Elkanah who was often tormented and ridiculed by Peninnah; the other wife of Elkanah, because she was without child. Deeply humiliated, Hannah turned to the Lord, prayed for Him to bless her with a son and promised to dedicate the child to Him. Hannah prayed so fervently that Eli, a priest that was witnessing her in the tabernacle, thought that she was drunk. She convinced him that she was not drunk by telling him of her anguish. Eli dismissed her and bestowed a blessing.

Hannah and Elkanah were blessed with the birth of Samuel. Hannah could have very easily said, "Thank you Lord for blessing me with a son but I can't keep my vow to you. Samuel is my miracle baby and his daddy and I need him with us. You know Lord - I'm not getting any younger" but she did not. She remembered her solemn promise and after Samuel was weaned, at the age of 3, Hannah presented him to Eli at the tabernacle in Shiloh. She wanted him to know that the Lord had answered her prayers and that she was there to fulfill her promise to the Lord. It would be under Eli's tutelage that Samuel would serve the Lord and become a great prophet.

Hannah prayed to the Lord after keeping her promise. Her prayer was a song celebrating the righteousness and sovereignty of Lord. Her prayer told of how the Lord defeats the proud and exalts the humble, how He protects and provides for those who are faithful to Him and He will strengthen His anointed king.

Hannah's account reminds us that there is no sorrow that He cannot heal.

December 14, 2003

Lesson Title: John: Forerunner of Jesus

Background Scripture: Luke 1:5-80

Print: Luke 1:67-90

Devotional Songs: #221, #272, & #243

Key Verse: And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways. Luke 1:76

While Zacharias was performing his priestly duties in the Lord's temple, an angel of the Lord, Gabriel, appeared before him. Gabriel told Zacharias that his wife would give birth to a son, and that he would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth and be great in the sight of God. Zacharias was fearful and did not believe the angel's words, and because of his unbelief, Gabriel silenced his tongue so he could not speak until the prophecy was fulfilled.

Zacharias and Elisabeth became the parents of John the Baptist and after John's birth, Zacharias spoke, prophesying and praising God for His mercy and goodness. Zacharias thanked God that He was raising up the promised Savior who would come to save people from their sins. John's role was to prepare the way for the Messiah. John grew strong and lived in the desert.

December 21, 2003

Lesson Title: Jesus: God With Us

Background Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25

Print: Matthew 1:18-25

Devotional Songs: #120, #116, & #118

Key Verse: Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Matthew 1:23

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Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 11)

Mary and Joseph were engaged to be married when Mary became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph, who was a descendant of King David, was about to divorce her until an angel appeared to him in a dream.

The angel told Joseph not to break the engagement, but to name the child Jesus because he would save people from their sins. The name "Jesus" is a Greek form of the Hebrew name *Jeshoshua*, which means, "the Lord saves." The sinless and divine nature of Jesus made Him the only man capable of shedding blood on the cross that is sufficient to atone for man's sin.

December 28, 2003

Lesson Title: Jesus Grew in God's Favor

Background Scripture: Luke 2:40-52

Print: Luke 2:40-52

Devotional Songs: #112, #345, & #381

Key Verse: And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. Luke 2:52

Jesus accompanied His parents on their yearly visit to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Jesus was talking with the teachers in the temple when Mary and Joseph started home. When they realized He was not with the crowd, they returned to Jerusalem to find Him. Jesus returned to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph and was obedient to them.

Jesus grew in wisdom, which came from God; and the grace of God was upon Him because He stayed connected to His Father in heaven. Jesus knew who He was and understood His purpose. Jesus operated from a pure, peaceful, loving, considerate, submissive, merciful, perfect, and sincere heart - qualities that come only from God.

God covered Jesus with divine grace, which He needed to fulfill His purposes on earth: To minister, to preach and to teach God's Word, and to ultimately die on the cross. God poured grace upon Him and increased it at various stages in His life. God increased His endurance and strengthened Him as His appointed time drew nearer.

Thinking on Thanking

An Editorial by Reverend Johnathan Richardson

(Continued from page 8)

anger and despair. This is why in times of pain, loss or extreme sadness, thankfulness is the last thing on our mind. But gratitude at its best occurs at that moment when we really don't have a reason to be thankful. Giving thanks is purest when pain and suffering is deepest - not necessarily after. It is at this point that I leave you with the words of Job, "Though he slay me/us, yet will I/we trust Him".

I have considered briefly the idea of gratitude/giving thanks. I have more queries on the topic but am hopeful that this snap shot of where I am has been inviting. I pray it has been received in love and benefits consciousness.



ADVENT begins the Christian liturgical year on the Sunday closest to November 30, which is St. Andrew's Day.

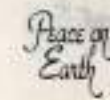
The season is four Sundays in duration. The Sundays are referred to as "Sundays in Advent". This year, advent begins on Sunday, November 30.

The advent message comes from the two Latin words, *as venire*, which means "to come to". The message is that God, in Christ, is coming into the world. It includes all time.

In times past, God did come in the Christ-like child in whose honor we celebrate Christmas. Thus, God supplies the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophets. In times present, the individual may experience God coming into their lives for the first time, "new birth," or in the renewal and growth into deeper dimensions of reality. In times to come, we are promised the return of the Christ in His full glory and power as judge of all the world.

Advent also bears the admonition that we need to prepare for the sure coming of the Lord. Preparation for the coming Lord must include repentance, prayer, and patience.

The liturgical color for Advent is violet. It is a color that communicates a feeling of quiet dignity, royalty, and repentance. Such a color is most expedient to announce the coming of the King of Kings.



December 2003



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class, Love Feast	4 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	5	6 10:00 a.m. Trustee Board Meeting
7 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Articles Deadline	8	9	10 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	11 Noon Prayer	12 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	13 10:30 a.m. Newsletter Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. WMS Meeting 3:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting
14 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Taste Tea	15	16	17 6:30 p.m. Prayer Service, Bible Class	18 Noon Prayer 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir	19 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus	20
21 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	22	23	24	25 Christmas Day	26	27
28 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	29	30	31 Watch Night Service			

Important Dates to Remember

- November 16** Fifty Plus Auxiliary Harvest Service, 10:50 AM,
Reverend Johnathan Richardson, preaching
- November 20** South Birmingham Huntsville Planning Meeting, 6:00 PM, Allen
Chapel AME Church, Birmingham (Woodlawn), Alabama,
Rev. Zachary Watkins, Pastor; Rev. Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
- November 23** Downtown Thanksgiving Service, 5 p.m., First Baptist Church,
600 Governors Drive
- November 24** Annual Planning Meeting and Election of Trustees
- November 26** GHIMF Thanksgiving Service, Owens Chapel MB Church,
Rev. Dr. Wendell Thompson, Pastor
- November 27** Thanksgiving Day
- December 14** Annual Taste Tea, following 10:50 AM service

Thought for the Month –

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Psalm 150:6

INDNJC

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Mrs. Mary Kirkland, Episcopal Supervisor
Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Presiding Elder
Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
6305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville AL 35810

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GHIMF Citywide Revival
Thanksgiving