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ST. JOHN
A.M.E.N NEWSLETTER



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 1

January 2014



Legacies of Nonviolence and Forgiveness: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela

By Bridget J. Floyd



On January 20, 2014, there will be a holiday/celebration marking the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. which occurred on January 15, 1929. This is the only national holiday to honor an African American. Dr. King, an iconic civil rights activist and minister began his activism in the 1950's in Montgomery, Alabama. The catalyst for the Montgomery Bus Boycott was Ms. Rosa Parks' refusal to relinquish her seat on the bus. The ensuing boycott and civil rights movement were characterized by nonviolent protests which often resulted in arrests and beatings. Great efforts were made to train those who would participate in the protests to withstand verbal and physical aggression and respond in a nonviolent manner, even under extreme conditions. The efforts of Dr. King and the vast numbers of those who would march for racial and economic justice, contributed to legislation for desegregation and voting rights for minorities. Dr. King, before his death in April of 1968, began to move toward economic and employment equality as well as advocating for peace/non-support of the Vietnam War. Many persons besides Dr. King lost their lives in an effort to bring attention to the injustice and atrocities that were inflicted upon African Americans (and protestors regardless of race) and to effect the changes that are viewed as part of the "Dream" about which Dr. King spoke.

Interestingly, on another continent, in the country of South Africa, there was another iconic leader/activist, Nelson Mandela, who was born July 18, 1918. He fought apartheid, a legalized system of oppression, inequality for the black majority by the white minority. Although trained in the area of law, Nelson Mandela, responded to mass killing of blacks by embracing the idea of violence to change the injustice of the ruling National Party of South Africa. His struggle began after 1948 and he was tried for treason but acquitted in 1961. He was tried for attempts to violently overthrow the government and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1964. He underwent a transformation while imprisoned and continued his effort to change the policies, law, government, and was released in 1990. He ultimately became the first Black President of South Africa as apartheid was ended.

Mr. Mandela was an example of how one could be transformed and he was held in high esteem in his country and internationally as a symbol of forgiveness. Rather than embrace bitterness and seek revenge against those who imprisoned him, he united his country and the people. During his illness and particularly after his death in December of 2013, news coverage communicated the multicultural and multiracial unity of South Africans as they mourned/celebrated the life of Nelson Mandela; and the international leaders and citizenry at large, communicated respect for the leader and particularly his transformation/example of forgiveness. He was often quoted as noting the importance of forgiveness and the liberating power associated with forgiveness.

Both King and Mandela received the Nobel Peace Prize for their work effecting change for racial equality, ending discrimination, and working for unity. The latter, received the award in combina-

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Legacies of Nonviolence and Forgiveness: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela

By Bridget J. Floyd

(Continued from page 2)

tion with Willem de Klerk, President of South Africa, who worked with Mr. Mandela to gain his freedom and have fair elections which would result in "President" Nelson Mandela.

A few quotes from Mr. Mandela speak not only to his legacy but highlight the work of Dr. King as well. Two icons, who sacrificed their lives in different ways, but changed the lives of many for the better; and set in motion events that would be noted globally. While they never met, their struggles had similarities and differences.

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who can conquer that fear". – Nelson Mandela

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others". – Nelson Mandela

"Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies". – Nelson Mandela

"As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison" – Nelson Mandela

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite" Nelson Mandela - Long Walk to Freedom.

"...And when this happens, and when we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro Spiritual: Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!" – Martin Luther King Jr.

"But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; ... " Luke 6: 27-29 (NR SV)



Pictured on the left is a statue of President Mandela outside of a square named in his honor and above is a prayer garden established during his illness. These pictures were taken by Brother Darwin Washington on a trip to South Africa with his wife, Sister Adrienne P-K Washington, in November 2013.

Shower for the Reverend Sheri Anticipates the Arrival of Joya Dianne

By Bridget J. Floyd

On Saturday, December 14, the Steward Board, Women's Missionary Society, Stewardess Board and Women's Ministry coordinated a shower in anticipation of the birth of Joya Dianne Clayborn. Front and center was Reverend Sheri as she was feted by enthusiastic St. John women. Pastor Clayborn made a brief appearance and Steward Adrienne P. K. Washington made a special presentation to him (see photo).

There were fun games and delicious food. Reverend Sheri opened numerous gifts and cards for "Joya" and took home gifts for "big brother" Patrick II (P2) as well. Reverend Sheri made closing remarks of appreciation that were heartfelt as well as moving.

Enjoy the photos that give a glimpse into the event and enjoyment.



Candlelight Service Offers Celebration of a "Holy Night"

O holy night!

The stars are brightly shining

It is the night of the dear Savior's birth!

Long lay the world in sin and error pining

Till he appear'd and the soul felt its worth.

A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices

For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

- Adolphe-Charles Adam



Praise team members

Janelle Smith, Reginald Pearson and Shay York

St. John members gathered at 6:30 pm on Christmas Eve for the first Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. Music was led by the Praise Team and members of the Naomi Council participated in the order of service. Sister Charlesie Brooks offered prayer and Sister Eva Smith read the scripture. The Advent reading was read by Sister Barbara Johnson and the Christ Candle was lit by Sister Lady Hereford.

The message was delivered by Pastor Clayborn. The message was entitled "Moving Past Fear" with text from Luke 2:8-10. He explained that the shepherds were afraid of the glory of God when it shone around them. He went on to explain that receiving God's glory is a part of God's blessings for one's life. Points highlighted were that God's glory brings good news as it points to who God is; it brings a sign to guide, as it did the children of Israel; and it gives backing as it did when the multitudes

appeared when the shepherds did not know what to do. In concluding, Pastor Clayborn stated that sometimes all one has to do to "Move Past Fear" is to give God praise.

As the worship service transitioned from the sermon to communion, the phenomenal gifted singer, Ms. Sharon Hicks, captured the purpose for the evening's celebration as she sang "O Holy Night." Communion was served and the service ended with worshippers lighting candles and singing.



Ms. Hicks sings "O Holy Night"



Candles are lit as the service concludes

Watch Night Service Filled with Praise, Technology and the Preached Word



The 2013 Watch Night Service was a wonderful way to celebrate 2013 and welcome 2014. Attendance was high and so was the spirit of those who came to worship and praise the Lord one more time in 2013. The service was the merging of Friday Nite Live and regular worship. The lighting, music and technology of Friday Nite Live were integrated into the Watch Night service. Special lighting was used throughout the service and a large screen allowed for lyrics of songs to be displayed and videos to be shown.

The Praise Team, consisting of Reginald Pearson, the Reverend Dennis DeLoach, Shay Williams-York and Christina Sanders, ministered in song throughout the service. Prayer was offered by the Reverend Meriam Garrett and scripture was read from Exodus 33:12-23. The Dance Ministry, directed by Dr. Jennifer Patterson, ministered the selection "I've Got a Testi-

mony" as well as accompanied the Praise Team in some of their selections.

The surprise of the evening was a video that captured the year via sermon and sermon series titles, bulletin covers, AMEN articles, memorials, and a clip from Pastor Clayborn's Annual Conference Report. This astounding "year in review" video was prepared by Sister Janette Smith. Pastor Clayborn acknowledged her many hours of labor to prepare the video, as well as the professional photographs that were taken by AMEN Staff photographer Darwin Washington.



Pastor Clayborn shared with congregants some of the plans for 2014. He stated that the theme for 2013 was "Catching the Vision" and the theme for 2014 will be "Writing the Vision." He also stated that there will be life groups coming in 2014 to promote healthier togetherness.

The preached WORD for the evening was centered on Exodus 33:21-22. The sermon was entitled "There is a Place." "The Place" referred to being where God's Glory is. He began by explaining how Moses and the children of Israel were "out of place" in the wilderness because the people worshipped idols. Moses had to go to the mountain top, "the place," to see God's Glory. He related the position of the Israelites to today's world. Persons have to go from being "out of place" in 2013 to get to "the place" in 2014. To do this requires that one ask for it, look for it, and go to "the place."

The sermon ended at midnight, just as the yoke release forms that had been submitted by members in December were burned outside (with a live feed to the screen in the sanctuary). Everyone gathered at the altar for prayer. Afterwards there was rejoicing and hugs as the blessings of 2013 were celebrated with anticipation of what God will do in 2014.



Christmas Program Highlights the Good News

By Kaitlyn McClung

This Christmas season highlighted the many blessings of the birth of Jesus Christ to St. John A.M.E. during the Christmas program, *Ring in the Great News...Jesus a Savior for all Nations*. With the hard work of Mrs. Donna Gullatte, Mrs. Cheryl Anderson, Ms. Amber Humphrey and Ms. Janette Smith, the 2013 program was a hit production.



With lights, camera, and action, the big screen was set up center stage as the St. John actors, news crew, and dancers came in with the Good News. During part one of the production, Angels twelve and under gave the Good News during the play in the form of a speech and a song, letting St. John know the goodness that Jesus Christ was born.

With commercial breaks and celebratory music, the scene crossed over to the second act, *Ring in the Good News*, where the St. John News Crew came in with the news of how God still moves in the lives of believers today. After teen news reporters spread the Good News with Pastor Clayborn, the Dance Ministry danced to "Testimony" by Anthony Brown.



In the third and final part of the production, the St. John news crew went around the globe spreading the Good News through testimonies. St. John members shared their trials and tribulations in sit-down interviews and shared how Jesus can bring you out of your deepest pit such as the murder of your child, suicidal thoughts, being homeless, and so much more.

Between testimonies, dancers took St. John around the world and back to the motherland with an African dance ministered to the intro of the wedding song from "Coming to America." Wrapping up the testimonies, dancers blessed attendees with the song "Born This Day" by Yolanda Adams, reminding them that Jesus was and is a savior for all nations.



Ministry Opportunities

Dance Ministry Seeking New Members

The St. John AME Dance Ministry is extending an invitation for members to become a part of this vibrant ministry. Interested persons ages 5 and up should sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office between January 8-31, 2014 or see membership chair Jason Gilmore. New members' orientation will be Saturday, February 1.

Mentors Sought for iThrive Ministry

Persons interested in interacting with the youth (ages 13-20) of St. John in fun and meaningful ways through the iTHRIVE ministry should contact Sister Janette Smith in the main office from 10 am to 4:30 pm on Monday-Friday, 256.534.3265, or email her at stjohnameh@aol.com.

Condensed New Members Class

There will be a condensed session of the New Members Class on Saturday, January 25, from 12:30 pm to 4:00 pm. All new members who have not completed the class are urged to attend. An agenda is posted outside the main office. If you have already attended some sessions, you may use the agenda to determine the time for the session you have not attended.

All members are welcomed.

Daniel Payne Legacy Village Appeal

The support of St. John's members for Daniel Payne College Legacy Village has been outstanding. Thank you for your commitments of \$10 per month. If you have not completed your pledge card, cards are available in the church office.

Your monthly commitment is important for the Ninth District to move from vision to reality.

It's a girl!

"Behold, children are a gift of the Lord..." Psalm 127:3

*Announcing the birth of
Joya Dianne Smith Clayborn*

January 9, 2014

3:19 pm

6 pounds 1 ounce, 18 inches

Proud parents: The Reverend Patrick and the Reverend Sheri Clayborn

Proud brother: Patrick Clayborn II

*"I (we) prayed for this child,
and the Lord has granted what I (we) asked of Him..."
1 Samuel 1:27*



AME Founder's Day to be Observed on February 9



The Right Reverend Carolyn Tyler Guidry will be the guest preacher for Founder's Day on Sunday, February 9. Bishop Guidry was the first female to be appointed Presiding Elder in the 5th Episcopal District and the second female elected and consecrated Bishop in the AME Church. She served the 16th and 8th Districts of the church. Bishop Guidry retired at the General Conference in Nashville, Tennessee in July 2012. Please plan to attend this historic service!

Healthcare Coverage is Mandatory

The Patient Care and Affordable Care Act's first deadline for coverage led to over 1 million people / families signing up to healthcare coverage by Dec 23, 2013. There is still time to ENROLL prior to March 31, 2014 deadline for 2014. Healthcare coverage is mandatory and persons without coverage will be fined.

These are the enrollment deadlines through March 2014.

- January 15th, for coverage to begin on February 1st
- February 15th, for coverage to begin on March 1st
- March 31st for coverage to begin on May 1st (this gap is due to how insurance plans implement coverage)

If you do not have healthcare coverage or know someone who does not have coverage, please contact the church office for assistance with signing up for coverage. You may also visit <https://www.healthcare.gov> for more information.

The Conversion

By Paulette Bargon

Jazz kept saying to herself, "God leave me alone, I like my lifestyle!"

Jazz thought she was living the good life; easy money, bad boys, gin and juice, an occasional Mary Jane, and a snort of coke. But something kept nagging Jazz, telling her it was time to make a change. She knew it was God whispering in her ear because He told her, "I won't leave you alone, you are my child, I love you." "But God", she replied, "I don't deserve you, I have done wrong so much that even my family has given up on me. And why are you here now? I thought you abandoned me when I got pregnant?"

He said, "I was there. Don't you realize that your child is a wonderful gift. The only time you feel peace in your heart is when you look at her. You always ask for a better life, just for her."

God also told Jazz that her family never gave up on her. They are constantly praying for her salvation.

Jazz was perplexed, she could not figure out why God wanted to help her now. Her only response was, "Lord, I don't pray."

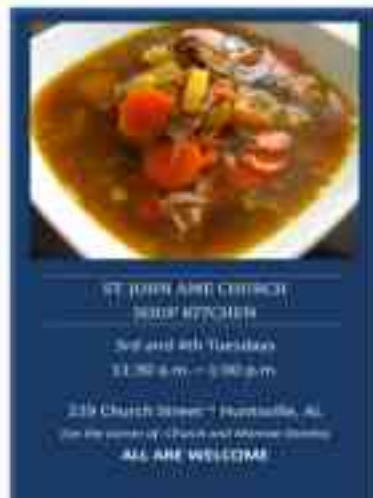
His response was, "You talk to me all the time, even when you don't realize it. I know every pain, anguish and remorse that you have. Do not give up hope. I can heal you, I can help you. You will be forgiven of your sins. The only thing you have to do is ASK and RECEIVE. And when you receive my love, the desire to live that so called good life will no longer be desirable to you. Now all your problems will not instantly go away, but with my help they will be a lot easier to deal with."

God told Jazz that He has a purpose for her. Jazz said, "God, even though I don't deserve you, please show me the way, tell me what to do!"

He said, "Take my hand!"

My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me" and my heart responds, "Lord I am coming." Psalm 27:8

God Provides, But How?



"When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands." Deuteronomy 24: 19 KJV

When a christian writer compared squirrels that race against winter to bury their acorns in a safe accessible place while making commotions and an entire herd of deer going through a backyard without making a single sound. He concluded that the two creatures are entirely different. The deer do not prepare for winter and when snow comes; they eat whatever they can find along the way; including shrubs in neighborhood yards. Squirrels, however, would starve if they followed that example. They would be unable to find suitable food. These two creatures represent ways that God cares for His people. He enables them to work and save for the future and He meets their needs when resources are scarce.

God provides by instructing those with plenty to share with those in need (Deuteronomy 24:19). The conclusion: When it comes to provision, the message of the Bible is work while we can, save what we can, and trust God to meet our needs.

The Soup Kitchen is open on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month.

You are invited!

Women's Ministry Tidbits!

St. John Ladies, your help is needed in planning the Summer Retreat that is currently scheduled for June 27-28, 2014. Please complete the survey located in the narthex and return at your earliest convenience. This is your retreat and your help is welcomed. Thank you. Sister Lauretta Teague, Coordinator.

Church-wide Service Project Exceeded Goal

One of the church-wide service projects for this year was to donate Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets to persons in need in the community. The goal was to service at least 100 households. St. John exceeded that goal by distributing 105 boxes of food.

Members donated nonperishable food items and made monetary donations toward this service project. Over 100 food boxes and meals were distributed for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The boxes of food contained a variety of kitchen staples that one would use to prepare a Thanksgiving or Christmas meal. Turkeys were included in the Thanksgiving boxes and gift cards (for purchase of meat) were included in the Christmas baskets.

Additionally, Madison County Commissioner Bob Harrison donated enough fresh produce to stock each box.



Executive Minister Sheri Smith Clayborn, coordinated the project. Super shoppers Maeola Peoples and Paulette Williams labored tirelessly as they shopped for food and assisted with the loading and distribution of the boxes. Thanks to all individuals and ministries who contributed to this project. Job well done!

St. John A. M.E. Church
229 Church Street ~ Huntsville, Alabama
The Reverend Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D. Pastor

2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*Church School	Each Sunday	9:45 am
Sunday Morning Worship	Each Sunday	8:00 am & 10:50 am
The Lord's Supper	1 st Sunday each month	
Bible Study	Each Wednesday	12 noon & 6:00 pm
Love Feast	Wednesday before 1 st Sunday	
Y. P. D. Meeting	3 rd Saturday	
Official Board Meeting	Jan. 4, March 1, May 3, Aug 2, Oct 4, Dec (TBA)	10:00 am
Steward Board	1 st Thursday	6:00 pm
Trustee Board	3 rd Tuesday	6:00 pm
Church School Board Meeting	Tuesday before 1 st Sunday	6:30 pm
Newsletter Staff Meeting	2 nd Saturday	10:30 am
Newsletter Article deadline	1 st Sunday	
Women's Missionary Society	4 th Saturday	10:30 am
YWI Meeting	3 rd Saturday	
Stewardess Board	Tuesday after 1 st Sunday (no meeting in July)	6:00 pm
Prayer Time	Tuesday (prayer line)	6:00 am
Fifty-Plus Auxiliary	1 st Monday each month	9:30 am
Pastor's Aid Board	TBA	
Children/Youth Choir	Saturdays before 1 st Sunday and before 3 rd Sunday	1:00 am
Gospel Choir	Last Monday & Thursday after 1 st Sunday	6:00 pm
Male Chorus	Friday after 2 nd Sunday & Friday after 3 rd Sunday	6:00 pm
Mass Choir	Thursday after 3 rd Sunday & Thursday after 4 th	6:00 pm
Youth /Young Adult Choir	Tuesday after 1 st Sunday & Tuesday after 2 nd Sunday	6:00 pm
Dance Ministry (Youth/Adult)	Saturday (unless otherwise scheduled)	9:30 am
Dance Ministry (Children)	1 st & 3 rd Saturday	12:00 pm
Lay Organization	Bi-monthly- 4th Tuesdays (beginning in February)	6:00 pm
Ushers	Bi-monthly- 1st Saturdays (beginning in February)	9:00 am
Sons of Allen	2 nd Tuesday	6:00 pm
Koinonia	3 rd Sunday	following 10:50 am worship
Women's Ministry	4 th Saturday	9:30 am
Soup Kitchen	3 rd & 4 th Tuesday	11:30 am- 1:00 pm
Military Ministry	2 nd Saturday- beginning January 11 th	9:30 am
Health Ministry	Thursday	7:30 pm

**Times will vary on fifth Sundays and special events.*

NINTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

R. E. V. I. V. E.

"Rekindling Eternal Vision, Inspiring Victory Everywhere."

2014 Events & Chairpersons

February	Black History Month	Sister Donna Gullatte
February 9	African Methodist Episcopal Church Founder's Day The Right Reverend Carolyn Tyler Guidry, Preacher	
March 5	Ash Wednesday Service	6:00 pm
March 13-15	Ninth District Mid-winter Meeting	
TBD	Dance Ministry Workshop	
April 13	Palm Sunday Church Anniversary	8:00 am & 10:50 am Steward Board

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2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Continued from page 11)

April 14-18	Spring Revival, Rev. Bankole Akinbinu, Revivalist Baptist Grove Church, NC~ Pastor
April 17	Maundy Thursday Service
April 18	Good Friday Pastor Clayborn will be preaching at St. Philip AME Church, Decatur, GA
April 20	Easter Sunrise Worship Service 8 am Easter Program..... Sis. Donna Gullatte 9 am Easter Worship 10:50 am
June 1	Church School Promotion.....Bro. Willie Sandifer
June 1-5	Vacation Bible School.....Monica Dillhunt, Ph.D.
June 7	Church Service & Church SchoolTBD
June 8	Pentecost Explosion (Montgomery, AL).....Steward Board
June 27	Graduate/Retirees Recognition Day.....Scholarship Committee.....6:30 pm
June 29	Women's Day
July 13	Men's Day The Reverend Bobby Cox, Guest Preacher
August	Friday Nite Live
August 10	Women's Missionary Society Sunday.....WMS.....10:50 am
August 24	AAMU Athletic Department Day.....Steward Board
August 31	Pastor's Appreciation.....
September 10-13	Northwest Alabama Annual Conference.....Fairfield Civic Center
September 17-20	Southeast Alabama Annual Conference.....Parks Chapel AMEC, Dothan
October 2-4	Alabama River Region Annual Conference.....St. Paul AMEC, Montgomery
October 15-18	Northeast Alabama Annual Conference.....Gaines Chapel AMEC, Phenix City
October 22-25	Southwest Alabama Annual Conference.....Samuels Chapel AMEC, Pritchard
November 13-15	9 th District Planning Meeting
November	SBHB Planning Meeting - TBA
November 9	Harvest Service.....50+ Auxiliary President/Committee 10:50 am
November 19	Thankful People Worship Service8:00 pm
December 3	Selah Memorial Service8:00 pm
December 14	Worship Services.....8:00 am & 10:50 am Christmas Program.....Mrs. Donna Gullatte & Mr. Karl Gullatte Taste Tea.....AMENewsletter Staff.....following 10:50 am service
December 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service8:30 pm

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2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Continued from page 12)

December 31 Watch Night Service 10:00 pm

Church-Wide Service Projects

Sick Visitation

Steward Board

Habitat For Humanity

Brother Eddie Whitehead & Sister Tami McGhee

Back to School

The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn

- Uniforms
- School Supplies
- Teacher Supplies

Sister Barbara Johnson
Christian Education / Koinonias
Sons of Allen

Holiday Baskets

Sister Paulette Williams & Sister Maeola Snell Peoples

The following persons were nominated and confirmed as Stewards for the 2013-2014 Conference Year,

William Bell
Darrell Ezell
Guy Ginn
James Heyward
Abbiegail Hugine
Jeanette Jones
Nedra McDaniel
Clifton Miller
Clifton Pearson
Willie Sandifer
Eddie Sherrod
Martha Smith
Adrienne P-K Washington
Hodges Washington
Pamela Whitehead

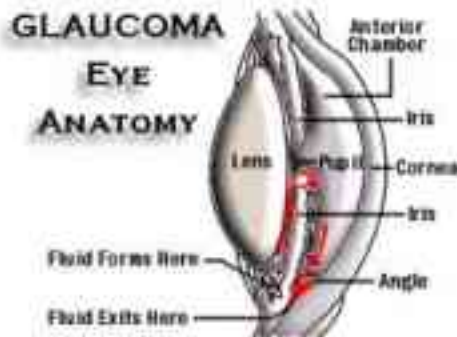
The following persons were elected and installed as Trustees for the 2013-2014 Conference Year,

Tommy Anderson
Bridget Floyd
Karl Gullatte
Erica Harbin
Randy Love
Pearlean Myhand
Claudnette Purfoy-Fears
Carl Lewis
Thalia Love-Brown
Lula Rochelle
Maeola Snell Peoples
Glenn Pippen
Eva Smith
Terry Speight
Jessie Johnson
Eddie Whitehead
Bill Williams
Lee Williams II
Justin York

Writing the vision...

The Eyes Have It

By Rosemary Wells



Glaucoma is irreversible damage to delicate nerve fibers and the optic nerve that sends information to the brain. Because there can be significant damage to the eye before the problem is discovered, glaucoma has long been called "the silent thief of sight." More than three million adult Americans have glaucoma. It generally appears in middle age and seems to have a genetic component. One in five people with glaucoma has a close relative with the disease.

The inside of the eye continuously produces and drains away a fluid called aqueous humor. As fresh aqueous is produced by cells inside the eye, an equal amount must exit through a drainage passage way (trabecular meshwork). If not enough drains away, pressure will increase inside the eye. The effects of intermittent or persistent high pressure on delicate retinal nerve fibers and the optic nerve results in permanent vision loss.

The most common type of glaucoma is called chronic open angle glaucoma (COAG) accounting for 75-90% of cases, of which both eyes may be affected at the same time, but one eye is often worse than the other. Eye sight begins to fade in the outer areas (peripheral) of the visual field. If untreated, tunnel vision and then blindness follow.

Extreme Glaucoma



Advanced Glaucoma



Early Glaucoma



Normal Vision



Narrow or closed-angle glaucoma (CAG) is less common and occurs suddenly with blurred vision, a great deal of pain in the eye and head, and redness, usually in one eye first. In CAG the flow of aqueous fluid is blocked from entering the drainage system causing a sudden and severe rise in pressure inside the eye. Acute CAG is a medical emergency and needs immediate medical care to restore normal aqueous outflow, reduce pressure and prevent damage to the eye and blindness.

It is not possible to prevent chronic open angle glaucoma, but early detection and effective treatment will prevent significant damage to the eyes and preserve your sight. All adults need an eye exam that includes tests for glaucoma every three to five years. These tests are usually done by an eye doctor, either an optometrist or an ophthalmologist. More frequent exams may be suggested if there is a family history of glaucoma or if there are other risk factors for glaucoma.

Risk factors may include:

- Being of African, Hispanic, Inuit, Irish, Asian, Russian, or Scandinavian descent.
- Having a family history of glaucoma
- Being nearsighted
- Having poor vision from a different eye problem
- Having had serious eye trauma
- Taking any form of steroid medication (pills, inhalers, eye drops) for disease such as asthma and rheumatoid arthritis.

Tests for glaucoma are brief and painless. The mere presence of higher than normal eye pressure does not mean that you have glaucoma. Elevated pressure in the eye without evidence of damage to the optic nerve is called ocular hypertension. People with this condition must be tested at regular intervals.

If glaucoma is suspected, eye doctors will carefully inspect the appearance of the optic nerve for signs of damage. One will also have a visual field test that measures the sharpness of their peripheral vision (side vision) by using spots of light of different sizes and intensities. Prescription eye drops are the first choice of treatment used to reduce pressure. Laser treatments and surgery are used if eye drops do not control glaucoma.

Glaucoma is a life-long condition that needs continual follow-up with your eye doctor. Early detection of glaucoma is the key to preventing damage to the eyes and blindness.

Church School Lesson Overview – February 2014

This month's Church School Lesson reviews were written by Kenneth Parham.

February 2, 2014

Lesson Title: Committed to Action

Lesson Scripture: James 1:19-27

Print: James 1:19-27

Devotional Songs: #413 [], #272 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Be doers of the word and not merely hearers who deceive themselves" (James 1:22).

Application: To demonstrate that one truly knows the Lord by living a changed life devoted to Christ.

Is one's daily walk with Christ in vain? Upon reflecting on this lesson, one's thoughts wonder as to whether they can serve God with an angry spirit. Apostle James wanted to convey that Christians should take note of their daily actions (looking in the mirror) in showing Christian love. He pointed out that in order to walk in the God spirit, one must strive to follow the perfect law – the law of liberty and perseverance, being doers and not only hearers of the word. Apostle James also indicated that while reflecting on Christian characteristics, if one determines that they cannot curtail the tongue then maybe the deeds that are done for others, in the spirit of Christ, will not be blessed and what was done for others will have been a wasted effort.

Apostle James also reminded readers of their obligation of being good Christians. In following the perfect law, they are reminded that they have an obligation to care for the orphans and the widows in distress and to always walk in a manner that is not characteristic of the world.

February 9, 2014

Lesson Title: Playing Favorites

Lesson Scripture: James 2:1-13

Print: James 2:1-13

Devotional Songs: #415 [], #251 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him?" (James 2:5).

Application: To recognize the sin of prejudicial treatment and repent of it.

In reflecting on this lesson, one central question came to mind, "How do we treat the less

fortunate amongst us?" In placing the lesson in modern day times, this reviewer recently came across an article or an internet hoax that brings verses 1-8 to home. The article, released in September, indicated a newly appointed minister, upon arriving at his new church assignment, decided to arrive dressed as a homeless person. While waiting for the service to begin, he interacted with the congregation - speaking to some, asking others for money and/or food and even attempted to take a seat on a pew up front. The article indicated that only a few spoke back, many ignored him. He was not given food or monies and when he sat up front, ushers politely requested that he sit in the back. The article went on to indicate that during the service, one of the stewards announced the arrival of the new minister. It was reported that the congregation cheered and clapped hands until the homeless man stood in the back of the church and proceeded to walk towards the altar, then there was total silence.

Apostle James reminds readers in verses 9-13 that if they were the ones who looked down on this homeless man then they too had sinned. Apostle James indicates that believers should strive to follow the royal law – "love your neighbor as yourself." And he notes that if one cannot keep this law, one should not profess to be almighty in other areas of their Christian walk. Apostle James reminded readers that for as long as they fail to keep one law, they will be judged as not keeping any of the laws. He also reminds readers that God's judgment will be without mercy to any who showed no mercy to his/her neighbor and to remember that mercy may allow one to escape judgment.

February 16, 2014

Lesson Title: Live What You Believe

Lesson Scripture: James 2:14-26

Print: James 2:14-26

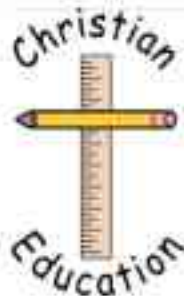
Tentative Devotional Songs: #358 [], #258 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead" (James 2:26).

Application: To challenge every professing believer to examine his/her life for evidence of salvation.

Apostle James continues teaching Christians on the concepts of faith and works. He cited

(Continued on page 16)





Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 15)

several examples where it took more than a good heart and lip service to demonstrate one's faith. Each example, where faith was described took an action on the part of the person to solidify their profession of faith. Apostle James provided examples of both sides, demonstrating where faith is not completed and where it is completed. He notes where only fulfilling part of a neighbor's needs while wishing them well does not demonstrate true faith. He noted where Abraham demonstrated his faithfulness by offering Isaac as a sacrifice. He also noted that the prostitute Rahab welcomed and protected the spies sent by Moses and then rerouted them to safety by giving them directions to return by a different route. Both of these later actions are noted as works.

Apostle James indicated that each of these examples indicated that works were the results of faith placed into action and therefore without works demonstrated faith alone would be meaningless.

February 23, 2014

Lesson Title: Unfork Your Tongue

Lesson Scripture: James 3:1-12

Print: James 3:1-12

Tentative Devotional Songs: #412 []; 77; and #243 []

Key Verses: "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so" (James 3:10).

Application: To have believers see that one should not only think before speaking but pray about it as well.

In this lesson Apostle James spoke on a truth that will never change. He cited several examples demonstrating how the smallest part of an object determines the path the object undergoes. And so it is with the tongue. The tongue, as he relayed, is small in comparison to all other human organs and/or body members. He alluded to the fact that the tongue cannot be tamed. It is noted that the tongue spits forth "both blessings and curses."

In a desire to satisfy one's curiosity, a word search of how many times the word "tongue" appears in the Bible was performed. It is noted that the word "tongue" appears in the Bible 143 times on average (depending on the biblical translation). Other word searches which may center near the word "tongue" (cause-effect

Church School Book Club

Discussion Date: 18 January 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Time Keeper, Mitch Albom, 2012

Discussion Date: 15 February 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

A Woman's Worth, Nikita Lynette Nichols, 2010

Monique Morrison had made a huge mistake when she moved into a home to play house with Boris Cortland. With on again then off again wedding plans and a woman who had already signed on to play the role of his wife, Boris was in no hurry to seal the deal. In his mind, Monique was not going anywhere, so why not continue to play the field? Though she was in church Sunday after Sunday, praying for God to touch Boris' heart and turn him from his wicked ways, it seemed Monique's pleas were constantly unanswered.

Suffering from neglect, rejection and verbal abuse, Monique had all but given up on her dream of having a relationship that represented true unconditional love until Adonis Cortland moves in and does for Monique all of the things that Boris would not do. Could Boris' cousin be the man that Monique had been praying for?

Church School Lesson

relationship) were also searched. Results were: heart - 876, love - 310, life - 450, light - 239, joy - 161, forgiveness - 58, wisdom - 215, and death - 372. The reviewer is not indicating that there can be a correlation drawn between the number of times the word is used and significance of the word on daily lives, but if one reflects on the number of times they have brought others to tears or to happiness, they can all testify that the tongue is very prominent in their daily lives.

Apostle James summarized the importance of the tongue in verse 9 - "With it we bless the Lord and Father and at the same time curse those who are made in the likeness of God." (NRSV)

February 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9:00 a.m. Usher Board Meeting 9:30 a.m. Dance Mirisky 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
2 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship AMEN Deadline	3 Fifty Plus Auxiliary 9:30 a.m.	4 6:00 p.m. Voices in Praise Rehearsal	5 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	6 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	7	8 9:30 a.m. Dance Mirisky 10:30 a.m. AMEN Staff Meeting
9 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship FOUNDER'S DAY	10	11	12 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	13 6:00 p.m. Voices in Praise Rehearsal	14 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	15 9:30 a.m. Dance Mirisky 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal YPD
16 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	17	18 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg.	19 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	20 6:00 p.m. Mass Chdr Rehearsal	21 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	22 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Mirisky 10:30 a.m. VMAO Meeting
23 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	24 6:00 p.m. Gospel Chdr Rehearsal	25 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Lay Organization Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Church School Mtg.	26 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	27 6:00 p.m. Mass Chdr Rehearsal	28	

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Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| January 25, 2014 | Condensed New Members Class, 12:30 to 4:00 pm |
| February 9, 2014 | Founder's Day, Bishop Carolyn Tyler-Guidry, Guest Preacher;
10:00 a.m. Worship, 9:00 a.m. Church School |
| March 5, 2014 | Ash Wednesday Service, 6:00 p.m. |

*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. Romans 10:9*

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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 2

February 2014

Pastor's Message

Visions of History, Heritage, and Hope

Hebrews 11-12



Pastor Patrick D. Clayburn, Ph.D.

As we celebrate Black History Month, I cannot help but think of my mother, who is a retired history teacher. Whenever a topic of history enters the conversation, her eyes light up, and she begins to wax eloquently on the great royalty of Europe or the wisdom found in the ancient Far East. However, when the topic of African and African American history is broached, she turns red with passion and gives a history lesson for all times. My mother will talk about the ancient pharaohs, the slave castles of western Africa, the stories of the Zulus, the Middle Passage, the Underground Railroad, Jim Crow segregation, the fight for Civil Rights, the fight for Women's Rights, the fight for economic equality, the fight for peace over war, how former slaves built schools, how the African American community started banks and insurance companies, and how there is still great potential in Black people! She will describe the heritage and hope of African Americans through a history lesson.

The writer of Hebrews gives the reader a history lesson as well. This writer details the exploits of the great patriarchs (and some matriarchs) of Israel. The writer helps the audience to see from whence they have come.

Most paramount is the theme the writer gives this history: FAITH. The heroes and heroines of Israel were able to succeed by faith. Great works were accomplished by faith. Sacrifices were made by faith. Faith is the heritage of the Israelites. This is a strand of their history that gives credence to their spiritual authority. Faith is part of their spiritual DNA.

Interestingly, the intended audience of Hebrews is in a place of suffering and persecution. Many are waking away from church and joining cults. They cannot see how their spiritual origins do them any good in their present circumstances.

Therefore, the writer of Hebrews encourages them to embrace their history – the godly models placed before them – and to hold on to their heritage – the faith of their forebears. Though their ancestors could not access the promise in their lifetimes, the writer claims that their ancestors are surrounding them as a great cloud of witnesses. This great cloud witnesses to the goodness of one who came after them: JESUS! The writer of Hebrews dares the audience run the Christian race by looking to Jesus, who has endured more than they could imagine. Unlike their ancestors, they will be able to receive the promise in their lifetimes – a kingdom that cannot be moved. Hence, the writer demands that they lift up their hanging hands and feeble knees – with HOPE! They are to anticipate God's deliverance through the ministry of Jesus Christ.

We, too, must embrace our history and hold on to our legacy as a people and as a church. We must do this in order to have hope for the situations we face daily. In a world of chaos, confusion, joy, triumph, uncertainty, and specificity, we have to honor the faith of our foremothers and forefathers who looked to Jesus for their help and power. When they called His name, they accessed a hope that the world could not destroy. Why should we deny ourselves this heritage? Let us as well look unto our ancestors for our history. Let us look to their faith as our heritage. Let us look unto Jesus for our hope!

There is one who assisted us in doing so – The Right Reverend Carolyn Tyler Guidry, February

(Continued on page 2)

Visions of History, Heritage, and Hope

(Continued from page 1)

9, 2014, was Founder's Day for the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Tyler Guidry is one of the most skilled people to help us maintain our history, our heritage, and our hope. Her accomplishments are far-reaching and are nothing short of spectacular. As a pastor, she has transformed churches from small congregations into thriving ministries with burgeoning community corporations and multimillion dollar acquisitions. She was the first woman in our denomination to be assigned to a major metropolitan church. She was also the first woman to be appointed a presiding elder in the Fifth Episcopal District and was the second woman to be elected and consecrated a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. As an Episcopal leader, Bishop Tyler Guidry led the 16th and 8th Districts to major purchases of an Episcopal residence and an Episcopal office respectively. As bishop, she has also led our church's Social Action Commission, making sure that our voice was heard and that our presence was felt on the political, economic, military, public health, racial, gendered, and educational issues that affected our communities. As a social activist, Bishop Tyler Guidry chaired Women's Voter Registration as she worked in the NAACP office with Medger Evers until his assassination. As a family woman, she is a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. As a minister of the gospel, Bishop Tyler Guidry is a preacher's preacher!

We were honored to have Bishop Tyler Guidry at St. John as our guest preacher for our Founder's Day Service. God gave her wisdom, understanding, the courage to proclaim hard truths, the compassion to do so in love, and a word that gave us direction in times like these. God allowed her to show us how to access the vision of our history, heritage, and hope with this message: "The Church Will Survive."

Hallelujah! This is God's word for all of us! When we look at Black History, we find that African Americans will survive. When we look at the history of the AME Church, we see that the AME Church will survive. When we look at God's word, we see that WE WILL SURVIVE! God says that we have a history and a heritage which offers us hope – that no weapon formed against us shall prosper. We have a hope that all things work together for the good of them who love God and are called according to God's purpose. We have a hope that in Jesus we have victory. Let's celebrate the vision of our history and heritage with this great hope – if God be for us, who can be against us?

"I Believe" In Our Future Daniel Payne College Legacy Village



Plans have been drawn, the land has been cleared, contractor's contracts have been accepted, and construction has begun. The goal is for the first event to be held at this site in 2015. Bishop Davis and the Daniel Payne College Legacy Village Board of Trustees stated in a letter to the District family, "We are asking all Ninth District AME's to BELIEVE with us and help us to do this mighty work."

Some St. John members have shown their commitment to this project by committing to make a monthly donation to the "I BELIEVE FUND." Members were asked to make a pledge of \$10 per month (or other amounts of their choice). Many have responded and the church continues to accept new pledges and donations. If you have made your pledge, please remember to honor your pledge each month. If you have not made a pledge, prayerfully consider making your commitment to the "I BELIEVE FUND." All checks must be payable to Daniel Payne College Legacy Village or DPCLV.

Thank you, St. John, for BELIEVING.

HENRY BOX BROWN (c.1816 - after 1889)

"A Slave Signed, Sealed, and Delivered"

By Tawanda Buford

Henry Box Brown was born a slave on a plantation called Hermitage in 1816 (precise date of his birth is unknown) in Louisa County, Virginia. He is best known throughout history as arranging to have himself shipped in a wooden box from Virginia to Philadelphia, to escape slavery and enter a world of freedom.

Unlike many slaves, Brown spent his childhood years with his parents and seven siblings who were all slaves. They were enslaved to John Barrett, a former mayor of Richmond and master and owner of the Hermitage. Although the entire family were slaves, life was relatively good for them. They were never deprived of food or clothing; neither did they suffer any inflictions of pain.



Their slave owner (John Barrett) eventually fell ill and died on June 9, 1830. The family was then separated among four plantations, and Brown was sent to Richmond to work in the tobacco factory of Barrett's son William Barrett, whose property he became.

While living and working in Richmond, he attended First African Baptist Church, where he served as an active member. He met a young lady there by the name of Nancy, who was also a slave belonging to a local bank teller named Hancock Lee. They attended church service regularly and always kept the faith knowing they would someday be free from slavery.

In 1836, Brown married Nancy, and to their union were born four children. Brown became a skilled tobacco worker and earned enough money to set up his family in a rented house. In August 1848, Nancy Brown's master sold her and the children to another master in North Carolina named Joseph H. Colquitt. He was known as an exceedingly cruel man and known to have abused Nancy - not because she did not do her duty, but because her

manner was too refined for a slave. Brown did his best to keep Nancy near him. Colquitt eventually sold Nancy to another slave owner named Samuel Cottrell. Brown regularly paid Cottrell whatever small wages he made from the tobacco factory. In return, Cottrell promised to keep Nancy and their children on his plantation. However, when Cottrell demanded more money than Brown had, he decided to sell them. After Brown had witnessed the auction of his family being sold for \$1,050 to a slave trader, Brown knew immediately he needed to do something.

Over several months he grieved the tremendous loss of his family and for a time stopped attending church. Having lost what little joy his life offered, he finally began to plan an escape. Henry Brown had a "heavenly vision" to mail himself to a place where there were no slaves but simply could not do it alone.

With the assistance of James Caesar Anthony Smith, a free black and fellow member of his church, he contacted a sympathetic white storekeeper by the name of Samuel Smith. Smith negotiated a price with Brown to assist him with escaping. Brown devised his plan to have himself shipped to a free state by Adams Express Company. Brown paid \$80 (out of his savings of \$100) to Smith, who contacted Philadelphia minister James Miller McKim. McKim advised them to mail the box to the office of Quaker merchant Passmore Williamson. In an effort to get out of work for the day, Brown burned his hand to the bone with sulfuric acid. He thought it was worth the risk.

(Continued on page 4)

HENRY BOX BROWN (c.1816 - after 1889) "A Slave Signed, Sealed, and Delivered"

By Tawanda Buford

(Continued from page 3)

The trip in the box began on March 23, 1849. The 27 hour journey of the box traveled thru wagon, railroad, steamboat, wagon again, railroad, ferry, railroad, and finally delivery wagon. Brown was sitting in a wooden box three feet long, two and one half feet deep, and two feet wide, and the package was listed as Dry Goods" from Richmond to Philadelphia. Brown was turned head down in the box for several hours and nearly died. During transfer points the box was handled roughly while delivery workers sat on the box to rest. The parcel finally arrived on March 24th, 1849. McKim took delivery at the office of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, where the box was opened. While getting the box opened Brown emerged from the box alive and finally free from slavery.

While being removed from the box, he sang:

*I waited patiently for the Lord
And he, in kindness to me, heard my calling
And he hath put a new song into my mouth
Even thanksgiving – even thanksgiving
Unto our God
Blessed – blessed is the man
That has set his hope, his hope unto the Lord
O Lord! My God! Great is the wondrous work
Which thou has done!
If I should declare them and speak of them
They would be more than I am able to express
I have not kept back thy love, and kindness, and truth
From the great congregation
Withdraw not thou thy mercies from me
Let thy love, and kindness, and thy truth always preserve me
Let all those that seek thee be joyful and glad
And let such as love thy salvation
Say always – say always
The Lord be praised!*



Information from this article was retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Box_Brown;
http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/brown_henry_box_ca_1815; and
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/boxbrown/summary.html>.

Special Session of New Members Class Held on January 25th

"And to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."

Ephesians 4:23-24 (NRSV)



The New Life Ministry at St. John is charged with providing instruction for persons who join the church. The objectives of the class are to equip members to grow and be strong in the faith by receiving a sound foundation in the fundamentals of our beliefs, to provide a support network of fellow believers, to further St John as a more loving, caring and empowering faith community where everybody is somebody and Jesus is Lord. Classes are held each Sunday during the Church School hour. All new members are urged to attend and current members are also welcome if they would like a refresher on the information that is presented during the class.

Several times a year a special condensed version of the class is held. This special session allows persons to complete all of the modules of the class in one day. On Saturday, January 25, 2014, the first condensed session for this calendar year was held. Nine new members completed the training

on that day. Instructors were the Reverend Doctor James R. Johnson and Steward Nedra McDaniel. During the module on the local church, representatives from boards, auxiliaries and ministries made brief presentations to the class. Steward Adrienne P-K Washington greeted the new members on behalf of Pastor Clayborn and the Steward Board. Other auxiliary and ministry presenters were Ms. Cassandra Ingram, Lay Organization; Mrs. Agnes Bailey, Usher Board; the Reverend Robert Hereford, Sr., Military Ministry; Mrs. Lorraine Parham, Women's Missionary Society; Mrs. Lauretta Teague, Women's Ministry; and Mr. Justin York, Koinonia and Sons of Allen; and Mr. Willie Sandifer, Church School.

Favorable remarks were received from persons attending the session. One new member was so enthusiastic about attending the class that she left the emergency room (where she was waiting to be treated for a shoulder injury) to attend the class. Another was inviting members to attend her St. John Church School Class before they reached the agenda item where ministries were highlighted.

This ministry is grateful for all who attended and participated in this class. A special thanks to Mrs. Paulette Williams and others who assisted with serving lunch. Persons interested in attending this special session should watch for future announcements regarding the scheduling of the class.



"Joya" to the World

By Bridget J. Floyd

Welcome to Joya Dianne Smith Clayborn

Born on January 9, 2014, Joya Dianne Smith Clayborn joined the Clayborn family of Pastor Patrick, the Reverend Sheri Smith, and Patrick II (P2). The joy of Joya was not limited to her nuclear or extended families, but spread to the St. John family. A special welcome was extended on Saturday, January 11th as Joya and her parents headed home from the hospital.

The desire of her parents to have Joya's first stop be the altar of St. John for special prayer, resulted in a touching welcoming to this precious little girl. The Stewards and Trustees, other officers and members who could attend this special occasion, arrived with eager anticipation. The stage was set with a "pink carpet" sprinkled with pink flower petals along the rear hallway and leading into the sanctuary. Pink balloons added to the "pretty in pink" moment to make Joya's first entrance a special one.



Special care was taken to celebrate while being sensitive to the newborn ears of Joya. So those lining the pink carpet used American Sign Language for applause as they entered. There were plenty of smiles as a circle was formed around the family

seated at the altar and they thanked God for the blessing of Joya and asked for His continued blessings on her and her family.

Joya seemed to feel the warmth and love as she transitioned between her parents' arms. The hush and appreciation of the miracle of this new life was palpable. The embrace of tiny Joya was extended by the circle of welcome and prayer.

May God continue to bless the Clayborn family. The St. John family extends welcome and prayers of support. In the sentiment of the church sign greeting the Clayborn family that Saturday afternoon: **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLAYBORN FAMILY! "JOYA" TO THE WORLD!**

St. John Member Speaks at Symposium in D.C.



Ms. Mariah Gullatte (Pictured to the left with Mr. Mineta) was chosen to represent the State of Alabama by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System Urban Programs Health Rocks! Program for her leadership skills and her essay on drugs, tobacco and alcohol. She attended, with three (3) other Extension Staff, the

National Drug Facts Week Symposium and Health Rocks Training January 30-February 2 in Washington, D.C. The keynote speaker for the conference was Mr. David Mineta-Deputy Director of Demand Reduction, White House Office of National Drug Policy. Deputy Mineta gave startling facts and statistics on substance abuse in the US and how important it is to educate people, especially our youth, on the dangerous consequences that come along with drug usage. He also praised the youth and adults on their involvement in getting the word out about substance, alcohol and tobacco usage. Deputy Mineta shared this statement with us, "On behalf of President Obama and my department...We Thank You for being a direct part of The President's National Drug Reform Policy through the mission of education and getting the word out to others about illegal drugs."

Attendees also participated in a Q & A Session with scientists from National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). The scientists helped them understand how people get addicted to drugs/alcohol/tobacco from a scientific point of view and enlightened them on how drugs can affect the brain and how a person operates.

On Friday-Sunday attendees participated in the 2014 Health Rocks! (HR) Training. They learned creative ways to deliver the program, work with others, and teach the HR lessons.

It was an eye-opening experience to see the statistics of drug usage from the five states (Georgia, Illinois, Virginia, Washington, and Delaware) that were represented there and even more surprising to hear about the problems and issues facing the United States as a whole. Mariah delivered a PowerPoint presen-

(Continued on page 12)

YPDeers Participate in "Crop Drop"

Fellowship Presbyterian Church connected with the Society of St. Andrews, which gleans local fields to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to the hungry, to host a "Crop Drop" on January 18, 2014. The Society of St. Andrews provided sweet potatoes and apples and the volunteers bagged the food for later distribution to various agencies that provide food to North Alabama families in need. St. John ministries were invited to participate and the YPD accepted the invitation.



Pictured above are Yvonne Sanderson, Kaitlyn McClung, Katherine Dulaney, Robyn Sanderson and Kenney Harris.

Due to the cold weather, the bagging took place at the Farmer's Market on Cook Street instead of the parking lot of Fellowship. YPDers and sponsors were among 200 volunteers who participated in this Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday Weekend service project. YPD Director, Yvonne Sanderson, expressed that the YPDers enjoyed this opportunity to serve and they look forward to future participation.

Health Tips

Submitted by Maeola S. Peoples

Drinking 2 glasses of water in the morning helps activate internal organs.

Drinking 1 glass of water before a meal will help digestion.

Drinking 1 glass of water before taking a shower helps prevent high blood pressure.

Drinking 1 glass of water before bed helps prevent strokes and heart attacks.

1 small serving of French Fries = 84 strawberries

Women's Ministry Tidbits!

PROMISES TO HELP YOU
SAVOR EACH MOMENT

"Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

- Matthew 6:34

"We do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for but a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary but the things which are not seen are eternal."

- 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Ladies of Saint John, to experience happiness we must train ourselves to live in this moment to savor it for what it is. Those special savored moments of fun, reflection, happiness and pleasure give us a tiny taste of what "eternity" with Christ will one day be like.

Hold the Date!

June 5, 2014

Pentecost 2014

Alabama State University Stadium



A Tribute to the late Mrs. Margaret Ballard



Mrs. Margaret Ree Ballard was a faithful member of St. John for over 45 years. In fact, the entire family, her husband, Mr. Herman Ballard, daughters, the Reverend Vicki Mayberry and the Reverend Debra Ballard, and grandchildren have all served faithfully at St. John.

Mrs. Ballard was steadfast in her service. She was a member of the Sanctuary and Gospel choirs, Women's Missionary Society and the Stewardess Board. Mr. Rufus Gilmore III, former Director of Music at St. John, noted in his reflections at Mrs. Ballard's Homegoing Service that even when her work schedule conflicted with choir rehearsal, she would attend rehearsal during her lunch hour and stay as long as her schedule allowed. As a missionary, Mrs. Ballard participated in local, area, district and conference level events. As a stewardess, she not only performed her duties of assisting with the serving of communion during worship, but regularly accompanied the late Reverend Kenneth Johnson when he served communion to the sick and shut-in members of the church.

Mrs. Ballard loved St. John and the AME Church. Whenever there was a service, Mrs. Ballard was present. She also faithfully accompanied her daughters as they fulfilled ministerial duties by attending meetings and conferences throughout the state and the connection.

St. John thanks God for allowing Mrs. Margaret Ree Ballard to be a faithful member of this congregation. Her presence will continue to be felt through the service of her husband, daughters and grandchildren.

"Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

- 1 Corinthians 15:58

Growing for the Glory of God!

St. John welcomes the following persons, who joined during the second quarter of this year. Be sure to greet these persons and encourage them as you worship and fellowship at St. John on Sundays and throughout the week.



Anita Williams



Mariah Harris



Walter Jenkins



Jabraelan Carter



Sylvester Daniels



Angelia Daniels



Ikenna Riggs



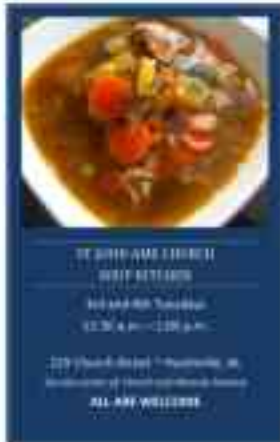
Ebony Aull



Darlene Thomas



Abreeota Williams



Compassion for the Poor

THE SOUP KITCHEN WILL BE OPEN
EVERY TUESDAY THIS MONTH

"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much."

- Luke 16:10 (NRSV)

"Occupy Wall Street (OWS) was the only mass social movement in recent years, except for one other initiative to impact global awareness of the scope of inequality and how this inequality ravages the hope of persons worldwide. This organization's main goal was to raise the American consciousness about the growing gap between the income of the wealthy-one percent and the ninety-nine percent in the midst of shrinking economic opportunities. OWS concluded the one percent's wealth is under-served and is excessive."

In Luke 16:19-31 Jesus presents a series of discourses on financial matters; using one's wealth is not to boost one's ego, power or flaunt one's success, but to wisely help those in need. Jesus emphasizes that one should use earthly abundance to earn eternal benefits by caring for the disenfranchised in our society.

Thank you, St. John, for continually supporting the "Soup Kitchen" with food contributions, financial support and prayers. The Soup Kitchen will be open each Tuesday in February to serve those in need during this winter season. Hats off to the Food Services Ministry!

Reference: Sunday School Quarterly of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Healthy Hearts Seek Support

The Healthy Hearts group, led by team captain Keri Daniels, will participate in the American Heart Association's Heart Walk on Saturday, March 8, from 8 am to 11 am. The funds raised will be used for critical cardiovascular disease research and education.

You may support this cause by joining the team or making a donation. Please contact Sister Angelia Daniels or the church office to participate.

Healthcare Coverage is Mandatory

The Patient Care and Affordable Care Act makes healthcare coverage mandatory and persons without coverage will be fined. There is still time to ENROLL prior to the 2014 deadline of March 31, 2014. Visit www.healthcare.gov for more information.

St. John Supports Connect Class 16



Connect Class 16 is a part of Leadership Huntsville/Madison County. St. John member, Latosha Baldwin, is a member of the class. The group sponsored a business suit/clothing drive in support of a professional development workshop that was hosted in January. The workshop was part of the Connect Class 16 program entitled Confident U, which served as an adult empowerment symposium to impact individuals who have a difficult time finding employment due to past mistakes or unfortunate situations.

The goal of the clothing drive was to supply workshop attendees with at least one outfit that is appropriate for an interview. The appeal was for professional attire for men and women, especially suit jackets, button-up shirts, pants, and ties for men, and skirts, dresses, blouses and slacks for women. St. John members responded to the appeal with a number of clothing items. Latosha was most appreciative of the support she received from her church family.

Thank you, St. John, for your response to this appeal.

Church School Lesson Overview – March 2014



March 2, 2014

Lesson Title: An Eternal Kingdom

Lesson Scripture: II Samuel 7:1-17

Print: II Samuel 7:4-16

Devotional Songs: #412[], #272 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever" (II Samuel 7:16).

Application: To show that as God prepared for the coming of Christ by means of His covenant with David, we can be assured that He is in control of history and that all that He has promised will come to pass.

This lesson looks at the original promises God made. One can learn that there are good ideas and then there are God's eternal purposes and plans for His covenant people.

David was secure in his kingdom. He had successfully transported the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. He was living in his royal residence. Jerusalem could now officially be recognized as the capital of Israel.

David expressed his desire to replace the tabernacle with a permanent temple, as he enjoyed this time of peace. This occasion was used by God to set up one more step in His plans to send the Messiah. God established that the lineage of David would be the lineage from which the Messiah would come and upon whose throne He would sit by making His covenant with him.

March 9, 2014

Lesson Title: Son of David

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 89:3-14; Isaiah 9:1-7; Matthew 1:18-2:6

Print: Psalm 89:35-37; Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:18-22a

Devotional Songs: #25[]; #251[]; and #243[]

Key Verse: "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet?" (James 2:5).

Application: To show that the Son of God, our Saviour, came into the world as promised.

This lesson examines how God confirmed His promises made in the Davidic covenant and revealed more fully through Isaiah how the

Messiah would be God incarnate. How the prophecies of the coming Messiah and King were fulfilled by the birth of Christ are also examined.

Sixteen times Jesus is called "Son of David" in the New Testament. Jesus was in the family lineage of David through Joseph and Mary as a man and was eventual heir to the throne of David. Jesus was the Son of God, hence, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King of the Jews and to have lordship over everyone. Jesus' servants are those who have faith in Him alone.

March 16, 2014

Lesson Title: An Everlasting King

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 110:1-7; Acts 2:22-36

Print Psalm 110:1-4; Acts 2:22-24, 29-32

Tentative Devotional Songs: #390[]; #258 []; and #243 []

Key Verse: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psalm 110:1).

Application: To show that we should not be discouraged if events seem to deny the promises of God.

This lesson examines the eternal authority of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. His rule will never end, when He assumes His future throne. The lesson shows evidence of the certainty of God's determination to prove to His people of His oath to raise up Jesus from the dead. It also shows evidence of the eternal power and authority of God to rule the kingdom of heaven and earth.

March 23, 2014

Lesson Title: Worthy Is the Lamb

Lesson Scripture: Revelation 3:7; 5:5-13; 6:12-7:17; 22:16

Print Revelation 5:6-13

Tentative Devotional Songs: #77 []; 282; and #243 []

Key Verses: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12).

Application: To show that whether we accept or reject Christ, we will one day acknowledge His worthiness as Redeemer and Judge..

This lesson zooms students to the future mo-

(Continued on page 12)

Black History in Medicine

By Rosemary Wells



James Derham (1757-1802) was the first Black person to receive a certificate to practice medicine in the US. He won his freedom and set up his own practice in New Orleans.

Rebecca Lee Crumpler (1831-1895) became the first Black woman doctor in the US. She graduated from, what is now, Boston University School of Medicine in 1864.

Mary Biza Mahoney (1845-1928) was the first African American to study and work as a professionally trained nurse in the US, graduating in 1879. In 1908, she co-founded the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses with Adah B. Thoms.

Daniel Hale Williams (1858-1931) founded the first black-owned hospital, Provident Hospital and Training School Association in 1891 on the South side of Chicago, serving the community as a whole. He was credited with the first successful open heart surgery in 1893.

Charles Richard Drew (1904-1950) developed a way to preserve blood, creating the first American Red Cross blood bank. He developed a method to efficiently store blood plasma; preserving blood plasma for transfusion. He was a surgeon, medical scientist and educator.

Henrietta Lacks (1920-1951) was a poor black tobacco farmer from Southern Virginia. At 30 years old she was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Six months before her death cells were taken (without her knowledge) from her womb and became one of the most important tools in medicine; vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, and in vitro fertilization. Henrietta's cells were the first immortal human cells grown in culture. Her cells even went up in the first space missions (to the moon) to see what would happen to cells in zero gravity. The HeLa cells have been bought and sold by millions, yet she remains virtually unknown, and her family can't afford health insurance.

In her new book, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, journalist Rebecca Skloot tracks down the story of the source of the amazing HeLa cells, Henrietta Lacks, while documenting the cell line's impact on both modern medicine and the Lacks family.



TRUSTEE CORNER

What is a Trustee?

Simply stated:

A trustee is the elected recipient of congregation's trust and shared responsibilities for the temporal concerns of this church, "The house of the Lord."

Introduction:

1. The primary purpose is to keep the members of St John informed as to any structural or physical developments as it pertains to improvements and/or repairs at the church facility. Secondly, St. John's Trustee Board would also like to encourage all members to take an active part of ensuring that this facility is worthy to be called "The house of the Lord."

Each year, the Trustee Board identifies and prioritizes several items that require attention, either for repair or improvement. Likewise, the Board welcomes any ideas and suggestions from the membership that would help in identifying other areas of concern.

2. Generally, priority leans toward safety, repair, then improvement. Of course, please be mindful that all viable ideas are scrutinized based on priority fit, implementation, cost and timing.

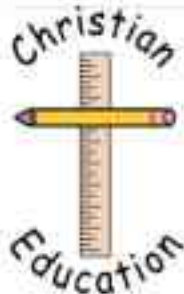
3. Other areas of the Trustee Board responsibility are Utilities, Insurance, Maintenance (Building, Copier, Bus, Land), Building improvement and Church furnishings.

4. The trustees of St John AME are specifically tasked to manage these church resources and help the ministries insure that the worship experience meets the spiritual need of the congregation.

Go Green

Reduce ~ Reuse ~ Recycle

- Reduce the setting on your thermostat by a degree or two.
- Install a programmable thermostat.



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 10)

ment prior to where the judgments of the tribulation start. Until Christ, the Lamb, comes forward, the seven sealed scroll that contains the judgments cannot be opened. Heaven bursts out in worship at His appearance.

The context of this lesson is Jesus' revelation to the Apostle John. In the first three chapters John sees Jesus in His present relationship to the church. John was transported to heaven in chapter 4 where he saw the throne of God surrounded by the elders and the four living creatures worshipping Him. When John saw the scroll that could not be opened, he was overcome with grief because no one was found worthy to open the scroll.

March 30, 2014

Lesson Title: The Entrance of the King

Lesson Scripture: Zechariah 9:9-10; Matthew 21:1-11

Print: Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:1-11

Tentative Devotional Songs: #221 []; Alleluia; and #243 []

Key Verses: "The multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna is the highest" (Matthew 21:9).

Application: To show that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah, proving He is the Messiah.

The lesson examines the fulfillment of the prophecy from the book of Zechariah of Jesus' triumphal entry. Zechariah provided some of those details and Jesus definitely fulfilled them.

The prophecies in chapters 9 through 11 of Zechariah focus mainly on the first coming of Israel's Messiah, while the next three chapters portend the Second Coming. Zechariah presented the Messiah entering Jerusalem as a humble King. He encouraged Jerusalem to look forward with joy to the arrival of its true King.

Zechariah wrote that it was Israel's King who was coming. At the time of his writing, Israel had no king. When Jesus appeared on the scene, Israel's kings were of the Herodian dynasty, a line of leaders selected or permitted by Rome. Herod the Great was from Edom and was seen by the Jews as not being eligible to be king.

Church School Book Club

Discussion Date: 15 February 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

A Woman's Worth, Nikita Lynette Nichols, 2010

Discussion Date: 15 March 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Keeper of My Soul, Keshia Dawn, 2010

Keith, though a successful lawyer, wants to be a successful husband. He loves his wife Michelle and is trying to save their marriage. Michelle is a successful judge, but even more successful as an always on the prowl cougar. In her heart of hearts she does love her husband, she just does not know how to show it. Stoney is a confused young woman who was raised by her schizophrenic grandmother, which leads her to daily question her own sanity and worse yet take medication that is not hers. Once her grandmother passes away, Stoney is ready to move to the big city in a quest to find the mother who abandoned her and her grandmother.

In this novel, the lives of these three characters intertwine like vines. It is interesting to see how what has been done in the dark comes to light.

Excerpts from the book review by Karen Reynolds, Readers in Motion Bookclub

St. John Member Speaks at Symposium in D.C.

(Continued from page 6)

tation where she gave state and local statistics on drug, tobacco, alcohol usage in Alabama and shared with the audience her role and responsibilities as a HR Teen Leader. She also highlighted some of the things the group in Madison County does and shared with attendees about her church member, Judge Lynn Sherrod's Drug Court.

Mariah says "I was honored to have the opportunity to be in the presence of the speakers, panelists and other teens who are making a difference in their communities. I also enjoyed the free time with the group's Night Tour of the DC Monuments and Historical Sites."

March 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 10:00 a.m. Official Board 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
2 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship AMEN Deadline	3 Fth PHS Auxiliary 9:30 a.m.	4 6:00 p.m. Voices in Praise Rehearsal Stewardess Board Meeting	5 6:00 p.m. ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE	6 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	7	8 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. AMEN Staff Meeting
9 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	10	11 6:00 p.m. Voices in Praise Rehearsal Sons of Allen	12 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	13	14 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	15 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal YPD
16 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	17	18 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Thruke Board Mtg.	19 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	9th District Winter Meeting		
				20	21 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	22 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. WMBD Meeting
23 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	24	25 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN	26 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	27 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	28	29 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
30 9:00 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship	31 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal					

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The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop

Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

February 22, 2014	Agnes-Cooper Area WMS Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
March 5, 2014	Ash Wednesday Service, 6:00 p.m.
March 20-22, 2014	Ninth District Winter Meeting
April 14-16	Holy Week Revival, The Reverend Bankole Akinbinu, Revivalist
April 17	Maundy Thursday Service, 6:00 p.m.
June 8, 2014	Pentecost 2014

*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. Romans 10:9*

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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 3

March 2014

Pastor's Message



Pastor Patrick D. Clayburn, Ph.D.

The Journey of Faith
1 Corinthians 4:1-2

Let [one] so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that [he/she] be found faithful.

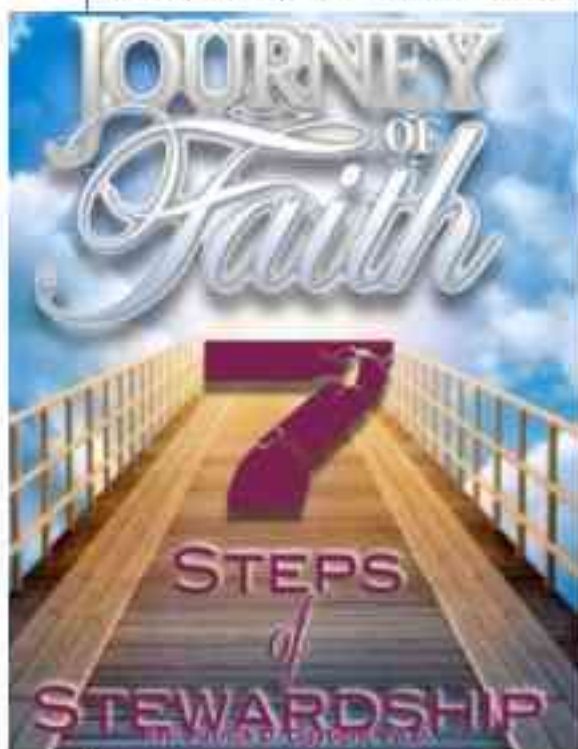
The word steward in the above passage is *oikonomos*. Here are some definitions: "*oikonomos*. In Greek this word means 'steward.' It may then denote the head of a particular branch of a great house, e.g., the chief cook. As a loanword it can denote a city official (cf. Romans 16:23). It may also be used for an estate manager or accountant as well as a housekeeper. In the rabbi Moses is God's steward. In parables the loanword usually has the sense of treasurer."¹ A steward is "a house-distributor (i.e. manager), or overseer, i.e. an employee in that capacity; by extens. a fiscal agent (treasurer); fig. a preacher (of the Gospel)."²

So, stewards are persons who take care of that which does not belong to them. They work for someone else. They represent someone else. What they have comes from someone else. What they will produce belongs to someone else. The steward is a caretaker, a servant, a worker, a representative! Stewards are caretakers of the mysteries of God --- the secrets of God! We are called to take care of the mysteries ---- what are they? God's mysteries include -- but are not limited to -- God's grace, God's mercy, God's faithfulness, God's blessings, God's miracles, God's healing, God's protection, God's provision, God's direction, God's forgiveness, God's restoration, God's favor, and God's peace. God's mysteries are the evidences of God's love toward us.

Therefore, stewardship is a faithful response to the love of God. It's not trying to get a title. It's not trying to get a position in the church. It's not trying to out give someone else. It's not about getting in the spotlight. It's not about getting close to the preacher. It's not about getting a promotion. It's not about getting a blessing in return for obedience. Stewardship is to be our faithful response to God's love!

During this season of Lent, St. John wants to respond faithfully to the love of God. We will explore seven ways in which to do so: relationships, time, health and wellness, talent, finances, community outreach, and the environment. Each week we will have a devotional that includes a brief meditation on each topic, scrip-

(Continued on page 2)



¹Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (678). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.

²Strong, J. (2009). *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

tures for each day of Lent that coincide with the week's theme, and a challenge for each week. As we take this journey of faith, we will also include our testimonies. We will not wait until Lent is over; we will testify as God blesses and as we make progress on our path to stewardship. On the wall opposite the administrative offices, artwork of a journey of faith is displayed and is ready for posting testimonies. Join us! Let us step together into this season of Lent with faithful responses to the love of God! As we take a journey of faith, let us testify to the miracles of God we see along the way.

In addition to this time being Lent, this is also Women's History Month. We celebrate women! Women, your presence is foundational. Your intelligence is remarkable. Your courage is immeasurable. Your gifts are innumerable. Your love is undefeatable. Your sacrifices are life-giving. Your fight to gain rights that should have already been afforded to you is contagious. Your knack for truth is divine. Your ability to care is inspiring. Your beauty is breath taking. Your hearts are unmovable, always abounding in the work of the justice and mercy. We salute you all: daughters, sisters, cousins, nieces, aunts, single adults, wives, and mothers of all kinds and forms.

Since we are looking to be good stewards, we need look no further for rousing examples. Women are some of the best stewards anywhere. Eve, Rahab, Deborah, Esther, Ruth, Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, Phoebe, Aquila, Lydia, Jarena Lee, Fannie Lou Hamer, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, Mary McLeod Bethune, Dorothy Height, Vashti Murphy McKenzie, Carolyn Tyler Guidry, Sarah Frances Davis, Anna Arnold Hedgeman, Coretta Scott King, Harriet Tubman, Michelle Obama, Cordy Lee Smith, Mertis Jones, Edwina Patrick, Doris Outlaw, Margaret Ballard, Sally Fitchard, Big Mamma, Auntie, Grandma, Big Sis, Baby Girl, and so many more are shining models of what it means to be faithful stewards of God's mysteries. As we take the journey of faith to resurrection Sunday, let us do so as so many women have done – responding faithfully to the love of God!

"I Believe" In Our Future Daniel Payne College Legacy Village



Plans have been drawn, the land has been cleared, contractor's contracts have been accepted, and construction has begun. The goal is for the first event to be held at this site in 2015. Bishop Davis and the Daniel Payne College Legacy Village Board of Trustees stated in a letter to the District family, "We are asking all Ninth District AMEs

to BELIEVE with us and help us to do this mighty work."

Some St. John members have shown their commitment to this project by committing to make a monthly donation to the "I BELIEVE FUND." Members were asked to make a pledge of \$10 per month (or other amounts of their choice). Many have responded and the church continues to accept new pledges and donations. If you have made your pledge, please remember to honor your pledge each month. If you have not made a pledge, prayerfully consider making your commitment to the "I BELIEVE FUND." All checks must be payable to Daniel Payne College Legacy Village or DPCLV.

Thank you, St. John, for BELIEVING.

Bishop Guidry Leads St. John in Celebrating Founder's Day

By Bridget J. Floyd



St. John celebrated Founder's Day on Sunday, February 9, 2014, at a combined 10 a.m. worship service. The theme was: *Writing the Vision: History, Heritage, and Hope*. The Right Reverend Carolyn Tyler-Guidry was the preacher for this time-honored celebration of the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church by Richard Allen. The Steward Board coordinated the program and Stewards were featured in the order of worship. Mrs. Pamela Whitehead served as program chair.

The Gospel Choir set the tone with inspirational selections, and Dr. Jennifer Patters on gave an emotionally gripping liturgical dance to "O Fix Me." Visitors were welcomed, and as with each Sunday in February (African American History Month), the drama ministry represented/introduced themselves as African American historical figures who were "visiting" St. John. Dr. Patrick Clayborn, pastor,

introduced Bishop Guidry, noting the history of early AME bishops, their impact on women's rights in the pulpit, and the "ups and downs" that occurred until "faith-filled women were allowed in the pulpit." And on this day, congregants were privileged to hear from a retired female bishop of the AME Church, which in itself was historical.

Bishop Guidry preached on the topic "The Church Will Survive" with the biblical text Matthew 16:12-20. She emphasized verse 18 with emphasis on building the church on the firm foundation which would be impervious to the efforts of the devil or any such attack. Setting the historical stage, Bishop Guidry noted that the AME Church and the United States Constitution were simultaneously in development. She emphasized the dichotomy of that time in establishing independence/freedom from Great Britain while embracing slavery for blacks. Bishop Guidry drew the time line from the founder John Wesley (Methodist Church) to Richard Allen, the end of slavery and the role of education for the newly freed slaves. Great strides were made with meager resources contrasted with the resources of today, which Bishop Guidry suggested are squandered in some instances.



Likewise, the church was established by Richard Allen and others in a humble setting (blacksmith shop). Bishop Guidry indicated that the torch should be passed and that "the Church will survive." She suggested that re-evaluation might be appropriate in an effort to "recapture the fervor of Allen" and others. She emphasized reaching out to "those in need of Jesus" without prejudgments about attire, vices, or the types of songs that they embrace; for the purpose is to "bring them to the altar/Jesus and HIS LOVE."

Bishop Guidry reiterated, "The Church will survive because Jesus commanded it to," regardless of naysayers. She highlighted the "responsibility" of outreach to "let those who need it know of Jesus." That is, "They are somebody's sons and daughters," and as

(Continued on page 12)

CELEBRATING WOMEN: WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

By Tawanda Buford



Women's History Month honors and celebrates the struggles and achievements of American women throughout history. American women have struggled to gain rights not simply for themselves but for many other underrepresented and disenfranchised groups in America.

Women's History Month had its origins in 1981 when Congress passed Public Law 97-28 which authorized and requested the President to proclaim the week beginning March 7, 1982 as "Women's History Week". As requested by Congress, President Reagan issued Presidential Proclamation 4903 proclaiming the week beginning on March 7, 1982 as the first "Women's History Week" and recognizing the vital role of women in American history. The beginning of the Proclamation states:

"American women of every race, creed and ethnic background helped found and build our Nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways ... As leaders in public affairs, American women not only worked to secure their own rights of suffrage and equal opportunity but also were principal advocates in the abolitionist, temperance, mental health reform, industrial labor and social reform movements, as well as the modern civil rights movement."

Congress continued to pass joint resolutions designating a week in March as "Women's History Week" and authorizing the President to issue a proclamation to inform the country of this recognition and urge the people to study the contributions of women to U.S. history. Since 1985, Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama have issued a series of annual proclamations designating the month of March as "Women's History Month." These proclamations celebrate the contributions women have made to the United States and recognize the specific achievements women have made over the course of American history in a variety of fields.

As we continue to celebrate women, the Newsletter Ministry decided to pay homage to ten (10) remarkable and notable women (see page 4) who changed history. Although their works have gone unnoticed, their contributions have paved the way despite the persecution, segregation, and racism each of these women faced. Without any of their contributions, women would not have the determination, courage, drive, nor the freedom to explore possibilities. These women have made a difference and fought a good fight in their quest for equal political, economic and social opportunities in the United States, just to make sure women have equal opportunities.

References:

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<http://womenshistorymonth.gov/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_History_Month
<http://wchbnewsdetroit.com/24003727-of-the-most-unrecognized-women-in-black-history/>
<http://www.timeforkids.com/minisite/womens-history-month>
http://www.loc.gov/law/help/commemorative-observations/women_history.php

PORTRAITS OF WOMEN IN HISTORY

	Nancy Green November 17, 1834- September 23, 1923	A storyteller, cook, activist, and one of the first <u>African-American</u> models hired to promote a corporate trademark known for "<u>Aunt Jemima</u>" Pancake Mix.
	Mary McLeod Bethune July 10, 1875- May 18, 1955	An American educator and civil rights leader best known for starting a school for <u>African-American</u> students in <u>Daytona Beach, Florida</u>, that eventually became <u>Bethune-Cookman University</u> and for being an advisor to President <u>Franklin D. Roosevelt</u>. She was known as "The First Lady of The Struggle" because of her commitment to bettering African Americans.
	Bessie Coleman January 26, 1892 – April 30, 1926	Served as the first African American pilot and the first person of African-American descent to hold an <u>international pilot license</u>.
	Hattie McDaniel June 10, 1895 – October 26, 1952	The first <u>African American</u> to win an Oscar. She won the award for <u>Best Supporting Actress</u> for her role of Mammy in <u>Gone with the Wind</u> (1939).
	Barbara Jordan February 21, 1936 – January 17, 1996	She was an <u>American politician</u> and leader of the <u>Civil Rights movement</u>. She was the first African American elected to the Texas Senate after Reconstruction, the first <u>southern</u> black female elected to the <u>United States House of Representatives</u>, and the first African-American woman to deliver the keynote address at a <u>Democratic National Convention</u>.
	Lorraine Hansberry May 19, 1930 – January 12, 1965	She was the first black woman to write a play performed on <u>Broadway</u>. Her best known work, the play <u>A Raisin in the Sun</u>.
	Mary Church Terrell September 23, 1863 – July 24, 1954	She was one of the first African-American women to earn a college degree in 1884 graduating from Oberlin College.
	Charlotte Ray January 13, 1850 – January 4, 1911	The first <u>African American female lawyer</u> in the United States. Ray graduated from <u>Howard University School of Law</u> in 1872 and became the first female admitted to the District of Columbia Bar.
	Charity Adams Earley December 5, 1918 – January 13, 2002	The first African American woman to be an officer in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (later WACS) and was the commanding officer of the first battalion of African American women to serve overseas during World War II.
	Maggie Walker July 15, 1867 – December 15, 1934	The first female bank president of any race to charter a bank in the United States.

Ash Wednesday Began 2014 Lenten Journey

Journey of Faith: 7 Steps of Stewardship

The 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. The date of the beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is determined by the date of Easter.

This year St. John will take a "Journey of Faith: 7 Steps of Stewardship" during the Lenten Season. Members received a preview of the journey in the previous Sunday's message "Journey of Faith: The Best Offering." The congregation will explore seven ways in which to respond faithfully to the love of God: relationships, time, health and wellness, talent, finances, community outreach, and the environment.

Worshippers gathered in the sanctuary on Wednesday, March 5, for the annual Ash Wednesday Service and in anticipation of the information that would be provided about the Lenten journey. The Reverend Meriam Garrett led the worship service. Prayer was offered by the Reverend Charles Glover. Dance and musical solo set the spiritual tone for the meditation. Dr. Jennifer Patterson, coordinator of the St. John Dance Ministry, ministered in dance to the song "Lead Me to the Cross" and a stirring solo, "God Is Here," was sung by Dr. Janette Kotey, Minister of Music at First Missionary Baptist Church.



Following a passionate singing of "Jesus, You're the Center of My Joy," Pastor Clayborn gave the meditation that was centered on Luke 15:11-13. The message was entitled "Journey of Faith: The Right Relationship." The message was focused on the first step of faith in stewardship. To have "the right relationship" one must admit brokenness, make an intent to do God's will, and take the step of faith. As the prodigal son took the first step of faith and returned to his father, believer's relationship with God is right as soon as they take the step of faith. In concluding, he stated that "Because of His grace and mercy, we have the right relationship."

Congregants gathered at the altar for prayer, followed by the imposition of ashes.



During the service, an explanation was given for the artwork on the wall opposite the administrative offices. This wall depicts the "Journey of Faith" that members will take during this season of Lent and it is a place where members may post testimonies along the journey.

History Lessons Taught by St. John Members

The St. John Drama Ministry taught valuable lessons in Black History during the month of February by interspersing special guests in the congregation and with skits. Each Sunday, "visitors" told of their contributions to history. There was also a skit that depicted important events in history. The history moments were directed by Mrs. Donna Gullatte and Mrs. Cheryl Anderson.

On February 2, a skit was presented on the Tuskegee Airmen (Eddie Whitehead, Jr., Michael Clark, Josiah Gullatte, Curtis Mayes, Jr., Jared Burns and Anthony Harbin) and narrated by Kaitlyn McClung. Visitors were Rosa Parks (Karen Minor), Harriet Tubman (Eleanor Burnett) and Admiral Michelle Howard (Felicia Carter).



On February 9, the skit was "Hair We Go Again! Madam CJ Walker Story," with Madam CJ Walker (Karmen Latimore, not pictured), Charles Joseph Walker (Eddie Whitehead), Louvenia, Madam Walker's Sister, (Jakeyah Williams) and narration by Claudinette Purifoy-Fears. Visitors were Richard Allen (Ricardo Williams), Daniel Payne, (Justin York), Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, (Darrell Ezell), Venus and Serena Williams, (Shannon and Erin Lott, not pictured).



The skit on February 16 was "Fulfillment," where President Barack Obama (Larry Stanley) and First Lady Michelle Obama (Templena Stanley) told the story of the election of the first African American President of the United States as a 'fulfillment' of the dream to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King (Karl Gullatte) and Coretta Scott King (Timyra Marshall). Visitors were George Washington Carver (Glenn Harbin) and Garrett Morgan (Guy Ginn).

(Continued on page 8)

History Lessons Taught by St. John Members

(Continued from page 7)



On February 23 St. John members who achieved "firsts" in their profession and/or service were honored. The honorees were Adrienne P-K Washington, Lynn Sherrod, Janette Smith, Willie Mingo Clark, Ernest Jones, the Reverend Charles Glover, the Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Cliff Miller, and Dr. Monica Dillihunt. Visitors on this fourth Sunday of the month were Oprah Winfrey (Mary Rankin), John and Eunice Johnson (Anthony Daniels and Teneshia Acklin), William Hooper Council (Sherrod Cowan) and Jesse Owens (Patrick Buford).





**APRIL
14-16
6:30PM
NIGHTLY**

ST. JOHN A.M.E. CHURCH

Holy Week

REVIVAL

ADVANCING THE VISION ►

Guest Speaker
Rev. Bankole Akinbinu
RALEIGH, NC



Musical Guest 4:15
AAMU Gospel Choir

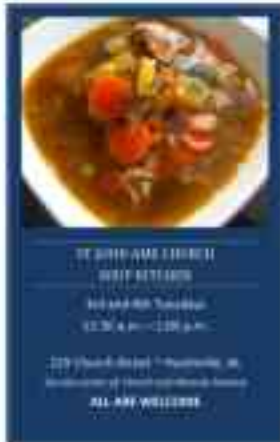
4:14 *Musical Guest*
Voices of Triumph Choir



Musical Guest 4:30
Psalmist Jamel Strong

ST. JOHN A.M.E. CHURCH
229 CHURCH ST NW, HUNTSVILLE, AL 35801 256-534-3265
WWW.STJOHNAME-MSV.ORG
Rev. Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D., Pastor

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Soup Kitchen Corner

REFLECTIONS ON ABUNDANCE

"Do to others what you would have them do to you." Matthew 7:12 (NIV)

Ministries of St. John serve the homeless and the needy in our city and county. These activities are reported monthly in our AMENewsletter and in our church conferences. (See past newsletters for activities.) Why do we serve untiringly? We are Christians!

We are similar to the Christian serving in an inner city soup kitchen who was asked: "Would you still do this if you won the lottery?" He emphatically answered, "Absolutely." As we strive to serve in the ministries of our church, we believe that we have won the lottery in many ways. We experience an abundance of God's many blessings in our lives—the blessings of shelter, food, health, income and relationship. This motivates us to give back to those laboring in poverty and related struggles.

Jesus, whom we serve and adore did not avoid the poor, but instead modeled a caring, embracing example for us to emulate. God does not make us do good. He gives us the opportunity to help our neighbors - the greatest joy of all.

Women's Ministry Announces Plans for Retreat

Mark your calendars for the Women's Ministry Retreat on June 20-21, 2014. The retreat will be held at the Marriott Resort and Conference Center in Florence, Alabama. More information will be provided soon.

Healthcare Coverage is Mandatory

The Patient Care and Affordable Care Act makes healthcare coverage mandatory, and persons without coverage will be fined. There is still time to ENROLL prior to the 2014 deadline of March 31, 2014. Visit www.healthcare.gov for more information.

Grace and Mercy

By Paulette Bargon

It was the grace of God that saved Moses through his mother's resourceful actions. Exodus 1:20-22; 2:1-10

It was mercy when God called Moses years after he killed a man. God had a purpose for him. Exodus 3:9-15; 2:11-14

It was grace that Moses was privileged to see the burning bush, to stand on holy ground and to hear the word of the Lord. Exodus 3:5-14

Through God's grace Moses was able to get the courage to deliver God's message to Pharaoh. To set his people free! Exodus 4:1-11

When God began a series of plagues and finally death to Egypt's first born sons, it was through God's grace that He spared His own people. Exodus 6:28 - 11:7

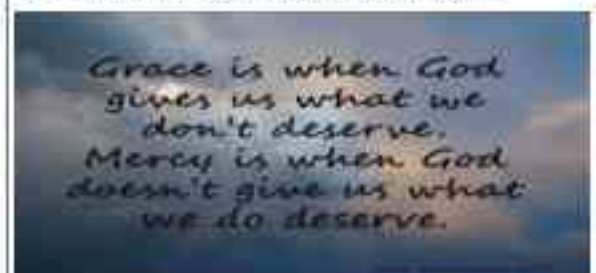
It was through God's mercy that He let all of His people cross the Red Sea when they failed His first big test by accusing Moses of betraying them. And when the sea was parted, they still did not believe. Exodus 14:11-14

Throughout their journey to the Promised Land, God provided them with food, water and protection, despite their many complaints. Exodus 15:22 - 17:16

It was mercy when God forgave His people and made a renewed covenant. (Remember the golden calf?) Exodus 34:5-7

It was the Grace of God, not power, that the Israelites were able to cross the Jordan River to the Promised Land after 40 years. Deuteronomy 9:1-29

These are some of this writer's examples of grace and mercy. Many bible scholars may have a different opinion. But, all should agree that because of God's grace and mercy, His son died on the cross for their salvation.





Online Giving Is Easy

1. Use your PayPal account to send directly to St. John at e-mail address stjohnameh@aol.com. Transfer from your banking account and specify donate/friends and family.
2. Simply go to the St. John AMEC website www.stjohnameh-hsv.org then click on Online Giving. Follow the instructions from there.

Ministry Opportunity

The Pastor's Aid Board is seeking new members. If you are interested in joining this ministry, please contact Mrs. Claire Philadelphia, Ms. Donnie Thompson, or the church office.

Church School Book Club

March 2014 Discussion Date: 15 March 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.
Keeper of My Soul, Keshia Dawn, 2010

April 2014 Discussion Date: 19 April 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.
Redeeming Waters, Vanessa Davis Griggs, 2011

In *Redeeming Waters*, Brianna was ten when she first met twenty-five-year-old David R. Shepherd, a devout gospel recording artist who would ultimately become megastar King d. Avid, and he left a lasting impression. The next time they meet, Brianna is a lonely young wife seeking solace in religious studies. King's companionship offers Brianna the deep emotional connection for which she longs. But she soon finds herself wrestling with questions of faith, fidelity, and forgiveness.

Bishop Davis Visits St. John



Bishop James L. Davis, presiding prelate of the Ninth Episcopal District, plans to visit every church in the District over a period of several weeks. The purpose of the visits is to meet the members of the congregations and to highlight the activities of the District.

Accompanied by Presiding Elder Oliver Allen, Jr. and Ms. Janet Benjamin, Administrative Assistant, Bishop Davis visited St. John on Wednesday, February 26. Pastor Clayborn and members were present to warmly welcome them to St. John. During the visit, Bishop Davis highlighted the following:

- Mid-Winter Meeting at the Fairfield Conference Center, March 20-22
- Pentecost Explosion on the campus of Alabama State University, June 8
- Summer Meeting (CEC, Minister Conference) on the campus of Troy University, July 21-24.

- Update and appeal for Daniel Payne College Legacy Village

Thank you, St. John, for your support of this visit.





Texting Teen News March 2k14

By Mariah Gullatte

"You cannot know where you are going, until you know where you have been." Black history month was full of educational facts straight from the history makers themselves! Of course the wonderful youth participated in the festivities!

The youth of St. John A.M.E. are always on the roll!

- The YPD continues to volunteer and to give clothing items at Christmas Charities.
- YPDers traveled to Ft. Mitchell, Alabama, to participate in the Ninth District LTI (Leadership Training Institute). At the institute, YPD'ers prepared for the future in a workshop that taught how to prepare resumes for job applications. In addition to resumes and applications, we were also enlightened on how to dress for all types of job interviews and on what type of questions the interviewer will most likely ask. The opening meditation of LTI came from the Reverend Timothy Nathan. He spoke about having the right characteristics as a successful black leader. Just in case you want to know, they are...the RIGHT ATTITUDE, GPS, and GOD. And as always, the ending service wrapped it all up!

Keep all young people and adults, military, college students, as well as our up and coming college students, as they enter the long road to the success process, in your prayers. We ask a special prayer for Wallace Parham for a speedy recovery from knee surgery.

Until next time, TTYL (Talk To You Later)!

News Text for the month...

"Let go and let GOD lead your life into what it should be. Don't ever let anyone bring you down."
-Wallace Parham

Founder's Day

(Continued from page 3)

"someone shared Jesus with you...so we must share today." Bishop Guidry culminated with further declaration of the Church's survival and the challenge: "IT WILL ONLY SURVIVE IF JESUS IS LIFTED TO THE WORLD."

The congregation and guests responded to the message of hope and mission for the AME Church with respect for the great founder, Richard Allen. It was most appropriate to bring into full membership those who had joined St. John and completed the necessary preparation as new members. After the benediction the right hand of fellowship was offered and a reception was held in the fellowship hall.

Pastor Clayborn to Preach at Mid-Winter Meeting

Pastor Clayborn will be the preacher for the noon service at the Ninth District Mid-Winter Meeting in Fairfield, Alabama, on Friday, March 21, 2014. The service is scheduled to begin at 12:30 pm. Please support him with your prayers, and your attendance, if your schedule permits.

Go Green

Huntsville Has Cap's Recycling Program

The City of Huntsville's Operation Green Team recently won the Innovation Award for Waste Reduction/Recycling at the 2014 Keep America Beautiful Conference. The award was the result of the successful Plastic Caps Recycling contest for schools.

The program has reduced waste and provided funds to area schools. The caps are recycled into new plastic paint containers. Residents can drop off plastic caps at City of Huntsville schools and local Huntsville fire stations to support the initiative.



March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

By Rosemary Wells

Among cancers that effect both men and women, colorectal cancer (cancer of the colon or rectum) is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Every year, about 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and more than 58,000 people die from the cancer.

The risk of getting colorectal cancer increases with age. More than 90% of cases occur in people who are 50 years old or older. Colorectal cancer screening saves lives, but many people are not being screened according to national guidelines. If you are older than 50 years old, getting a screening test for colorectal cancer could save your life. Early screening can....

- ⇒ Find precancerous polyps so they can be removed before they turn into cancer. In this way, colorectal cancer is prevented.
- ⇒ Find colorectal cancer early; treatment often leads to a cure.

You should begin screening for colorectal cancer soon after turning 50, and then keep getting screened regularly until the age of 75. Ask your doctor if you should be screened if you are older than 75. The best time to get screened is before you have any symptoms!

Precancerous polyps and colorectal cancer do not always cause symptoms, especially at first. You could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know. That is why having a screening test is so important. Symptoms for colorectal cancer may include:

- ⇒ Blood in or on the stool (bowel movement);
- ⇒ Stomach pain, aches or cramps that do not go away;
- ⇒ Losing weight and you do not know why.

These symptoms may be caused by something other than cancer. If you are having any of these symptoms, the only way to know what is causing them is to see your doctor.

Localized bowel cancer is usually diagnosed through a sigmoidoscopy, which is the minimally invasive medical examination of the large intestine from the rectum through the large part of the colon. There are two types of sigmoidoscopies: a flexible (flex) sigmoidoscopy, which uses a flexible endoscope, or a rigid sigmoidoscopy, which uses a rigid device. A flexible sigmoidoscopy is generally the preferred procedure. A sigmoidoscopy is similar to, but not the same as, a colonoscopy. A sigmoidoscopy only examines up to the sigmoid, the most distal part of the colon, while the colonoscopy examines the whole large bowel. This procedure should be performed every 5 years.

A colonoscopy is the endoscopic examination of the large bowel and the distal part of the small bowel with a CCD camera or a fiber optic camera on a flexible tube passed through the anus. During a colonoscopy, polyps as small as one millimeter or less can be removed and studied (with the aid of a microscope) to determine if they are precancerous or not. This procedure (screening) should be performed every 10 years. It takes 15 years or fewer for a polyp to turn cancerous.

Prevention of colorectal cancer is the key, and includes the following:

- ⇒ Be physically active for at least 30 minutes, at least 5 days a week.
- ⇒ Do not smoke. If you do smoke, quit.
- ⇒ Eat fruits, vegetables and whole grains to help you get and stay healthy.
- ⇒ Eat less red meat and cut out processed meat.



Remember if detected early, colorectal cancer can be easily and successfully treated!!

Church School Lesson Overview – April 2014



April 6, 2014

Lesson Title: Jesus Cleanses the Temple

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 56:6-8; Jeremiah 7:8-15; Mark 11:15-19

Print: Isaiah 56:6-7; Jeremiah 7:9-11; Mark 11:15-19

Devotional Songs: #345 [], #272 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight?" (Jeremiah 7:11).

Application: Like the temple at Jerusalem, our churches and other places of worship should be dedicated for worshipping God. They should be sanctuaries wherein worshippers can expect to find shelter from the storms of life.

This lesson took place during the final week of Jesus' earthly life following His triumphant entry into Jerusalem and a roundabout trip to Bethany. Jesus came across and cursed a fig tree that showed various signs of fruitfulness, yet had no figs. Jesus' reaction to both the fig tree and the money changers in the temple provide strong warnings concerning the dangers of hypocrisy and deceptiveness.

Students are challenged to personally evaluate their reasons for going to church and their behavior while they are there. Physical presence in the building / facility is not equivalent to being engaged in worship.

April 13, 2014

Lesson Title: A Messianic Priest and King

Lesson Scripture: Jeremiah 23:5-6; Zechariah 6:9-15; John 19:1-5; Hebrews 7:13

Print: Jeremiah 23:5-6; Zechariah 6:9-15; John 19:1-5

Devotional Songs: #92 [], #251 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face" (John 19:3).

Application: Believers must aspire to righteousness like that of the Branch that God raised from David's remnants.

This lesson gives a chance for students to discern seeds of eternal hope that are available to all, especially those who are oppressed and exploited because they identify with the suffer-

ing Savior. The title of this lesson refers to Jesus, the Messiah in whom God has combined the roles of priest and king to reign forever. The invitation to join Him as inhabitants of His kingdom is still open. There are deeper insights into the nature of the Priest King and His role in God's plans for salvation.

April 20, 2014

Lesson Title: The Third Day

Lesson Scripture: Hosea 6:1-3; Luke 24:1-12

Print: Hosea 6:1-3; Luke 24:1-12

Tentative Devotional Songs: #156 [], #258 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Remember how he told you...that the Son of man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and on the third day rise again" (Luke 24:6-7).

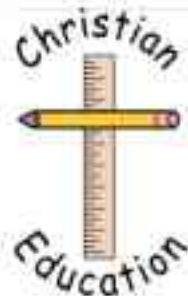
Application: Jesus' resurrection from the dead is the cornerstone of Christian faith. On it, the Church is built.

This lesson is about a subject that has different meanings for different people — deliverance — dependent upon personal experiences and histories. Without regard to personal meanings, a dominant theme among delivered people is the essential need to maintain hope and confidence that deliverance will come.

Hosea reminded Israel of God's power and his faithfulness. God loved them unconditionally, and his deliverance was readily available to them. All they had to do was confess their sins, repent and turn back to God, knowing that as in the past, God would forgive them. Sadly, they would not acknowledge the weight of their sins. They did not repent or return to God either; they remained unfaithful, interested only in any benefits they might derive from their relationship with God. The Israelites were soon taken into exile as a consequence.

We see love as we go to the empty tomb with the women in this lesson. Jesus was hastily placed in the tomb on Friday evening before the start of the Sabbath. The women had gone home to observe the Sabbath. Early on the first day of the week, the women came with spices and perfumes to anoint Jesus' body for proper burial. On their way to the tomb, the women wondered who would roll the heavy stone from

(Continued on page 15)



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 14)

the entrance so they could enter. They were surprised to find the stone already rolled away and Jesus' body was not there. God sent messengers, who explained that Jesus had risen from the dead.

April 27, 2014

Lesson Title: From Suffering to Glory

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 52:13-53; 12; Luke 24:25-27, 44-50

Print: Isaiah 53:5-8; Luke 24:25-27, 44, 47

Tentative Devotional Songs: #21 []; 282; and #243 []

Key Verses: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12).

Application: Because we are imperfect and living in an imperfect world, suffering is bound to happen. Just as the disciples were disappointed when the suffering servant did not match their expectations for a victorious king, we are often disappointed when God does not reveal His plans or answer our prayers the way we expect.

We gain new and deeper understandings in this lesson as we learn how Jesus and the Scriptures fulfilled the disciple's needs.

The disciples had followed Jesus for three years and listened to Him teach, but they did not understand because they had envisioned Jesus' role and purpose from human perspectives of royalty and political power. The disciples had seen Jesus suffer, mistreated, and killed like a criminal. The disciples needed major shifts in their way of thinking in order to move forward and to understand Jesus' message, purpose, and ministry from heavenly perspectives.

This lesson proves a framework for overcoming adversity and finding hope in what may appear to be hopeless circumstances by creating and developing deeper understandings about Jesus; by seeking to know and understand relevant prophecies from Genesis to Revelation; by maintaining an ongoing relationship with Jesus; and by seeking to strengthen spiritual understandings through personal study and with the aid of godly teachers.



TRUSTEE CORNER

What are the qualifications to be a Trustee?

1. Minimum Qualifications
 - A. Any member at least eighteen (18) years of age or over.
 - B. A member in good and regular standing at St John AME Church
 - C. A member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church for no less than two (2) years and at least six (6) months at St. John AME Church.
2. Annually candidates for the Board of Trustees are nominated by the Pastor and elected by the church body to serve a term of one year.
3. The Pastor or minister in charge is the chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is amenable to the Quarterly Conference and shall make a report of all receipts and expenditures to this conference quarterly.
4. Trustees elected should number no less than three (3) and no more than nineteen (19). Presently, St John AME has elected the following nineteen (19) Trustees for this conference year.

2014 Board of Trustee Members

The Reverend Patrick Clayborn (Chairperson)

Tommy Anderson
 Bridget Floyd
 Karl Gullatte
 Erica Harbin
 Jesse Johnson
 Carl Lewis
 Randy Love
 Thalia F. Love
 Pearlean Myand
 Glenn Phippen
 Claudinette Purifoy-Fears
 Lula Richelle
 Eva Smith
 Maeola Snells-Peoples
 Terry Speight
 Eddie Whitehead
 Bill Williams
 Lee Williams
 Justin York



**Official Public Relations Announcement From the Office of
The 9th Episcopal District, African Methodist Episcopal Church**

Bishop James L. Davis, Presiding Prelate

Mother Arells B. Davis, Supervisor

1040 19th Street, North, Birmingham, AL 35203

Office Phone: 205-326-4499 (Fax: 205-326-4434)

Email: jld-2013bishop@yahoo.com 9th District Website: www.ninthamec.org

Rekindling Eternal Vision Inspiring Victory Everywhere! R.E.V.I.V.E.!

**Excitement is in the air! Hope to see YOU at these 9th District
Services. Please circle these dates on all of your calendars.**

Additional details are on the way!



Mid-Winter Meeting, March 20-22, 2014
(Founder's Day, Mid-Year & Ministers' Training)
Fairfield Civic Center, Fairfield, Alabama

PENTECOST EXPLOSION – June 8, 2014
(Alabama State University Stadium, Montgomery, AL)
Co-Sponsored by members of the 9th Episcopal District
AME Church, AME-Zion Church, and CME Church

SPECIAL CELEBRITY GUESTS
BISHOP PAUL MORTON AND CeCe WINANS

Summer Meeting, July 21-24, 2014
(CEC and Minister's Training) Troy University; Troy, Alabama
CEC: Praise & worship, debates, The movie, workshops and seminars for all ages, Christian
Debutants/Masters, an extra- special event, special guests, outdoor activities, and more.
Registration: \$140 – covers lodging, food, entrance to events, and kit materials! What a deal!

Stay tuned for updates on the 9th Episcopal District Vision:
Daniel Payne College Legacy Village

*****TELL EVERYONE ABOUT WHAT GOD IS DOING IN THE NINTH DISTRICT CHURCH*****

April 2014*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
* Please see the Music Department's calendar that will be posted outside the main office for choir rehearsal dates for April. The schedule will be adjusted due to Holy Week services and Easter Program rehearsals.		1	2 1200 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study LOVE FEAST	3 6:00 p.m. Steward Board Mtg.	4	5 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
6 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship AMEN Deadline	7 9:30 a.m. Fifty Plus Auxiliary	8 6:00 p.m. Stewardless Board Meeting Song of Allen Mtg.	9 1200 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	10 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg.	South Birmingham, Huntsville, Bessemer District Conference Grant Chapel, Birmingham	
13 CHURCH ANNIVERSARY 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship PALM SUNDAY	14	15 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN	16	17 6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service	18 GOOD FRIDAY	19 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. AMEN Staff Meeting
20 6:00 a.m. SUNRISE SERVICE 9:00 a.m. Easter Program 10:30 a.m. Worship RESURRECTION SUNDAY	21	22 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Lay Organization Mtg.	23 1200 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	24	25	26 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. WMMO Meeting
27 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	28	29 6:30 p.m. Church School Board Meeting	30 1200 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study LOVE FEAST			

POTPOURRI

Pray for our Sick & Shut-ins

Susie Akin

Gwendolyn Baldwin

Jason Brown

Altonette Burks

Arthur Burks

Mildred Hereford

Evelyn Hildreth

Robert Hyder

James Jamir

Ernest Jones

Lorene Jones

Idell Merrell

Ellie Russell

Pray for our sick and shut-in.

Home Depot's 2014 Retool Your School

It is time to vote for HBCU schools in the Home Depot 2014 Retool Your School campus improvement grant program. HBCU finalists are competing for \$250,000 in grants for on-campus improvements. Go to www.retoolyourschool.com to vote.



REMEMBER OUR MILITARY

2LT Butler, Christopher P.

ABE Joseph, Daisha

Please remember St. John's military family members by sending cards or little reminders of home. Most of all, keep them in your daily prayers.

If you know of any member of the St John family who has a loved one deployed overseas as well as those stationed in the U.S, please contact any AMEN staff with their name and address. You may also e-mail the contact information to stjohnameh@aol.com.

Prayer Time

Every Tuesday at 6:00 am.

Conference Call Credentials
US Toll Number (530) 881-1212,
Meeting ID: 876-863-940
For smart Phone Speed Dialing:
5308811212, 876863940

If you are not able to join the call at 6:00 am, you may listen to the playback anytime.
Playback Number (530) 881-1219,
Meeting Id 876-863-940

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

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E-mail: stjohnameh@aol.com

Website: stjohnamehsv.org

The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop

Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

March 20-22, 2014

Ninth District Mid-Winter Meeting,
Fairfield Civic Center, Fairfield, Alabama

March 21, 2014

Pastor Clayborn will preach at 12:30 pm on March 21st.

April 13

Palm Sunday
Church Anniversary, 8:00 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. Services

April 14-16

Holy Week Revival, 6:30 p.m. nightly
The Reverend Bankole Akinbinu, Revivalist

April 17

Maundy Thursday Service, 6:30 p.m.

April 20

Resurrection Sunday
6:00 a.m. Sunrise Service
9:00 a.m. Easter Program
10:50 a.m. Easter Morning Worship Service

June 8, 2014

Pentecost 2014

*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. Romans 10:9*

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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 4

April 2014

Pastor's Message

Journey of Faith to Resurrection

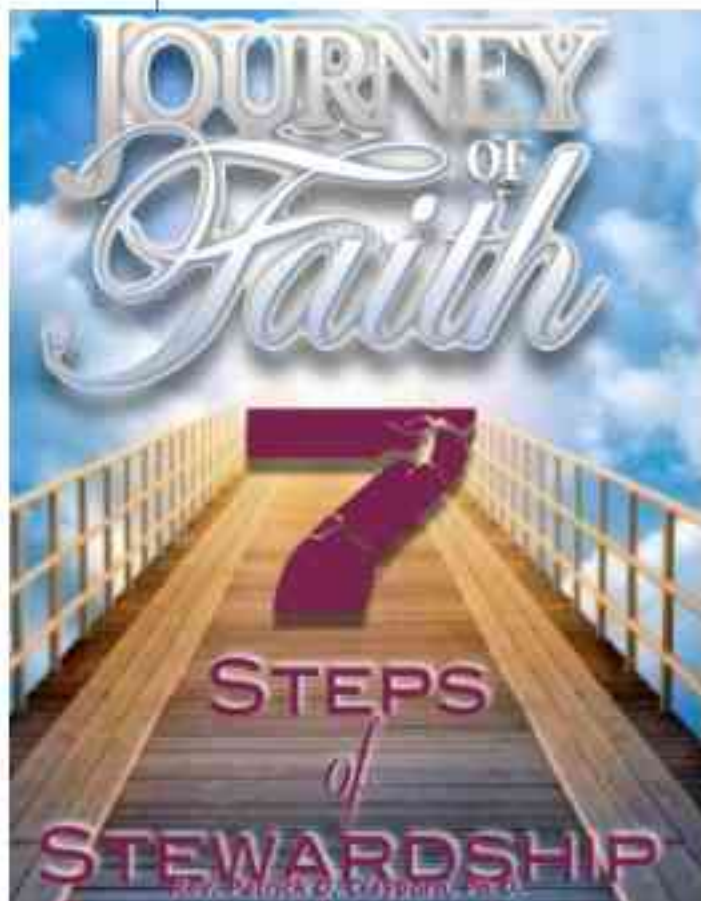
Luke 24:12

We have come to the climax of the Journey of Faith. How appropriate it is that the journey leads to Resurrection Sunday! The biblical narratives around the resurrection of Christ involve journeys. The women journey to the tomb. Two disciples journey to Emmaus. The disciples journey to Galilee. Jesus even journeys there to meet them.

Yet, there is one journey that brings our journey of faith to light: Peter's run to the tomb. What makes Peter's run so powerful is that his run is juxtaposed to static posture of the other apostles. When the other apostles heard the story of the women (of how they saw that Jesus was no longer in the tomb), the "words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them" (Luke 24:11). Peter, on the other hand, gets up and runs to the tomb. He looks in the tomb and finds the linen clothes without the body of Jesus. He went home and was amazed by what happened (Luke 24:12). All those who did not believe – all those with no faith – stayed. Peter gets up and runs.



Pastor Patrick D. Clayburn, Ph.D.



Faith will cause us to move when others are still. Faith will take us to places where we have lost hope in order to reclaim it. Faith grows not in what we see but in what we cannot see. Peter could not see the body of Jesus! His faith grew from what he could not see and from what he could not find. He was AMAZED!

Resurrection is an amazing moment. Amazement is born in impossibility. The miracles of God and the wonders of God's power are so far above our comprehension that their manifestation shakes our core. The resurrection of Jesus shook Peter to his core, and he was amazed. All that he thought he would never reach was within grasp. All that he thought had died now lived. All that he felt had slipped away was coming back. This is why he was amazed. What was impossible now became possible – resurrection!

Faith ultimately leads us to resurrection. Just as it led Peter to an empty tomb, faith will lead us to places and people that are empty of the disappointment, hopelessness, confusion, chaos, gossip, envy, pride, shame, regret, pain, drama, oppression, abuse, weakness, and sorrow. As the tomb is empty, Peter's heart is filled – with amazement.

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

My hope is that your journey of faith has brought you to empty tombs in your life – empty of bondage, waste, generational curses, selfishness, greed, low self-esteem, and addictions. While those tombs are emptied, I pray that your hearts are filled with liberty, purpose, dreams, blessings, generosity, love, companionship, self-worth, and joy. The purpose of our Holy Week Revival – with our guest preacher the Reverend Barkole Akinbinu – is to point to the empty tomb that our hearts may be filled with the presence of God. Certainly, you will read more about the revival in next month's issue. However, I have to say that we were **AMAZED** at the preaching of the Reverend Akinbinu. We were also blessed by the ministries of the Voices of Triumph, the Alabama A&M Gospel Choir, and Jamel Strong. We were also honored by the presence of Pastor Carlton Byrd (Oakwood SDA) and Pastor Gregory Bentley (Fellowship Presbyterian Church). Worship was rich, and people were blessed. I just had to testify!

Please be sure to testify to how resurrection happened for you this Lent – in relationships, health, talent, time, finances, environment, or community outreach. There will be a testimony! Faith is the evidence of things not seen!!!! There will be some linen clothes – rags – left behind that testify to our resurrection. There will be rags of the limitations others put on us. There will be rags of self-destruction. There will be rags of procrastination. There will be rags of low expectations. There will be rags of destructive criticism. There will be rags of hate and rags of indifference. All that attempted to hold us back will be left in our tombs. Their presence – their being left behind – will testify to our resurrection.

The journey of faith will lead us home. In amazement, Peter went home. Faith leads us to places of nurture, cultivation, contemplation, empowerment, restoration, celebration, trust, warmth, sensitivity, and peace. As we celebrate the resurrection of the Savior, be sure to let your faith lead you home – to the presence of God.

"I Believe" In Our Future Daniel Payne College Legacy Village



Plans have been drawn, the land has been cleared, contractor's contracts have been accepted, and construction has begun. The goal is for the first event to be held at this site in 2015. Bishop Davis and the Daniel Payne College Legacy Village Board of Trustees stated in a letter to the District family, "We are asking all Ninth District AME's

to BELIEVE with us and help us to do this mighty work."

Some St. John members have shown their commitment to this project by committing to make a monthly donation to the "I BELIEVE FUND." Members were asked to make a pledge of \$10 per month (or other amounts of their choice). Many have responded and the church continues to accept new pledges and donations. If you have made your pledge, please remember to honor your pledge each month. If you have not made a pledge, prayerfully consider making your commitment to the "I BELIEVE FUND." All checks must be payable to Daniel Payne College Legacy Village or DPCLV.

Thank you, St. John, for BELIEVING.

Pastor Clayborn Preaches at Mid-Winter Meeting



The Ninth Episcopal District of the AME Church, where Bishop James Levert Davis is the presiding prelate, held its Mid-winter Meeting at the Fairfield Convention Center in Fairfield, Alabama, March 20-22, 2014. The conference was a combination of Founder's Day and Mid-year convocation.

The first day of the conference consisted of break-out sessions and reports for the ministers and various components of the Ninth District. South Birmingham Huntsville Bessemer Presiding Elder, the Reverend Oliver O. Allen, Jr., delivered a powerful message on Thursday evening that was referenced throughout the remainder of the conference. There were other outstanding presentations and sermons during the conference.

The highlight for St. John was the Friday mid-day message, delivered by Pastor Patrick Clayborn. Over twenty members of St. John were present to offer support and prayers along with countless other members in Huntsville who were praying for their pastor.

Pastor Clayborn began with a soul-stirring solo, "Great is Thy Faithfulness," that set the tone for the message. The sermon was entitled "The Right Relationship," with texts from Genesis 4:3-7 and Luke 15:15-17a. He began by posing the question "What was wrong with Cain's relationship that caused his offering to be rejected?" He further stated that even if God accepts the offering, there is room for improvement.

He explained how the parable of the prodigal son helps one to see the line of demarcation. Although decisions are rejected, God is not rejecting the person, but their choices.

Pastor Clayborn continued with more parallels of the prodigal son and one's right relationship with God. Persons must come to that "moment" when they come to themselves, as the prodigal son did, and admit the relationship is broken. They must accept justice in order to receive forgiveness and mercy. They must take the step of faith as the prodigal son did when he got up and went to his father. The father saw him from afar and ran to meet him. Likewise, when persons take the step of faith, God will catch them with grace, peace, and hope.

The preacher concluded the message with the response that persons whose relationships have been made right, even though it was not deserved, should give. The parable of the lepers who were healed when Jesus told them to go show themselves to the priest and the one who returned to say "thank you" shows how to respond. The sermon was followed by much praise and apparently an indicator that those who heard the preached word had a right relationship with God and they gave Him thanks.

Other sermons and meditations during the Mid-Winter meeting include the Friday evening message by Bishop Samuel Green, of the 13th Episcopal District, and the closing meditation on Saturday by the Reverend Elijah Shofar, pastor of St. Paul, Troy.

Other business conducted included an update from the Daniel Payne Legacy Village Board of Trustees and an appeal for donations. The Pentecost Committee presented a video on the upcoming 2014 Pentecost Explosion.



April 20, 2014 Resurrection Sunday

6:00 am Sunrise Service
8:00 am Breakfast
9:00 am Easter Program
10:50 am Morning Worship

Join us for Easter Sunday Worship

"He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' " - Luke 24:6-7

Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church - 229 Church Street - Huntsville, Alabama



St. John Participates in 2014 Habitat Build

Below is the schedule for work days for this year's Habitat for Humanity Spring Build. St. John is partnering with St. Matthew, United Church of Huntsville, Aldersgate United Methodist, First Presbyterian, The Church of the Nativity, and First Christian Church.

Persons interested in serving on this ministry should report to the work site on the scheduled dates and times.

SCHEDULE FOR 2014 HABITAT HOUSE

2506 Small Brook Circle

DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY
April 1, 3, 5	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Clean and level crawl space, start floor system
April 8, 10, 12	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Finish floor system, build walls in warehouse
April 15, 17, 19	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Erect walls and trusses.
April 22, 24, 26	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Apply sheathing to walls, deck roof, install windows, ext. doors, hurricane clips, and deadwood
April 29, May 1, 3	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Install porch beams, barge rafters, fascia, attic access, electrical rough-in, (plumbing, HVAC rough-in by others)
May 6, 8, 10	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Install wall insulation, start vinyl siding, (sheetrock by sub)
May 13, 15, 17	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Paint walls, continue vinyl siding, install shutters
May 20, 22, 24	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Clean floors and windows, install vinyl tile, landscape
May 27, 29, 31	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Install and paint interior doors and trim, install cabinets, plumbing and electrical fixtures
June 3, 5, 7	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Install closet hardware, window blinds, bathroom accessories
June 10, 12, 14	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Catch up work, touch up paint, clean and wax floors
June 17, 19, 21	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Work punch list, DEDICATION CEREMONY



Regular working hours are from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM, with a break for lunch around noon.

Lunches are provided on Saturdays only. Bring carpentry tools, a utility knife, gloves if you have them. St. John will provide lunch on May 24th.

St. John AMEC will come together and meet at the site on Saturdays, May 3, 24, and 31, under the leadership of Sister Tami McGhee and Brother Eddie Whitehead.



Soup Kitchen Corner

EASTER HOSPITALITY

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

We praise God for the recognition that the Soup Kitchen Ministry, a part of the Kitchen Ministry of St. John, received from WHNT-Channel 19 TV News in their PAY IT FORWARD segment that aired on March 31, 2014. (<http://whnt.com/2014/03/31/st-john-a-m-e-church-providing-soup-and-compassion/>)

The church received the 'Pay It Forward' gift of \$319.00 to support the work of compassionate care in feeding the hungry in the Huntsville community. What a generous blessing!

As we approach the blessed Easter season we know the greatest gift of all came in Christ. Jesus came to feed us and give us all we need; our mission is to show the same hospitality to others.

Each day we can be thankful for hospitable acts of others: donations, time, sharing soup, etc. As a response to God's love coming to us through them, we can look for ways to show "hospitality and welcome" to each one we encounter in our "soup kitchen".



Newsletter Ministry Assessment

The AMEN Staff will be conducting an assessment of the newsletter ministry. The survey will be e-mailed to persons on the St. John e-mail list and/or the AMEN e-mail list. Please respond to this short survey as soon as possible after it is received.

Thank you for your support of this ministry for over seventeen years.

Women's Ministry Tidbit

AN EASTER PRAYER

O God of Easter,
God of resurrection power,
Bring heavenly life to our
earthbound souls;
Thou, who didst call Lazarus forth
from his tomb.
Call us forth from dead works,
and let our hearts be aglow
with immortal glory and power.
Call us out of the tomb of hollow profession,
of cold creeds, and wordy ritual.
And let Thy life abundant permeate and
saturate our stagnant souls,
Bringing joy where there is heaviness of heart,
Bring peace where there is confusion;
Bring love where there is bitterness;
And may we henceforth live in
the glorious glow of The Life
which that first Easter poured
forth upon a world of darkness.
And may we always be mindful of the
source of this life-giving power.
And come to Thee regularly to be refilled,
In the Savior's name. Amen

- Author Unknown



Remembering Aunt Ada

*Some glad morning when this life is over
I'll fly away
To a home of God's celestial shore,
I'll fly away.*



Early on Saturday morning, March 15, 2014, Aunt Ada 'flew away' to be with the Lord. St. John praises God for the wonderful 98 years that God allowed Mrs. Ada Harris Houston ('Aunt Ada') to live and serve in the Huntsville community, and faithfully serve at St. John for over 70 years. In her latter years, Mrs. Houston had no living biological relatives; however, she claimed the entire membership of St. John as her family. The congregation

responded and claimed her as Aunt Ada. She served faithfully as a Trustee, usher (president for many years), member of the Pastor's Aid Board (former president), food service, and in many other ministries of the church.

Aunt Ada was blessed with a gift of selling and recruiting. She excelled in her career as an insurance agent for Atlanta Life Insurance and used those skills to lead many fund raising endeavors at St. John. Aunt Ada had "long arms." She could reach out to every member, in her special way, to encourage them to serve the church. When Aunt Ada asked members to purchase rolls, cakes, ADC tickets, NAACP membership, etc., the answer was "yes ma'am". She not only recruited members to serve and give, but was the first to give and to ask "What can I do?"

Mrs. Houston's service extended beyond the walls of St. John. She was known throughout the community for her work with the NAACP and ADC. She had a wall of plaques in her family room where many of her awards were displayed. Many were blessed by their visits to her home and were encouraged to serve faithfully because of her witness.

Pastor Clayborn centered Aunt Ada's eulogy on her baking skills as he labeled her "The Cake Lady" and made contrasts and likenesses to the widow in 2 Kings 17 who made cakes

(Continued on page 8)



TRUSTEE CORNER

What are the Responsibilities of Trustees?

Duties of Trustees (*AME Discipline 2012*, pg. 66)

1. The Trustees shall manage all the temporal concerns of the church not otherwise provided for and shall have a treasurer elected by the Board.
2. They shall guard for the Connection all real estate, churches, parsonages, schools and any other property obtained by the local church.
3. They shall make improvements upon the property or real estate when authorized to do so by majority of the legal members of the church.
4. They shall secure, by purchase or hire, a house for the pastor's family and also comfortably furnish it. In lieu of this arrangement, the pastor may be given a housing allowance.
5. They shall pay the moving expense of the pastor and family from their previous assignment.

Never Miss Another Meeting or Rehearsal

Did you know that your CHURCH BULLETIN contains a weekly calendar of the upcoming meetings and events, a calendar of members' birthdays and anniversaries, plus so much more! Please KEEP AND USE THIS VALUABLE RESOURCE! :)

~The Office Staff

Remembering Aunt Ada

(Continued from page 7)

for Elijah, her son and herself. She baked cakes, rolls, and meals for her church, friends, and anyone in need from "Ada's Kitchen". Even in her 90s she prepared meals on New Year's Day to send to the sick and shut-in and those in need.

St. John cannot remember Aunt Ada without taking about her hats. She was "The Hat Lady of St. John." Every Sunday she was dressed in matching hat, suit, purse, shoes. As Aunt Ada read the book *Crowns*, she noted, rightfully so, that she could relate to each of the ladies in the book.

St. John, celebrate the life of Aunt Ada by serving God and community in a way that would make Aunt Ada proud. Remember to have the spirit of love that she had as she ended conversations and signed cards, "Love Ya."

Online Giving Is Easy

1. Use your PayPal account to send directly to St. John at e-mail address stjohnameh@aol.com. Transfer from your banking account and specify donate/friends and family. THIS IS THE PREFERRED METHOD OF ONLINE GIVING.
2. Simply go to the St. John AMEC website www.stjohnameh-bay.org then click on Online Giving. Follow the instructions

New Clothes, New Life

By Paulette Bargon

Easter has always been my favorite holiday. When my sister and I were children we each received two new dresses. One dress would be for church and the other dress for after church. I loved the shiny new Mary Jane shoes. On Saturday we went to Mrs. Wheeler's to get our hair pressed and curled, Shirley Temple style.

On Easter Sunday, we did not go to children's church, instead all the kids went to the adult church. We would each stand and recite the scripture that was given to each of us to memorize. Then we would all parade around the church to show off our new clothes. After church we got our Easter baskets.

I kind of knew what Easter was all about; Jesus died on the cross because people were bad and Jesus' dad brought Him back to life. And new clothes.

As I got older, I realized that Easter was not about new clothes, it was about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. On Friday, He died for our sins. Early on Sunday morning when Mary Magdalene and Mary went to Jesus tomb, a violent earthquake had occurred because an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and rolled the stone aside and sat on it. The angel spoke to them, "Don't be afraid!" he said, "I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He isn't here. He has been raised from the dead." Matthew 28:1-5.

Death is not the end. Rather, it is the beginning as God intended. Jesus is alive! He lives for us. He will continuously be alive in our hearts. I will always believe that.

Summer Retreats Planned

The Women's Retreat is set for June 20 - June 21, 2014. Reservations may be made to the Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa in Florence, Alabama by calling 1-800-593-6450. Discounted rates from the hotel will be \$129 per night. There are also reduced room rates available through AEA or the retirement system for teachers and/or government workers. The cutoff date for these reduced rates is May 20, 2014. The retreat registration fee is \$70 (this includes all meals). Your participation is needed to make this retreat a success! We look forward to seeing you there!

The Sons of Allen will hold its Annual Men's Retreat July 11-12, 2014 in Guntersville, Alabama. Please contact Brother Theodore Tyson, Brother Carl Lewis, or Brother Justin L. York for more information about this year's retreat. Please RSVP (whether you will stay overnight or not) with the Sons of Allen by June 10, 2014.

Please let Justin York, SOA Secretary, know if you have any questions or need anything further. You may also contact the church office.



First Church Visits on Fifth Sunday

By Bridget J. Floyd



On Sunday, March 30th, St. John was blessed with a guest choir at the 10 a.m. (combined) worship service. The Inspirational Choir of First Seventh-Day Adventist Church (First Church), directed by Mr. Cleveland Wilson, lived up to its name with melodious and moving selections throughout the service. They set the tone as congregants entered the church to the beautiful sounds of songs which facilitated contemplation and meditation. The quality as well as the selections chosen provided the quintessential experience in musical worship.

When combined with Pastor Clayborn's sermon entitled, "The Battle for Healing", from his *Journey of Faith* series, it was a most outstanding worship experience.

The scriptural reading was Matthew 15: 21-28 and Luke 18: 35-43 with emphasis on verse 22 from Matthew and verse 37 from Luke for the sermon. Pastor Clayborn emphasized "being a good steward over our health". Noting that one's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the emphasis was on physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Some ways of doing this were highlighted, including having reciprocal relationships (not all giving or receiving) which should be natural or a good fit, rather than forced. Maintaining a healthy spirit involves focusing on choices made inside and outside of the church setting (there should be consistency in behavior/choices). Serving others can be rewarding and even if tiring at times, Pastor Clayborn noted the difference between "good tired" and "bad tired". He indicated that "God gave us health...it is our duty to take care of it", understanding that one cannot avoid illness totally.

Dr. Clayborn referred to the reactions of the persons healed in the scriptural references and encouraged those listening to emulate them. In both instances the man and woman began shouting in response to healing. So, the first step is to "Break the Silence". He indicated the man and woman were aware that healing was available and did not suffer in silence. Giving praise and thanks once the healing occurs, leads to the second suggestion, "Keep breaking the silence. That is, 'keep believing, serving, going to therapy, getting treated, praying, praising'". The third suggestion was "Get Closer to Jesus". In the text, the woman knelt before/worshipped Jesus. Pastor Clayborn emphasized that the relationship with Jesus is more important than whether or not healing occurs or prayers are answered ("yes"). That is, "when you don't get what you ask for, *you get what you need...the will of God in your life*". It may not come in the way or the time that one asked or expected.

The worship in song, liturgical dance, and sermon were spiritually intermingled in a way that could only inspire and offer hope for a relationship with God, as well as connecting with those on earth in a way that will promote spiritual health as well as physical and emotional health for God's temple.

It is hoped that "First Church" will visit St. John again. St. John is appreciative of having the directing talents of Mr. Wilson with St. John's Gospel Choir. The congregation responded to the visiting choir with such enthusiasm and appreciation as the name "Inspirational Choir" truly fit.



Ninth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church



Pentecost Explosion

"OVERFLOW" Catch the Fire



**Bishop
Paul S. Morton**

*Parish Pastor
St. George Baptist Church
Lynchburg, Virginia
Pastor Emeritus
St. John's Church
New York, NY*



**Earnest
Pugh**

International Recording Artist



**Bishop
James L. Davis**

African Methodist Episcopal Church



**Bishop
Dennis V. Proctor**

*African Methodist Episcopal
Zion Church
Co-Sponsors*



**Bishop
Teresa E. Soriano**

*Christian Methodist
Episcopal Church
Co-Sponsors*

**Sunday,
June 8, 2014
2:00pm**

**Alabama State University
Hornet Stadium
Montgomery, Alabama**



Please contact us at
1040 19th Street, North
Birmingham, AL 35203

205 326 4499
or visit www.ninthamec.org

James L. Davis, Servant Bishop
Arells B. Davis, WMS Supervisor

FAQs for Pentecost

- Who?:** 24,000 persons from the AME, AMEZ, and CME churches and from throughout the community.
- What?:** Pentecost Explosion 2014
Bishop Paul S. Morton will be the guest preacher. Bishop Morton is currently Senior pastor of Changing A Generation Full Gospel Baptist Church and Co-Pastor of Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church. He is also a recording artist, author and the founding and presiding bishop of the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship.
Earnest Pugh will be the guest artist. Mr. Pugh is known for selections such as "Rain on Us," "The Great I Am," and "I Need Your Glory."
- WHERE?:** Alabama State University, Montgomery, Alabama
- WHEN?:** Sunday, June 8, 2014, 2:00 p.m.
St. John worship will be held on Friday, June 6.

Sign up outside of the main office or e-mail the church at stjohnameh@aol.com. Two coach buses have been chartered to transport St. John members to Montgomery.

The ticket price is \$50.00. Please contact the church office if you need more information.

You may purchase your ticket from Stewards outside the main office each Sunday or by contacting the church office.

Volunteers are needed for Kids Zone, Choir, Dancers, Ushers (Sons of Allen), and greeters (Koinonias).

Choir rehearsals— May 2 at 3:00 pm, May 15, 6:30-8:30, May 17 at 3:00 pm, May 31 at Mt Zion AME Zion Montgomery and ASU stadium on June 7.

Everyone is asked to wear red. Please contact Nedra McDaniel for availability of Ninth District shirts.

The Spiritual Preparation plan is outlined on page 12. Please pray for the Lord to bless in a mighty way.

Visit the Ninth District website at ninthamec.org to stay on current information about the Pentecost Explosion.



And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' TEACHING and to FELLOWSHIP, to the BREAKING OF BREAD and to PRAYER."
Acts 2:42

Preparing Spiritually for Pentecost 2014

A Spiritual Preparation Guide has been prepared to be used by churches in the Ninth District during this six-week period from Monday, April 21 until Saturday, June 7. A summary of that information is provided below. The full guide is available on the Ninth District website, ninthamec.org

The theme for Pentecost 2014 is, "Overflow: Catch the Fire" taken from John 7:31-39 (NCV) and Acts 2:46-47 (AMP). As part of the spiritual preparation for Pentecost, members who are physically and medically able are asked to join in a 3-meal per day Daniel Fast from April 21-May 28. The fast will consist of eating only vegetables and fruits, and drinking only water and 100% pure fruit/vegetable juices. Please check with your physician prior to beginning this fast. By utilizing the theme, the following prayer themes and scriptures are suggested.

Week of April 20, 2014: Pray for Bishops Davis, Proctor, and Snorton
John 7:31-32, John 7:12

Week of April 27, 2014: Pray for Special Guest Bishop Morton, Earnest Pugh and Dr. Daniel Cason
John 7:33-34

Week of May 4, 2014: Pray for Alabama State University.
John 7:35-36

Week of May 11, 2014: Pray for the community surrounding Alabama State University
John 7:37

Week of May 18, 2014: Pray for the Evangelism Committee, the un-churched, and all AME's, AME Zion's and CME's participating in Pentecost 2014.
John 7:37-39, also reference Gen. 1:2; 6:3; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps. 51:11; 139:7; Ezk. 3:24, 27; Hag. 2:5

From May 29-June 4, daily prayers will be offered. A prayer line has been established for 7:00 a.m. daily prayer: Call in # 712-432-1212; Access Code: 332722131#. For those who are physically and medically able, are to join in a 1-meal per day Daniel Fast. The meal should consist of only vegetables and fruits, and drinking only water and 100% pure fruit/vegetable juices.

The suggested Bible readings and fasting information for the remainder of the preparation period will be printed in next month's issue of the AMEN.

Managing Your Blood Pressure

By Rosemary Wells



About 65 million American adults (nearly 1 in 3) have high blood pressure. Many people have high blood pressure, also called hypertension, for years without knowing. Most of the time, there are no symptoms, but when high blood pressure goes untreated, it damages arteries and vital organs throughout the body. Having no symptoms, high blood pressure is often called the "silent killer."

High blood pressure develops over many years, and it eventually affects nearly everyone. Fortunately, high blood pressure can be easily detected. And once you know you have high blood pressure, you can work with your doctor to keep it under control.

There are two types of hypertension:

Primary (essential) hypertension. For most adults, there is no identifiable cause of high blood pressure. This type of hypertension tends to develop gradually over many years.

Secondary hypertension. Some people have high blood pressure caused by an underlying condition. This type of hypertension tends to appear suddenly and cause higher blood pressure than does primary hypertension.

Blood pressure is determined by the amount of blood your heart pumps and the amount of resistance to blood flow in your arteries. The more blood your heart pumps and the narrower your arteries, the higher your blood pressure.

The higher the pressure and the longer it goes uncontrolled, the greater the damage. Uncontrolled hypertension can lead to:

- Atherosclerosis or hardening and thickening of the arteries which can lead to heart attack or stroke
- Aneurysm, which is a weakening and bulging of blood vessels. If an aneurysm ruptures, it can be life threatening.
- Heart failure. In order to pump blood against the higher pressure in your vessels, your heart muscle thickens. Eventually the thickened muscle may have a hard time pumping enough blood to meet your body's need, which can lead to heart failure.
- Weakened and narrow blood vessels in your kidneys. This can prevent these organs from functioning normally.
- Thickened, narrowed or torn blood vessels in the eyes. This can result in vision loss.
- Metabolic syndrome. This syndrome is a cluster of disorders of your body's metabolism—including increased waist circumference, high triglycerides, low high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good," cholesterol, and high insulin levels. If you have hypertension, you're more likely to have other components of metabolic syndrome. The more components you have, the greater your risk of developing diabetes, heart disease or stroke.
- Trouble with memory or understanding. Uncontrolled hypertension may also affect your ability to think, remember and learn. Trouble with memory or understanding concepts is more common in people who have hypertension.



Blood pressure is typically recorded as two numbers, the top number (systolic) which is also the higher of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats (when the heart muscle contracts). The bottom number (diastolic), which is also the lower of the two numbers, measure the pressure in the arteries between heart beats (when the heart muscle is resting between beats and refilling with blood).

The American Heart Association's recommendation for normal blood pressure is systolic less than 120 and diastolic less than 80.

(Continued on page 17)

Church School Lesson Overview – May 2014

This month's reviews were written by Kenneth Parham.

May 4, 2014

Lesson Title: Victory over Temptation
Lesson Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:13-18; 8:3;
Psalm 91:11-12; Matthew 4:4-11
Print: Deuteronomy 8:13-18; Matthew 4:4-11
Devotional Songs: #355[], #272 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

Application: To show that when we are tempted and tested, we need to follow Jesus' example and rely on God and the Bible.

In this text, Satan's envious spirit attacked all things made perfect by God. Several biblical examples to note that support this statement follow. In Genesis, after creating man and God's declaration that all is "very good," Satan set up and successfully tempted Adam and Eve into sinning. Next, we encounter in the book of 2 Samuel, after God has described David as a man after God's own heart, again right away Satan goes after David by exposing David as a mere man with desires of the flesh. Satan's attack also came in the Book of Job where Job was described as a perfect and righteous man, Satan set out, through Job's wife, to tempt Job by indicating to Job that he should curse God and die during his period of tribulation. And finally, in this lesson, after God's declaration from heaven that Jesus is His "beloved" son and that He is most pleased, Satan set out to bring Jesus down to his level.

The reviewer's take away from this lesson is that Satan understands the power of Jesus (even in Jesus' weakened condition) and Satan wanted to see if he could do battle with Jesus (by tempting Jesus with nourishment, scripture, show of power and riches) to see if he (Satan) could get Jesus to pledge loyalty to Satan thereby breaking the redemptive bond between God and Son (mankind). The lesson indicates that Jesus was victorious and Satan departed.

May 11, 2014

Lesson Title: Jesus' Mission on Earth
Lesson Scripture: Leviticus 25:8-55; Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:14-21

Print Luke 4:14-21

Devotional Songs: #412[]; #251[]; and #243[]

Key Verse: "He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21).

Application: To show that since Jesus clearly identified His mission as Israel's Messiah, we are responsible for the way we respond to Him.

Upon reflecting on this lesson, one sees that Jesus went straight to the point of His mission on earth. Jesus knew and understood His role to spread the Good News, to proclaim freedom to the captives, to restore sight to the blind, to restore hearing to the deaf, to heal the sick – to be a servant to mankind.

The reviewer is reminded of the scripture where Moses encountered God at the burning bush and Moses asked God who should he say sent him to the people of Israel. God responded that He should tell the people of Israel that "I am that I am" had sent Moses. The reviewer also reflects upon the name and is reminded that "I am that I am" interprets the name as meaning completeness. In mathematical logic (the law of equality), I am equals I am. Using math logic, this name would indicate that God is anything and everything that a person would need both spiritually and physically. Therefore, Jesus identifying His mission on earth only makes manifest of God's words by putting them into action through a human form, Jesus, indicating that the scriptures have been fulfilled.

May 18, 2014

Lesson Title: Jesus' Teaching on the Law
Lesson Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17; Isaiah 29:13-14; Matthew 5:17-48; 15:1-20
Print: Matthew 15:1-11, 18-20
Tentative Devotional Songs: #255[]; #258 []; and #243 []

Key Verse: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:8-9).

Application: To show that we need to know, understand, and apply the Bible to our lives above any other writing or teaching.

(Continued on page 15)





Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 14)

The question of observing the Law or doing God's work has always been a controversial topic between the Jews versus Jews and/or Jews versus Gentiles during the New Testament biblical era. Today's lesson sites an example where Jesus was being examined by Jewish's clergy over the washing of hands before eating. Jesus turned the table and asked the Jewish clergy why they were allowed to break the commandments in order to keep tradition.

Jesus furthered the discussion by indicating that Jewish scripture also implies that observing tradition makes one a hypocrite meaning that the ones following tradition are only giving lip service to the Lord. He continued teaching to the crowd and His disciples that the mere act of not washing before eating does not defile the body. It is more what is fermenting in the heart and comes out with the tongue that defiles. He gave noteworthy human traits of murder, adultery, fornication, theft, and false witnessing as some typical examples.

May 25, 2014

Lesson Title: The Greatest Commandment

Lesson Scripture: Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Mark 12:28-34

Print: Mark 12:28-34

Tentative Devotional Songs: #413 ☐; 77; and #243 ☐

Key Verses: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment, And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:30-31).

Application: To show that we should accept the teaching of the Bible with the same authority and reverence given to it by Jesus.

In the opinion of the reviewer, this lesson discusses the true essence of why God set out to create mankind in His own image and likeness. The first great commandant that has been passed from generation to generation indicated that people are to love God with all their heart, soul and mind. They are to constantly give praise to God, acknowledging His greatness and to whom they belong.

If they can do this while loving their brothers,

Church School Book Club

April 2014 Discussion Date: 19 April 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Redeeming Waters; Vanessa Davis Griggs, 2011

May 2014 Discussion Date: 17 May 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Speak to My Heart, Stacy Hawkins Adams, 2008

Serena Jasper is successful, sassy, and saved. Her life is going great. Her professional advertising career has hit the fast track, her future looks promising, and her mother couldn't be more proud.

But then Mama shares a devastating secret that changes Serena's life. Feeling like her whole identity is in question, Serena decides she needs a break from everything and everyone. From Mama. And from God.

Throwing herself into her budding career and her new friendship with a handsome seminary student named Micah, Serena discovers she can no longer avoid God's voice or mama's secret. Can she come to terms with her mother's past, her relationships, and the One who was always speaking to her heart, even when she wasn't listening? Or is it too late to make amends?

*Awake, my soul and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as the matchless King
Through all eternity.*

- Matthew Bridges and Godfrey Thring

Church School Lesson

the second greatest commandment, then they would have come full circle within the divine law of pure love.

May 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:00 p.m. Steward Board Mtg. Mass Choir Rehearsal	2	3 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:00 Offical Board Mtg. 3:00 p.m. Pentecost Choir Rehearsal
4 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship AMEN Deadline	5 9:30 a.m. Fifty Plus Auxiliary 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	6 6:00 p.m. Offical Board Meeting VIP Choir Rehearsal	7 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	8 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	9	10 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. AMEN Start Meeting
11 MOTHER'S DAY 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	12	13 6:00 p.m. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	14 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	15 6:30 p.m. Area Pentecost Choir Rehearsal	16 8:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	17 9th District Church School Day 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 3:00 p.m. Pentecost Choir Rehearsal
18 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	19	20 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. BO UP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg.	21 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	22 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	23 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	24 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. WMMO Meeting
25 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	26	27 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. BO UP KITCHEN 6:30 p.m. Church School Board Meeting	28 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study LOVE FEAST	29 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	30	31 Pentecost Choir Rehearsal Montgomery, AL

St. John Welcomes New Musician



ROBERTO L. BURTON joined the St. John music department as lead musician in April. Mr. Burton has a long music career in the city of Huntsville. He is a graduate of Oakwood University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Piano Performance and is scheduled to complete a Masters of Education in K-12 Vocal/Choral & Instrumental Music Education in July 2014 from Alabama A&M University. He has served as musician for several local churches.

Mr. Burton is a producer, engineer, and music director who has worked with Dr. Wintley Phipps, Asaf Alexander Ward, Pastor Jimane Nelson, John Stoddart, Kurt Carr & The Kurt Carr Singers, John P. Kee, Take 6, Men Of Standard, Darin Atwater & Soulful Symphony, Patti LaBelle, Committed, and A Special Blend. His production company has won two Stellar Awards. His publishing company, Scubed Music Publishing BMI, is in its 15th year of existence.

Managing Blood Pressure

(Continued from page 13)

If your blood pressure is higher than normal, your doctor may take several readings over time and/or have you monitor your blood pressure at home before beginning a treatment program, such as lifestyle changes and prescription medication. Lifestyle changes may include:

- Eating healthy foods
- Decreasing the salt intake in your diet
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Increasing physical activity
- Limiting alcohol
- Quit smoking
- Managing stress

High blood pressure is not a problem that you can treat and then ignore. It is a condition you need to manage for the rest of your life.

Even if your blood pressure is normal, you should consider making lifestyle modifications to "prevent" the development of high blood pressure and improve your health!

Go Green

Get involved with Earth Day!

Every year on April 22, over a billion people in 190 countries take action for Earth Day. Earth Day 2014 will focus on the unique environmental challenges of our time. It will seek to do that through its global theme: Green Cities.

Find out how your city will observe this special day and get involved!

REMEMBER OUR MILITARY

2LT Butler, Christopher P.
TF Caesar ITF Guardian
APO. AE 09355

ABE Joseph, Daisha
230 Chevalier Field Ave.
BKS George Washington
Pensacola, FL 32508-5151

Please remember St. John's military family members by sending cards or little reminders of home. Keep them in your daily prayers.

If you know of any member of the St. John family who has a loved one deployed overseas as well as those stationed in the U.S, please contact any AMEN staff with their name and address. You may also e-mail the contact information to stjohnameh@aol.com.

Prayer Time

Every Tuesday at 8:00 am.

Conference Call Credentials
US Toll Number (530) 881-1212,
Meeting ID: 876-863-940
For smart Phone Speed Dialing:
5308811212, 876863940

If you are not able to join the call at 8:00 am, you may listen to the playback any time.
Playback Number (530) 881-1212,
Meeting Id 876-863-940
Press # to ignore any requests for reference number when calling for playback.

POTPOURRI

Pray for our Sick & Shut-ins

Susie Akin

Gwendolyn Baldwin

Jason Brown

Altonette Burks

Arthur Burks

Mildred Hereford

Evelyn Hildreth

Robert Hyder

James Jamar

Ernest Jones

Lorene Jones

Idell Merrell

Pray for our sick and shut-in.

About St. John Members

Ms. Barbara Johnson and Col. (Ret.) James O. Heyward were honored at the Annual Alabama Democratic Conference Membership Breakfast on March 22, 2014.

Ms. Johnson received the Education Award for initiating a 4 year partnership between Butler High School's 9th Grade Academy and Alabama A&M University, known as The Hill Project-Class of 2014.

Col. (Ret.) Heyward was the recipient of the Perry O. Ward, Community Service Award for his exceptional work with the Boy Scouts of North Alabama.

Congratulations Ms. Johnson and Col. Heyward!



Mariah Gullatte, pictured with Huntville Mayor Tommy Battle.

Mariah Gullatte was named the April 2014 Star 99.1-CAFY Young Citizen and received the award at the beginning of the Huntville City Council meeting on Thursday, April 10, 2014, at 6 p.m. Mariah, who was nominated by St John member Barbara Johnson, is a junior at Sparkman High School. Mariah is the daughter of Karl and Donna Gullatte and sister of Josiah. Read the full article on Mariah at <http://blog.aj.com/breaking/2014/04/caf-y-young-citizen-april-2014.html>

Congratulations Mariah!

St. John AME Church
229 Church Street
Huntsville, Alabama 35801
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(256) 534-6828 Fax

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Website: stjohnamehsv.org

The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop

Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

April 17	Maundy Thursday Service, 6:30 p.m.
April 18	Good Friday Service, 12:00 p.m., St. Philip AME, Atlanta, Georgia, The Reverend William D Watley, Pastor Pastor Clayborn, preaching
April 20	Resurrection Sunday 6:00 a.m. Sunrise Service 9:00 a.m. Easter Program 10:50 a.m. Easter Morning Worship Service
June 6, 2014	Evening Worship at St. John
June 8, 2014	Pentecost 2014
June 20-21, 2014	Women's Retreat The Reverend Agnes Lover, Guest Preacher and Workshop Facilitator The Reverend Sheryl Shipman, Guest Workshop Facilitator
July 11-12, 2014	Men's Retreat
July 21-24, 2014	Ninth District CEC and Minister's Training at Troy University

ST. JOHN A.M.E.N NEWSLETTER



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 5

May 2014

Pastor's Message

The Mothering Spirit

John 19:25-27



Pastor Patrick D. Clayburn, Ph.D.

This month we celebrate Mothers, and it is only right that we do so. Mothers sacrifice body, heart, mind, spirit, money, time, energy, opportunities, quiet, enjoyment, simple pleasures, and strength to love and care for their families – in particular, for their children. They do this in so many varied ways: praying for their families, helping with homework, attending Parent Teacher Organization meetings, taking on two and three jobs for extra income, teaching their children to be strong and healthy, regularly giving up their individual plans so their families can progress, staying up late while one child has the flu, leaving work to take another child to soccer practice, encouraging another child who failed an exam, loving yet another child who was rejected by a friend, giving wisdom to the child that asks for help, believing in and sacrificing for a child's dream, and so much more.

I realize that very few people will have an issue with this previous statement. On Mother's Day, we see the evidence. Churches are filled to capacity with families honoring their mothers. Restaurants are packed with people taking their mothers out to eat. Parks, malls, movie theatres, and other public venues are filled with numerous persons celebrating the mothers in their lives.

Yet, this day is traumatic for so many. A number of women want to be biological mothers, but they face great difficulties. Some have tried and have had no success. They have either lacked a husband with whom they could build a family, endured miscarriages, experienced failed attempts with medical help, or had no results after all of their efforts. Other women have been told by doctors that – either from their birth or after certain life circumstances – they are unable to do so. There are some women who have at least one child, with a desire for one more; but they, too, have one or more of the above difficulties. Some mothers have deceased children; and some have children who are suffering from illness, poor decisions, or life. There are those whose mothers are sick and close to death. Other persons miss their deceased mothers to such an extreme that Mother's Day becomes a day of depression and loneliness. There are certain persons who never knew their mothers. They were given up for adoption; they were abandoned; or their mothers died while they were very young. Still, there are others who had negative relationships with their mothers, and they are permanently separated from their mothers – either by death or by the choice to never be in relationship.

At the cross of Jesus, a similar trauma takes place. Mary is losing her son Jesus. In Mary's mind, Jesus was supposed to bury her instead of His death unfolding before her. Jesus sees Mary and sets up a surrogate mother-son relationship between her and John. Jesus shows us that motherhood is not ultimately dependent upon biology. Motherhood is defined by a mothering spirit! Jesus was saying that His death could not stop Mary from being a mother. His death could not kill the mothering spirit within her. This means that no life circumstance can stop the call of God on our lives. Motherhood is a calling, and if God has placed that calling on our lives, then no power on earth can stop that calling from reaching its fulfillment in us.

The mothering spirit is not bound by biology, money, status, background, connections, or the values and decisions of others. The mothering spirit is based in God's will. Jesus said his mother

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

was one who does the will of God (Matthew 12:50). Therefore, a woman does not have to physically give birth to a child to be a mother! Attending to the mothering spirit within will help many of us to come out of hurtful places.

Woman behold your child...

For those who have never had children, the mothering spirit will lead some of them to adopt a child or children. The mothering spirit will guide others to take care (or assist in care) of someone else's child. Still, a number of them will find the mothering spirit birthing another life form into their lives for care and nurture: a pet, a plant, a business, a friendship, a dream, or a ministry.

Woman behold your child...

For those mothers who have lost children or cannot have more children, the mothering spirit will call them into nurturing relationships with other people. For those mothers with suffering children, the mothering spirit will give them the endurance to continue standing with those children.

Child behold your mother...

For those persons who never knew their mothers, the mothering spirit will draw them to one with a heart to care for them. For those persons who desperately miss their deceased mothers, the mothering spirit will help them find ways to honor their mothers' memories and will bring persons in their lives to provide healing for their souls.

Child behold your mother...

For those persons with adverse relationships with their mothers, the mothering spirit will lead them back to their mothers if the relationship can be mended. In cases where the relationship is irreparable, the mothering spirit will show those persons how to grieve, let go of the pain, and move forward in their lives. The mothering spirit will establish within them that what they experienced was not true motherhood and that real motherhood is grounded in the love of God. The mothering spirit will cause them to be open in time to one with a heart to give them motherly support and adoration.

If any of you are going through a stressful Mother's Day, I pray that the mothering spirit will cover you in whatever area you need. I pray for healing of your heart, deliverance of your spirit, peace in your mind, joy in your path, love in your relationships, and wisdom in your decisions. I pray that your grief be short-lived and that you rebound in a divine way. I pray that your life be filled and guided by the presence of the mothering spirit.

How can this kind of prayer be effective? What is this mothering spirit?

The mothering spirit is the voice of God that calls, leads, and binds mother to child.

***Woman, behold your child. Child, behold your mother.
Have a blessed Mother's Day!***



St. John A.M.E. Church 129th Anniversary Reflection

By Darrell Ezell

Editor's Note: This article is a reprint of the anniversary reflection that was written by Darrell Ezell, Ph.D. for the 129th church anniversary celebration on Sunday, April 13, 2014.

O' Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; his mercy endures forever!

Religion and higher-education are two narratives that are inextricably linked in the African American community. Our beloved St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1885 with the aid of Alabama A&M University founder, Dr. William Hooper Council. Long before W.E.B. DuBois published the *Souls of Black Foks*¹ or Booker T. Washington challenged African Americans to "cast down their buckets,"² the American statesman, Frederick Douglass lifted Dr. Council in complement as "a beacon of hope to the people in the South."³ "This great orator, William Hooper Council, a slave child brought to North Alabama from North Carolina through the slave trade, began educating the Negro in the South a few years after the American Civil War."⁴

Council, a self-made man, with only the bare educational necessities, taught himself to read and write the classical languages: Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. To become an ordained elder in the AME Church, he taught himself theology which enabled him to pass the required examination. In addition, he taught himself law and passed the Alabama Bar exam on his first attempt.⁵ Out of a great calling to educate our community, Alabama A&M University was first erected in downtown Huntsville, Alabama in 1875. Compelled to build a house of worship, the first church services for St. John AME Church were held in a barbershop on the corner of Miller and West Holmes Street.

In 1900, the first church building was erected on Church Street, adjacent to the old church site, which stood until 1971. Twenty years after the completion of the building, the mortgage on the church was burned in 1920 under the leadership of Reverend Patterson. In addition to Dr. Council and Reverend Patterson, we give thanks for the legacy of all ministers who have served St. John AME Church: Reverends: Shelton, Goodlow, Williams, Todd, Brooks, Newell, Evans, Hill, Brice, Douglas, Cook, Thompson, Scott, Oliver, Woods, Lamar, White, Hughes, Howard, Stone, Dennis, Fox, Hereford, McCall, and our present pastor, Dr. Patrick Dewitt Clayborn.

The stone that the builder refused, shall be the chief cornerstone!

One hundred twenty-nine (129) years later, we stand at 229 Church Street. Being founded by freed slaves, there is plenty of work to do. It is therefore essential that we embrace a theology of liberation to tackle the issues that confront our people today. In honoring the legacy of St. John AME Church, we shall not ignore the powerlessness of the black community and the role our dear St. John must play in shaping the advancement of those lives.

The affirmation of greatness in this church comes from the whole experience of being free and

(Continued on page 12)

¹See W.H. Council, *Lamp of Wisdom or Race History Illuminated* (Nashville: Hiley Press, 1898) Top of Form; William Hooper Council, *The Negro and the South: His work and Progress* (Normal: Alabama A&M Press, 1897); See also, Joseph Fanning Drake, *From Slavery's Chain to Teacher's Chair a Pageant Portraying the life and work of the illustrious William Hooper Council* (Microfilm); Richard D. Morrison, *History of Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University* (Huntsville: Liberal Arts Press, 1994).

²W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Greenwich: Fawcett Publications, 1961).

³Booker T. Washington, "Atlanta Exposition Address, September 18, 1895," *The Booker T. Washington Papers*, ed. Louis R. Harlan et al, vol. 3 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), pp. 584-87.

⁴See Eddie E. Davis II, *William Hooper Council: The Greatest Negro the Race Ever Produced* (Huntsville: Presh4world Publishing, 2013), 120. Frederick Douglass wrote of Council in a notable endorsement, "I take pleasure in commending Mr. W.H. Council, and his work, to the good will and support of all. I have the fullest confidence in him," 120.

⁵*Ibid.*, i.

⁶*Ibid.*, xiii.

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Observed

Maundy Thursday Service at St. John



The spirit of Holy Week Revival continued on Maundy Thursday as worshippers gathered at the church to commemorate 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. The meal and/or the washing of feet are used as an act of remembrance. Maundy Thursday is observed during Holy Week on the Thursday before Easter. It is usually a solemn occasion, *marked by the shadow of Jesus' betrayal.*

The St. John Maundy Thursday service continued the revival theme of Praise, Prayer and Worship. The Invocation was offered by the Reverend Meriam Garrett and scripture was read by the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn from Luke 22:14-20 and John 13:1-17, 31-35. Praise and Worship was led by an ensemble consisting of Reginald Pearson, Janette Smith, Shay York, and Christina Sanders. They ministered in songs of worship that included "You've Been So Faithful," "I've Been Changed," and "Don't Give Up on God."

Worshippers gathered in groups of two to offer prayers for the concerns of one another. This prayer time was followed by communion. During the Passover meal, Luke 22:19-20 records that Jesus took bread and wine, blessed it, broke the bread in pieces, gave it to His disciples. Afterwards He shared the cup of wine. Likewise, the Maundy Thursday service included a special communion service. Each person was served individually by the pastor. As each individual came to the altar, they were given a piece of home-baked unleavened bread which they dipped in the chalice and then ate. This was indeed a sacred moment of worship and remembrance.

The Benediction was offered and members left to continue in Holy Week worship of Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday.

Good Friday Services at Saint Philip

Good Friday, the Friday before Resurrection Sunday, is the commemoration of the Lord's suffering and death on Calvary's cross. Many Christians observe this day with a special worship service that include seven (7) sermons on the seven (7) last sayings of Jesus Christ on the cross. Traditionally, the service is held from noon until three o'clock in the afternoon, the time of Jesus' crucifixion.



This year a group of St. John members journeyed to Saint Philip AME Church in Atlanta, Georgia to worship with them in their "Seven Last Words" service and to support Pastor Clayborn as he preached during this service for the third consecutive year. Many who were not able to be present physically, watched the live streaming of the service. Dr. William D. Watley is the pastor of Saint Philip.

Pastor Clayborn preached the first word, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." The text was Luke 23:32-37, 44-45. His message was entitled "Facing the Darkness." He noted that Jesus was able to face the darkness with a simple profound statement "Father forgive them." Pastor Clayborn used Jesus' example of facing darkness to provide points on how believers can face darkness with the same grace that Jesus did. Pray, like the prayer Jesus prayed in the garden. Be radical as Jesus' prayer for forgiveness "calls for justice with compassion." Be persistent. Jesus spoke in the imperfect tense meaning He kept saying "Father forgive them." Pastor Clayborn brought this message with all the fervor and passion that he does each Sunday morning. What a way to start a series of sermons!

(Continued on page 12)

Reverend Akinbinu Returns to Inspire St. John for Holy Week Revival

By Bridget J. Floyd



The Reverend Bankole Akinbinu, pastor of Baptist Grove Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, returned this year as the evangelist for Holy Week Revival. The dates were Monday, April 14th through Wednesday, April 16th. The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn led the order of worship. Guests provided music that augmented the blessing of messages by the Reverend Akinbinu. Monday featured the Voices of Triumph of Oakwood University. Tuesday featured Alabama A & M University Gospel Choir, and on Wednesday Jamel Strong and Message gave musical selections. The revival scripture read each night was Habakkuk 2:1-4. On Monday and Wednesday nights the St. John Dance Ministry spiritually enhanced the service. Pastor Clayborn introduced the evangelist each night.

Reverend Akinbinu rose to the occasion of interpreting scripture and reviving those privileged to be present each night. On Monday night Reverend Akinbinu preached on the topic "Prayed Up or Stressed Out" from the text Philippians 4:6-7. He began by asking attendees to assess their stress levels upon entering the sanctuary that evening and noted that stress causes more stress and is a "silent killer" that can lead to medical conditions and listed various sources of stress. In quoting Paul ("Do not worry about anything"), he indicated this could cause Paul to be labeled "naïve." The key to not worrying according to Reverend Akinbinu is to realize that the problems are real but one's God is real. Worry suggests that all options have been exhausted, but with a "real God" and the use of *prayer* "in the middle of worry" there is hope. It is important to know to whom one is praying and to always remember to *pray about it*. Secondly, *supplication* comes from the recognition that there is a lack or need and one should pray to God so that that void may be filled. The next important issue is to *request*, that is, "come to God and say 'please'...throw yourself on the altar and say 'please.'" He highlighted the *manner* in which one prays is key; that is "supplication and thanksgiving." He cautioned against letting "your need cause you to forget the many blessings God has already given" and gave a litany of reasons to be thankful which elicited praise and worship amongst those listening that night. Reverend Akinbinu stated that in the midst of difficulty/stress, it is important to note that "God set up an army around my heart and mind to do battle around me" and to remember that "God gives us peace and has peace that blocks attacks waged against you", even if one is at one's lowest ebb and must "cry out" to God.

On Tuesday, Reverend Akinbinu preached on the topic "Remember the Stones" from Joshua 4: 1-9; 19-24. This significant scripture on the importance of remembering milestones/history was addressed in an outstanding way. He reflected on Moses "wistfully" looking upon the promise but not allowed to step foot in Canaan. Yet, Moses dutifully mentored Joshua as God directed, noting that as long as they remained faithful God would continue to bless them. The challenge was to not have "amnesia" and to "remember God when you come into better days/the Promised Land." The Reverend Akinbinu noted the "first command was that the priests were to carry the Ark of the Covenant...the presence of God going before them would allow them to cross over to dry land." Joshua also "had twelve stones carried from the midst of the dry ground of the Jordan River through the power of God." The second command was to carry the twelve stones in order to have a "perpetual connection to their faith." They were encouraged to "never forget" this mile-

(Continued on page 6)

Reverend Akinbinu Returns to Inspire St. John for Holy Week Revival

By Bridget J. Floyd



(Continued from page 5)

stone, "you are what you are by the Grace of God." He noted that believers have their own stones given to them by God and shared historic deliverance such as slavery ending, the civil rights movement, and many others. This dynamic preacher emphasized the significance of remembering knowing that "if the Lord has done it before...my God will make a way somehow!!!" He indicated the stones "provide a *generational bridge between the young and the old.*" In the text, the stones were to be a point of connection "when your children ask..." Modern examples given by Reverend Akinbinu included "educate your children about what it means to be Black" and dispelled a litany of stereotypes and cited African American historical icons upon which to model for a wide range of professions /vocations. He emphatically added, "BUT BE SURE TO

TELL THEM WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN."

The final night's focus was "Prayer Push Ups" from the text Colossians 4: 12. The Reverend Akinbinu began by citing the example of "pushing the limits of endurance" and the benefit of a health and fitness regimen. He noted in the text that this man had assistance/spotter's standing by to lift the weight off if he could not. The preacher added that "Christian growth/development also does not come without strain. There are no shortcuts to serving the Lord." One must carry a cross even if it seems too heavy to bear... "spiritual strain...the weight of trials and temptation." He indicated "there will be times in your life when you feel like giving up, the weight seems too heavy. God gives other believers to assist, "spot for us," and in turn believers are to reciprocate and "spot for others." He indicated "you cannot grow in faith if you isolate...you need other people to be what God wants you to be."

It was noted that in the text, despite being in prison, Paul was using his time struggling for the Colossians via prayer, and that intercessory prayer is the way that believers "push and are pushed up." The Reverend Akinbinu indicated "we should not be selfish in bringing just your own concerns to Him in prayer." He indicated that it is "not natural to pray for others when you are in the midst of your own issues" and referred to the example in the text of praying for others while behind prison walls. He described how Jesus prayed for others before himself and noted that one day "we will be like Jesus." According to the Reverend Akinbinu, "God wants you to pray targeted/specific prayers with your strategic knowledge." He indicated that "one day all tears shall be wiped from our eyes" and he used the metaphor of a building under construction which initially "doesn't look like the picture," but that means "God isn't through with the person yet. We must be patient with each other." He encouraged perseverance in terms of "keep pushing when it seems like your prayers are not being answered...seem like they are rejected. He stated that "PRAYER STILL WORKS."

The Benediction for the revival was given on Wednesday night. The Reverend Akinbinu gave an outstanding revival and it was well received when Pastor Clayborn announced the evangelist for revival next year: the Reverend Akinbinu. St. John was blessed with, as Pastor Clayborn indicated the first night, a much needed revival.

More pictures from Holy Week Revival and Easter will be posted on the St. John website.

The Beauty of a Mother's Love

By Tawanda Butrd



When we think of "a mother's love", it is simply an amazing bond that a mother has between herself and her children. The bond begins the very moment the expectant mother determines she is pregnant. As soon as her child is delivered, it is an indescribable feeling that is very hard to understand. When the child is born, a mother is also born.

So, what makes a woman a good mother? There are several answers to this question. Yet, there are so many qualities that a mother should possess. The beauty of being a mother encompasses the following:

A good mother is one who cares for her newborn and wakes up every three hours without hesitation to ensure her child is fed, yet she's tired and sleep deprived.

A good mother is one who witnesses her problematic child being taken away to jail, knowing they are a menace to society. As a mother, she sees the good only she could see and no one could fathom.

A good mother is one who works a full time job during the day, and another job at night. She works several jobs to make sure her kids have food on the table, clothes on their backs, and shelter for protection. It is no concern to her that she needs rest because a good mother makes many sacrifices for her kids.

A good mother is one who will discipline her kids when they are wrong, while making them understand right from wrong. She can become so angry with her child and still utter the words, "I Love You."

A good mother is one who will be the only one standing and clapping, giving her child a standing ovation after a performance.

A good mother is one who will pray all night long after she has found out her child has been called upon for overseas duty. She remains on bended knees praying feverishly that her child will be kept safe from harm and danger.

A good mother is one who will stay up late after getting home from work, to bake her child a birthday cake. She ensures her child has a special day to remember and celebrate.

A good mother is one who instills Christian values in her child and constantly reminds that child of the bible verse found in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Being a mother is one of the greatest gifts a woman can receive. It is indeed a blessing from God. There are many precious things that God has bestowed on us; however, a Mother is one of the unique gifts of God. She is the embodiment of sacrifice and love.

*Who fed me from her gentle breast
And hushed me in her arms to rest
And on my cheek sweet kisses pressed
My Mother*

*Who ran to help me when I fell
And would some pretty story tell
Or kiss the place to make it well
My Mother*

- Ann Taylor



St. John Participates in 2014 Habitat Build

Below is the schedule for work days for this year's Habitat for Humanity Spring Build. St. John is partnering with St. Matthew, United Church of Huntsville, Aldersgate United Methodist, First Presbyterian, The Church of the Nativity, and First Christian Church.

Persons interested in serving on this ministry should report to the work site on the scheduled dates and times. The build began onsite on April 1 and will continue through June 21.

SCHEDULE FOR 2014 HABITAT HOUSE

2506 Small Brook Circle

DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY
May 13,15,17	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Install exterior doors, barge rafters, facial attic access, start vinyl siding, electrical rough-in, (plumbing, HVAC rough-in by others)
May 20,22,24	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Continue vinyl siding, Install wall insulation, (sheetrock by sub) Polyethylene in crawl space.
May 27,29,31	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Paint walls, install shutters, install underlayment
June 3,5,7	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Clean floors and windows, install vinyl tile, landscape
June 10,12,14	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Install and paint interior doors and trim, install cabinets, and electrical fixtures
June 17, 19, 21	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Install closet hardware, window blinds, bathroom accessories
June 24,26, 28	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Catch up work, touch up paint, clean and wax floors
July 1,3,5	Tues, Thurs, Sat	Work punch list, DEDICATION CEREMONY

Regular working hours are from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM, with a break for lunch around noon.

Lunches are provided on Saturdays only. Bring carpentry tools, a utility knife, gloves if you have them. St. John will provide lunch on May 24th.

St. John AMEC will come together and meet at the site on Saturdays, May 24, and 31, under the leadership of Sister Tami McGhee and Brother Eddie Whitehead. Members are also encouraged to volunteer on any of the dates listed above.

There is Still Time to Register for the Summer Retreats

The Women's Retreat is set for June 20 - June 21, 2014. Reservations may be made to the Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa in Florence, Alabama by calling 1-800-593-6450. Discounted rates from the hotel will be \$129 per night. There are also reduced room rates available through AEA or the retirement system for teachers and/or government workers. The cutoff date for these reduced rates is May 20, 2014. The retreat registration fee is \$70 (this includes all meals). Your participation is needed to make this retreat a success! We look forward to seeing you there!

The Sons of Allen will hold its Annual Men's Retreat July 11-12, 2014 in Guntersville, Alabama. Please contact Brother Theodore Tyson, Brother Carl Lewis, or Brother Justin L. York for more information about this year's retreat. Please RSVP (whether you will stay overnight or not) with the Sons of Allen by June 10, 2014. Please let Justin York, SOA Secretary, know if you have any questions or need anything further. You may also contact the church office.



He Paid It All Jesus the Great I Am

By Cheryl Anderson

The Easter program followed Sunrise Service this year and began at 9:00 am. Daniel Haygood led the program with a scripture reading taken from John 11:25-26, followed by a powerful "Love" medley sung by the St. John AMEC Worship Ensemble comprised of Christina Sanders, Deidre Walton, Jakeyah Williams and Janette Smith.

Mrs. Yvette Cooper-Clark, as curator of the Journey of Faith Museum, led attendees on a walk through the life of Jesus Christ.

Michael Clark and Anthony Harbin were the stars of this year's play titled the "M&M Story" as they explained that Jesus is the Great I AM with assistance from De'Shaun Harden as The Messiah; Callynn Williams as The Bread of Life; Zariah York as The Eternal One; Anthony Mack as The Light of the World; Curtis Mayes as The Gate; David Wells as The Good Shepherd; Josiah Gullatte as The Son of God; Wallace Parham as The Resurrection and the Life; Robin Sanderson as The Teacher and Lord; Kobe Jenkins as The Way, the Truth, and the Life; Alicia Brownlow as The True Vine; and Mariah Gullatte as The Alpha and Omega.



Praise team members. (left to right)
Christina, Deidre, Shay and Janette



Recitations were given by Tyler Williams, Caylon Mayes, Jared Burns, Jordan Patterson, Janise Williams, Blake Johnson, Reagan Lawson, Isiah Mayes, Jasmyne Rochelle, Channing Ransom, Breyana Rochelle, Darrien Lott, Patrick Clayborn II, Cambridge Wilson, Kathryn Buckham-White, Jessica Harbin, Carter Rankin, Camden Rankin, Kendall Lawson, Kennedy Rankin-Crutchner, Chloe Wilson, Cayden Wilson, and Zharla York.

McLeod Buckham-White expressed himself through song with a heartfelt rendition of "The Light

(Continued on page 10)

He Paid It All Jesus the Great I Am

By Cheryl Anderson

(Continued from page 9)

of The World" and Kaitlyn McClung recited an original spoken word piece titled "The Rain."



The St. John Dance Ministry, led by Dr. Jennifer Patterson, closed the program with an amazing human video performed to "Cornerstone" by Hillsong. Other dancers were Wallace Parham, Xavier Rembert, Janette Smith, Mariah Gullatte and Kaitlyn McClung.

Other program participants included Jayla Mack as sign holder and Xavier Rembert and Ashley Lewis assisted with the set and props.

The program was led by Drama Ministry leads Donna Gullatte and Cheryl Anderson with joint efforts from the media ministry, Abreeotta Williams, Monica Dillihunt and Erica Harbin. Special thanks to all the parents and everyone who helped with the program this year. An extra special thanks to the Reverend Patrick and the Reverend Sheri Clayborn for their great leadership.



Soup Kitchen Corner

SERVICE

"The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many."
Mark 10:45

St. John's Soup Kitchen volunteers are inspired by God's love and motivated by faith to try to serve others in meaningful, helpful ways. Love encourages us to do the right thing based on God's example. Faith motivates us to step beyond our comfort zone and to act from the conviction that with God all things are possible. Last month's Soup Kitchen included encouraging a mother and son and listening to their problems, and an outreach with intercessory prayer for an ill visitor.

We pray that our simplest acts of kindness through our efforts to feed the hungry will trigger a succession of good deeds. Our service is an act of giving and receiving love. When we serve our community, we are serving God and expressing God's love to others.

"The love of God inspires us,
Our Faith in God motivates us."

New Alabama Voter ID Law to be Enforced

The new requirement for voters in Alabama is to have a photo ID in order to vote. Acceptable forms of photo identification are Alabama Driver License; US Passport; employment ID card issued by city, county, state or US government; student or employment ID issued by a college in Alabama; tribal ID with photo; Alabama photo voter card; US military ID; or ID card issued by a branch, department, agency or entity of the State of Alabama, another state or the United States.

This new law will be enforced beginning with the June primary elections. This will affect people who DO NOT have an accepted form of photo identification. Free acceptable photo identification cards may be obtained from the Alabama Department of Senior Services, at the County Board of Registrar's Office, or any Department of Public Safety location. To receive the card, you must present a correct Voter Registration card and proof of date of birth.

Be informed! Be prepared! Vote!

Women's Conference Scheduled for June 20-21, 2014

The ladies of St. John are invited to attend the 2014 Women's Conference to be held at the Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa. The events will begin on Friday evening with worship and praise with special ministerial guests the Reverend Agnes Lover from Greater Saint Paul AMEC Florence, Alabama and the Reverend Sheryl Shipman from Mt. Zion AMEC in Trussville, Alabama. St. John's First Lady, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn is the host minister for the retreat.

The retreat promises to be spiritually uplifting and inspirational. Ladies are invited to respond to the theme: "Do You See What I See? Your Passport To Abundant Living". On Saturday, we will spend time together through spiritual walks, fellowship through meals, workshops, and listening to the Word of God as we apply it to our own lives. We invite you to join us for this promised fulfilling experience.

Registration for hotel rooms are made individually by calling the Marriott Shoals at (256) 248-3600 and asking for the St. John AMEC conference rate of \$129. The deadline for this rate is May 20, 2014. Registration payments are \$70 per person. Checks should be made payable to St. John AME. Registrations are taken after the 8:00 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. services at the desk in the vestibule. You may also put your envelopes in the offering but be sure to indicate on the envelope Women's Retreat. You can make it a great success with your presence.

- Laurretta Teague, Coordinator

Ministry Assessments

Ministries of St. John have been conducting assessments of their services over the past few months. Appreciation is expressed to persons who participated in the online surveys that were offered by some ministries. Through these reviews, St. John will be better able to serve the church membership and the community. To God be the glory for the things He has done and He will do through the services offered by these ministries.

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday

(Continued from page 4)

Each of the following messages, interspersed with hymns from the Saint Philip Praise Team (as they were referred to by the pastor, although they appeared, based on size, to be a choir). The second word, "Today you shall be with me in paradise," Luke 23:39-43, was preached by the Reverend Doctor Kenneth Marcus, senior pastor, Turner Chapel AME Church, Marietta, Georgia. The third word, "Woman, behold your son! Son, behold your mother!" John 19:26-27, was preached by the Reverend Carolyn D. Williams, associate minister, Saint Philip AME Church, Atlanta, Georgia. The fourth word, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:45-46, was preached by the Reverend Eric Lee, senior pastor, Springfield Baptist Church, Conyers, Georgia. The fifth word, "I Thirst," John 19:28-29 and Mark 15:23, was preached by the Reverend Charles A. Maxell, founder and senior pastor of Breakthrough Fellowship, Smyrna, Georgia. The host pastor, the Reverend William D. Watley, Ph.D., preached the sixth word, "It is finished," from John 19:30. The seventh word, the final word, was preached by the Reverend Doctor Cynthia Hale, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit," Luke 23:44-46. Each preacher brought a powerful message that was a vivid reminder of how much God loved the world and the sacrifice that was made to offer eternal life to all who believe.

St. John members who attended the service were blessed to receive a special guided tour of the Saint Philip complex. It is a magnificent witness to the work that God is doing through the church. The complex includes a 2,500 seat state-of-the-art sanctuary, an administrative wing with offices, conference rooms, book store, fellowship hall (that seats 500 banquet style and 1,500 auditorium style) with full commercial kitchen and professional culinary staff, a youth church with café, a gymnasium with regulation size basketball court, walking track and professional gymnastic equipment (they offer gym membership and exercise classes), an Early Life Development Center and much, much more.

Thank God for traveling mercies on this trip and for the blessings received through the preached word and the hospitality of Saint Philip AME Church.

Anniversary Reflection

(Continued from page 3)

responsible. The freedom of those who came before us was not given lightly—it was taken by force. It is our responsibility in the 21st century to continue laying stones of hope where there is a path of despair.

We thank God for the struggle.
We thank God for social action and change.
We thank God for the resources to feed the hungry and clothe the naked.
We thank God for the wisdom of our elders.
We thank God for the courage to rise up and take control to lead our youth.

To restore our communities and lift the blood-stained banner of hope requires, we, as a people, to continue to take risks. To bring sight to the blind, we must move beyond these walls and onto the streets where young black boys—who are really men—congregate.

We must walk through prisons and offer a balm to the sin sick soul. We must travel to the group homes and affirm the dignity of women marginalized by domestic violence and to the wards where patients with HIV and AIDS live. We must pour back into our communities markets, schools, and resources that will sustain our children.

This means it is time we stand on a stone of hope, producing greatness in the midst of despair. With the legacies of Richard Allen and Dr. William Hooper Councill, we must educate, refine, and build anew that which is broken.

*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His mercy endures forever!*

Student Recognitions 2014



Parents are asked to submit student honors information to the church office by June 2. This request is for students pre-school through high school. Forms will be available outside the church office.

The deadline for submitting information is Sunday, June 1. Students will be recognized in the Student Honors section of the AMEN in June.



Ninth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

2014 Pentecost Explosion

"OVERFLOW" Catch the Fire



**Bishop
Paul S. Morton**

*People's Preacher
All Saints Episcopal Church
Lynchburg, Virginia
April 2014
Co-Sponsor*



**Earnest
Pugh**

International Recording Artist



**Bishop
James L. Davis**

African Methodist Episcopal Church



**Bishop
Dennis V. Proctor**

*African Methodist Episcopal
Zion Church
Co-Sponsors*



**Bishop
Teresa E. Soriano**

*Christian Methodist
Episcopal Church
Co-Sponsors*

**Sunday,
June 8, 2014
2:00pm**

**Alabama State University
Hornet Stadium
Montgomery, Alabama**



Please contact us at
1040 19th Street, North
Birmingham, AL 35203

205 326 4499
or visit www.ninthamec.org

James L. Davis, Servant Bishop
Arelis B. Davis, WMS Supervisor



Preparing for Pentecost

Sunday, June 8, 2014, 2:00 p.m.

St. John worship service will be held on Friday, June 6.

Tickets and seats on the bus are still available. Contact the church office TODAY to purchase tickets. All Official Board members are expected to purchase at least one ticket. If you are unable to attend, please donate your ticket to allow someone else to attend.

Volunteers are needed for Kids Zone, Choir, Dancers, Ushers (Sons of Allen), greeters (Koinonias), special needs assistance. If you speak/read a language other than English or Spanish, please contact the Pentecost Explosion committee at pentecostexplosion2014@yahoo.com.

Mandatory rehearsals for all choir and dance participants are scheduled for May 31 and June 7 in Montgomery. Contact Nedra McDaniel for more information.

Everyone is asked to wear red. A limited inventory of Ninth District shirts are available. Contact the Pentecost Explosion committee at pentecostexplosion2014@yahoo.com to determine what sizes and styles are available.

Visit the Ninth District website at ninthamec.org to stay current on information about the Pentecost Explosion.

The Spiritual Preparation continues. As part of the spiritual preparation for Pentecost, members who are physically and medically able are asked to join in a 3-meal per day Daniel Fast from April 21-May 28. The fast will consist of eating only vegetables and fruits, and drinking only water and 100% pure fruit/vegetable juices. Please check with your physician prior to beginning this fast.

By utilizing the theme, the following prayer themes and scriptures are suggested for the upcoming weeks.

Week of May 18, 2014: Pray for the Evangelism Committee, the unchurched, and all AMEs, AME Zion's and CME's participating in Pentecost 2014.

John 7:37-39, also reference Gen. 1:2; 6:3; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps. 51:11; 139:7; Eze. 3:24, 27; Hag. 2:5

From May 29-June 4, daily prayers will be offered. A prayer line has been established for 7:00 a.m. daily prayer: Call in #: 712-432-1212; Access Code: 332722131#. For those who are physically and medically able, are to join in a 1-meal per day Daniel Fast. The meal should consist of only vegetables and fruits, and drinking only water and 100% pure fruit/vegetable juices.

May 29, 2014: Pray for 24,000 persons in attendance
Acts 2:46: How can God's people be "in one accord?"

(Continued on page 15)



Preparing for Pentecost

Sunday, June 8, 2014, 2:00 p.m

(Continued from page 14)

- May 30, 2014:** Pray that all tickets will be sold
Acts 2:48-47: Do you daily praise and worship God? If not, what is needed for you to begin doing so?
- May 31, 2014:** Pray for each Presiding Elder
Acts 2:48-47: Compare Acts 3:1. Are you demonstrating that you are a believer who worships, prays and attends church regularly? Do you seek improvement in that area of your spiritual life?
- June 1, 2014:** Pray for each pastor
Acts 2:48-47: Is it important to fellowship with other believers? What would you hope to accomplish through fellowship?
- June 2, 2014:** Pray for each church
Acts 2:48-47: Do you have an attitude of gladness, joy and rejoicing in worship and ministering to the needs of others?
- June 3, 2014:** Pray for each Pentecost Committees
Acts 2:48-47: Are you satisfied with your praise to God? What can you do to improve it?
- June 4, 2014:** Pray for each Pentecost participant
Acts 2:48-47: In your present worship and praise of God, do others see a difference in your daily life?
- From June 5-7, we are suggesting a minimum of one hour in prayer daily. For those who are physically and medically able, please join us in a liquid fast. This will consist of broth, fruit and vegetable juices and water. If unable to participate in a liquid fast, please continue with the 1-meal per day Daniel Fast. As you read the suggested Bible readings, meditate, preach and/or study how these passages of Scripture impact your daily life and your walk with the Lord.
- June 5, 2014:** Pray for favorable weather on June 8 that promotes attendance.
Acts 2:48-47: What does the statement mean, "and being in favor and goodwill with all the people?" Is your praise and worship so contagious that it attracts others to Christ?
- June 6, 2014:** Pray for souls to be saved during Pentecost 2014
Acts 2:48-47: Do you want and expect God to add souls to the church? Why or why not? What part are you playing in winning souls?
- June 7, 2014:** Pray for baptism in the Holy Spirit
Acts 2:48-47: Would you want your behavior and attitude to be transformed to that of the early believers? Could their actions work today? Are you willing to give all you are and all you have to receive such radical behavior?
- JUNE 8, 2014:** PENTECOST
Offer up prayers of thanksgiving for what God is going to do today in the lives of His people.

VBS—Save the Date



"The Jesus Connection... What a Friend" will be trending here at St. John June 9-12, 2014. If you are interested in using your gifts in VBS this year please sign up on the sheet outside the office or contact Dr. Monica Dilihunt.

We need dancers and singers for a special promotional event that is to come in May. Even if you just want to have fun, contact Dr. Jennifer Patterson or Brother Reginald Pearson so you can be a part of this event. All ages are welcome.

Church School Book Club

June 2014 Discussion Date: 21 June 14
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.
Delilah, Sheila M. Goss, 2010

When Samson Judges, a prominent pastor, refuses to sell land that his church owns land that real estate mogul William Trusts wants, Trust hires Delilah Baker to find out Samson's Achilles heel.

Samson is far from innocent. He feels his longstanding relationship with God puts him above reproach. His weakness for one woman, Delilah, threatens to ruin his relationship with his fiancé Julia, his parents, and his church. When he realizes the length Delilah will go through to get her man, Samson vows to protect his ministry by any means necessary.

—Amazon

Mothers of the Bible

By Paulette Bargon

EVE - The first mother. She was the mother of Cain, Abel, Seth (and several unnamed others). She was the first to partake of the forbidden fruit (Big mistake!). But God still blessed her with children. Eve was also the first mother to bury a child.

SARAH - Mother of Isaac. This woman gives hope to everyone who waited a little late to start a family. God made a promise to Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. When Sarah heard this she laughed and she probably got in trouble for laughing. If you were her age you would probably laugh too. Nevertheless she gave birth to a son and her lineage would include Jesus Christ himself.

REBEKAH - Mother of Jacob and Esau. Rebekah played favorites with her twin sons. She loved Jacob more and plotted to take the birthright from his oldest brother, Esau. It turned out that this family disagreement lasted a long time. Rebekah reminds us that it is a dangerous thing to use maternal power for manipulation.

JOCHEBED - Mother of Moses, Aaron and their sister Miriam. When the new king of Egypt ordered the death of all newborn sons of the Hebrew women, Jochebed saved Moses by placing him in a waterproof wicker basket and sending him down the Nile River with his sister, Miriam, serving as a lookout. He was pulled out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter. Bravely, Miriam asked Pharaoh's daughter if she should get a Hebrew woman to nurse the child. She was told to do that. Miriam fetched her mother, Jochebed, to nurse her own son.

Because of Jochebed's faith and trust in God, she was able to leave Moses in the hands of God by leaving him in the river rather than see him killed. A lesson learned; there is always another option. Adoption is always a choice.

HANNAH - Mother of Samuel the Prophet. Hannah is one of the most inspiring mothers in the bible. Despite years of patience and prayer, she remained unable to have a child. One day in her deep distress Hanna prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. God finally answered her prayer. But Hannah's character showed when in gratitude to God, she dedicated her newborn son to His service. Her son became one of Israel's greatest prophets.

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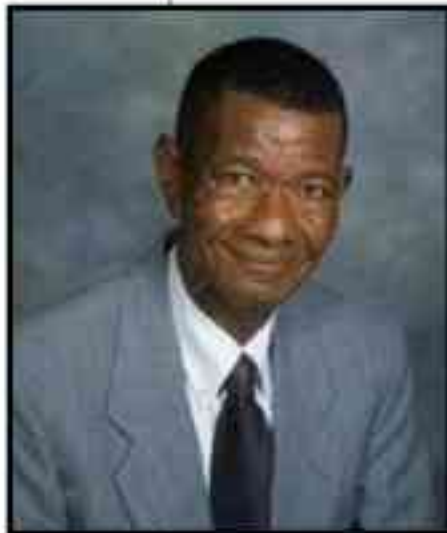
Remembering Mr. Russell

By Agnes Gilmore

In Loving Memory
of
Mr. Ellie Russell

*Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last.*

- Charles Wesley



On April 1, 2014, Mr. Ellie Russell answered God's call and flew away to the bosom of Jesus. He was born on June 5, 1928 in Madison County, Alabama. He was married to the late Rosie Russell and was the father of two sons, four grandchildren, three great grandchildren and a special daughter-in-law, Greta Russell.

It was a privilege to have known Mr. Russell. His membership at St John A. M. E. church spanned over 80 years. He was a faithful member of the Senior Usher Board. On first Sundays he could be found on his post lovingly greeting persons as they arrived for worship. He was a soft spoken gracious man with a warm sincere smile for everyone. Although he was quiet and unassuming, he had a strong faith in God. His prayers during worship services were a testament of that faith. He was faithful in his church attendance until his health declined.

Mr. Russell was known throughout the community as "Hoss". He believed in sharing with others and always greeted everyone with a smile whether in Kroger or at G's restaurant. That smile was contagious and you always felt better after being in his presence.

Thank you Mr. Russell for your testimony of God's goodness and faithfulness.



TRUSTEE CORNER

The Trustee Board has a list of projects to complete. Recently in May the church sign was renovated by stenciling again both sides of the sign. This was completed May 2, 2014.

The next project that is in the planning stage is an air conditioning upgrade. The goal is for this to be completed by the end of May, but definitely prior to the warmest temperatures of the summer. Also on the list of projects is enhancing the security protocols/equipment for the church. More updates will be forthcoming.

Visit the St. John Website for more information on the Trustee Board.

Mothers of the Bible

By Paulette Bargon

(Continued from page 16)

MARY - MOTHER OF JESUS. Mary was a very young woman who had just become engaged when an angel of the Lord appeared to her and told her that she was going to give birth to a son and He would be God's Son, the "Messiah."

God knew that Mary was a woman of great strength and obedience. She was the only human being to be with Jesus throughout His life. She gave birth to Him as her baby and watched Him die as her Savior. Mary was at the crucifixion, when some disciples were in hiding. But Mary stayed when the rest of the world walked away. It must have been very hard for Mary to watch her cherished son bear the weight of sin and die a terrible death on the cross. The story of Mary, mother of Jesus, tells us that through it all, joy and pain, a mother will always be there for you.

There are many other mothers in the bible; some good, some bad, just like in our lives today. Most mothers are not perfect and we should not expect them to be. Love your mother, forgive her for her mistakes, and cherish her and any woman who has had an influence on your life.

Happy Mother's Day!

Nip Seasonal Allergies in the Bud

By Rosemary Wells



Spring means flower buds and blooming trees—and if you're one of the millions of people who have seasonal allergies, it also means sneezing, congestion, runny nose, itchy eyes and other bothersome symptoms are in overdrive and are apt to stay that way for months. Seasonal allergies, also called hay fever and allergic rhinitis, can make you miserable. But before you settle for plastic flowers and artificial turf, try these simple strategies to keep seasonal allergies under control.

Reduce your exposure to allergy triggers

- Stay indoors on dry windy days---the best time to go outside is after a good rain, which helps clear the pollen from the air.
- Delegate lawn mowing, weed pulling and other gardening chores that stir up allergens.
- Remove clothes you've worn outside; you may also want to shower to rinse pollen from your skin and hair.
- Don't hang clothes outside; pollen can stick to sheets and towels.
- Wear a dust mask if you do outside chores.

Take extra steps when the pollen counts are high

- Check your local TV or radio station, your local newspaper, or the internet for pollen forecasts and current pollen levels.
- If high pollen counts are forecasted, start taking allergy medication before your symptoms start.
- Close doors and windows at night or any other time when pollen counts are high.
- Avoid outdoor activity in the early morning when pollen counts are highest.

Keep indoor air clean

- Use the air conditioning in your car.
- If you have forced air heating or air conditioning in your house, use high-efficiency filters and follow regular maintenance schedules.
- Keep indoor air dry with a dehumidifier.
- Use a portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter in your bedroom.
- Clean floors often with a vacuum cleaner that has a HEPA filter.

For many people, avoiding allergens and taking over-the-counter medications, such as an antihistamine to help relieve sneezing, itching and a runny nose, or a decongestant to reduce stuffiness by shrinking swollen membranes in the nose, is all that is needed to ease symptoms.

If your seasonal allergies are bad enough, your doctor may recommend that you have skin or blood tests to find out exactly what allergens trigger your symptoms. Testing can help determine steps you need to take to avoid your specific triggers and identify which treatments are likely to work for you.

For some people, allergy shots (allergen immunotherapy) can be a good option. Also known as desensitization, this treatment involves regular injections containing tiny amounts of the substances that cause your allergies. Over time, these injections reduce the immune system reaction that causes symptoms.

Remember...when home remedies are not enough, see your doctor!

For more information on seasonal allergies go to the website:
www.allegria.com.



Church School Lesson Overview – June 2014

This month's reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer.

June 1, 2014

Lesson Title: Obey the Lord

Lesson Scripture: Luke 19:41-48, Haggai 1:1-11

Print: Haggai 1:1-11

Devotional Songs: #977 [], #272 [], and #243

Key Verse: "Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: 'Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?' (Haggai 1:3, 4).

Application: To so order our lives and establish our habits of thought that we would not even consider disobeying the Lord.

In this lesson we note the link between obedience to God and material prosperity that was a vital part of the covenant relationship that existed between God and Old Testament Israel. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah appeared on the scene in the midst of the people's complacency (Ezra 5:1). These men were raised up by the Lord to shake the people out of their lethargy, to stir them to act in order to finish rebuilding the temple. Haggai played a major role in conveying God's message to a people who had become indifferent to his work.

Haggai confronts the people by drawing attention to their actions. They seem to have plenty of time to build their *paneled houses*. They have invested much time and expense to make sure their homes look their best. It is clear that the people's houses are finished while the Lord's house, the temple, is not.

June 8, 2014

Lesson Title: Trust God's Promises

Lesson Scripture: Haggai 1:12; 2:1-9

Print: Haggai 1:12—2:9

Devotional Songs: #424 [], #251 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:9).

Application: To set our hearts on living by this principle daily.

In this lesson we see the results of the obedience of the people to God's clear directives.

This lesson features Haggai continuing his encouragement to the people, but with a different focus—a focus to think in terms of an ex-

treme makeover. It begins where last week's ended, at Haggai 1:12, and the year is still 520 BC. The book of Haggai is set in the period of Persian dominance, which began with the rise of Cyrus in 539 BC. Persian expansion to the west was eventually halted by defeats at the battles of Marathon (490 BC) and Salamis (479 BC). These battles occurred within the time gap between the last verse of Ezra 6 and the first verse of Ezra 7.

An important lesson can be learned from the message that Haggai had for his people: One should live in the present by looking to the future, not to the past. Haggai the prophet now foretold what God would do in the future to encourage His people to live in the present.

June 15, 2014

Lesson Title: Live Pure Lives

Lesson Scripture: 1 Peter 1:13-29

Print: Haggai 2:10-19

Tentative Devotional Songs: #358 [], #258 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit" (Haggai 2:19).

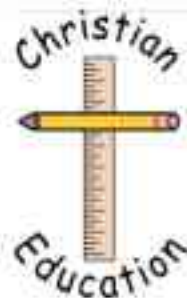
Application: To walk daily with the mind-set of delighting in thankful obedience to God.

In this lesson we continue our study of Haggai's challenge to God's people to complete the rebuilding of the temple. Following a plan is essential in rebuilding a temple (or any structure for that matter). But God's people also needed to embrace his plan for rebuilding their lives and shaping them according to his master design. Leaving captivity in Babylon to return to the Promised Land was an important step; leaving spiritual captivity to return to God was another.

The laws concerning the transmission of purity and impurity, which are part of Haggai's message, were for the benefit of God's people. These laws were meant to emphasize that impurity or defilement is much easier to transmit than purity or holiness. The principle is that one maintains purity by separation; defilement results from exposure to that which is defiled.

Impurity seems to flourish in so many areas of life today. One of the great ironies of modern society is that people can become so passion-

(Continued on page 20.)



Church School Lesson Overview – June 2014

(Continued from page 19)



ate about keeping water, air, and food free from contamination, yet exhibit an alarming apathy regarding moral and spiritual purity. God has always been concerned that his people—whether in Old or New Testament times—live pure lives.

June 22, 2014

Lesson Title: Hope for a New Day

Lesson Scripture: Nehemiah 7:1-7; Haggai 2:20-23; Zechariah 4

Print: Haggai 2:23; Zechariah 4:1-3, 6-14

Tentative Devotional Songs: #484 []; 77; and #243 []

Key Verses: So he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty" (Zechariah 4:6).

Application: To make it our practice to respond quickly and willingly to the Lord and the words that He sends us.

This lesson is the last in this unit of studies that focuses on the rebuilding of the temple in the post-exilic period of Old Testament history. Most of the lesson text comes from the book of Zechariah, who was a contemporary of Haggai. Like Haggai, Zechariah encouraged God's people to faithfulness in completing the rebuilding of the temple project that had been on hold for some 16 years. The day of victory and achievement would come only by means of a day-by-day devotion to carrying out God's plan.

It is clear that this second temple will not possess the grandeur of Solomon's renowned temple. But those engaged in the important task of rebuilding do possess the most important "building material" of all: the power of the Spirit of God. This will more than compensate for whatever material resources or manpower the people seem to lack as they rebuild.

Once the obstacles represented by the mountain are leveled, Zerubbabel is then pictured as bringing out the capstone. This is the topmost stone, the last stone to be set in place. When this is done, the building is finished! This step will be accompanied by a shout of triumph: *God bless it! God bless it!*

June 29, 2014

Lesson Title: Pursue Unity in Christ

Lesson Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:1-17

Print: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 1 Corinthians 3:4-9

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525 []; "This Little Light of Mine"; and #243 []

Key Verses: "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought." (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Application: To see ourselves as one with all people who own Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Paul's second missionary journey began as a trip to visit the congregations he had planted on his first journey. After doing so, the restless Paul desired to move on to new territory with the message of the gospel. God influenced Paul's itinerary through a vision that directed him to cross the Aegean Sea to the region known as Macedonia. He eventually arrived in Corinth in about AD 52, where he remained for some 18 months. Corinth was a busy and wealthy center of trade in Paul's day, a cosmopolitan city with residents from many regions. It was a place of lax morals and influential pagan religions.

Paul desires unity in the Corinthian church in what the people say and do. Unity in the church is desirable both for the peace of the congregation and the effectiveness of its message to unbelievers. This is God's ideal.

While the exact causes of the divisions among the Corinthians are unknown to us, our lesson gives us the names of four individuals who were used as rallying cries: Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ. Using a little imagination, let's consider what these factions within the Corinthian church might have looked like and see if they match with any groups in our own experience.

Those who claimed to follow Paul might have been the original converts of the apostle, the charter members. Perhaps they wanted a church frozen in time, unchanged from the day Paul left. Because of their tenure, this group had great influence, so their resistance to change dominated.

Those said to follow Apollos perhaps were converts who came into the church after Paul left and Apollos arrived. The background of Apollos was Alexandria, so he did things differently from Paul, who was from Tarsus. Apollos had a different preaching style.

June 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship DEADLINE FOR RETREAT REGISTRATION	2 9:30 a.m. Fifty Plus Auxiliary 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	3 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Meeting VIP Choir Rehearsal	4 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	5 6:00 p.m. Steward Board Meeting Gospel Choir Rehearsal	6 6:30 p.m. Worship Service	7 Pentecost Rehearsal Montgomery, Alabama
8 PENTECOST EXPLOSION ASU MONTGOMERY, AL 2:00 p.m.	VBS 2014 The Jesus Connection...What a Friend 6:00—8:00 p.m.				SBHB Church School Convention Payne Chapel, Birmingham	
						9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. AMEN Staff Meeting
15 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	16	17 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg.	18 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	19	20 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	21 Women's Retreat Florence, Alabama
22 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	23	24 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Lay Organization	25 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	26 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	27 Graduate & Retiree Recognition 6:30 p.m.	28 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. VBS Meeting
29 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship Women's Day	30					

POTPOURRI

Pray for our Sick & Shut-ins

Susie Akin
Gwendolyn Baldwin
Jason Brown
Altonette Burks
Mildred Hereford
Willie M. Heyward
Evelyn Hildreth
Robert Hyder
James Jamar
Ernest Jones
Lorene Jones
Homer McCraw
Idell Merrell

Pray for our sick and shut-in.

About St. John Members

We are proud of You!

If you are retiring in 2014 or graduating on or before June 15, 2014, please sign the sign-up sheet outside of the church office and complete the Graduate/Retiree form.

Please leave the form in the church office by May 25.

The celebration will be held on Friday, June 27.

Go Green

Watering your lawn and landscape plants can account for 30-50% of your watering bill during summer months. It has been estimated that a rain barrel can save a homeowner as much as 1000 gallons of watering over the course of a year, depending on barrel placement, size and use. One inch of rain on a 500 square foot roof can collect 300 gallons of water.*

* Green Tips for May., TREECOLOGY

REMEMBER OUR MILITARY

2LT Butler, Christopher P.
TF Caesar ITF Guardian
APO, AE 09355

ABE Joseph, Daisha
230 Chevalier Field Ave.
BKS George Washington
Pensacola, FL 32508-5151

Please remember St. John's military family members by sending cards or little reminders of home. Keep them in your daily prayers.

If you know of any member of the St. John family who has a loved one deployed overseas as well as those stationed in the US, please contact any AMEN staff with their name and address. You may also e-mail the contact information to stjohnameh@aol.com.

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

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Return Service Requested

E-mail: stjohnameh@aol.com

Website: stjohnamehsv.org

The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop

Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

May 17, 2014	Church School Day, 10:00 a.m.
June 6, 2014	PENTECOST Evening Worship at St. John, 6:30 p.m.
June 8, 2014	Pentecost 2014, Alabama State University, Montgomery, Alabama
June 9-12, 2014	Vacation Bible School, 6:00 p.m., nightly
June 13-14, 2014	SBHB Church School Convention, Payne Chapel, Birmingham, Alabama
June 20-21, 2014	Women's Retreat The Reverend Agnes Lover, Guest Preacher and Workshop Facilitator The Reverend Sheryl Shipman, Guest Workshop Facilitator
June 27, 2014	Graduate/Retiree Recognition, 6:30 p.m.
June 29, 2014	Women's Day, 10:00 a.m.
July 11-12, 2014	Men's Retreat
July 21-24, 2014	Ninth District CEC and Minister's Training at Troy University

*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. Romans 10:9*

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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 6

June 2014

Pastor's Message

Dedicated Dads

*In his defense Jesus said to them,
"My Father is always at his work to this
very day, and I too am working."*

- John 5:17



Pastor Patrick D. Clayburn, Ph.D.

This month, we salute dads everywhere. For dads – and "other-dads" who step in – giving love, prayer, wisdom, guidance, correction, focus, opportunity, support, care, protection, provision, time, attention, and affection to their children – St. John praises God for all that you do! Dads; granddads, great-granddads, play dads, uncles, brothers, male cousins, male caretakers, mister from across the street who was kind and protective, and that male presence who came in just when we needed him most – take a bow! We honor your sacrifices and labor of love for your kids. All of your children – in addition to your spouses (for those married fathers), family, and friends – say "THANK YOU FOR BEING DEDICATED DADS!"

In addition to this salute, we offer prayer for all of those who missed a fatherly presence in their lives. Some grew up without a dad because dad walked away or was locked away in jail. There are some who missed much time with their fathers because employment kept them out of the house. Others missed the paternal presence because dad died early in their lives. Still others had the physical presence of their dads, but those dads were absent emotionally and spiritually. There are some who were abused by their dads – abused physically, emotionally, or spiritually. We also pray for those who have unhealthy relationships with their fathers; for those who miss their fathers due to death; for those who hunger for a better relationship with their fathers; and for those who are in search for their fathers. We even pray for the fathers who have fallen short. We pray for those dads who have not been dedicated in taking care of their families and their responsibilities. We pray for those dads who want another chance and for those who have turned their backs permanently. We pray for the fathers who have lost children. In all these cases, we pray to God for healing, restoration and mercy.

God, we lift up the fatherless. We recognize what your Word says – when our fathers forsake us, You will lift us up! God, we thank You for being our true Father. Thank You for being a dedicated Dad. Thank You for all of Your blessings on our lives. Thank You for not allowing the absence left by earthly fathers to keep any of Your children from reaching the destiny You've made for them. Please heal the hurts of those grieving the loss of their fathers. Help them to honor their fathers' legacies by living lives of truth and purpose. For those hurting because of abuse or neglect from their fathers, we pray that You provide a supernatural support that will lead them to experience the fatherly love You intended for them – from some unexpected person or experience. For those fathers who are grieving the loss of their children, Lord we pray for Your supernatural comfort found in Your Holy Spirit. For the fathers who are estranged from their children – for any reason – God help them to reconnect with their kids or, at least, to have peace about their present circumstances. We acknowledge that You have always been there for us. You have provided, sus-

(Continued on page 2)

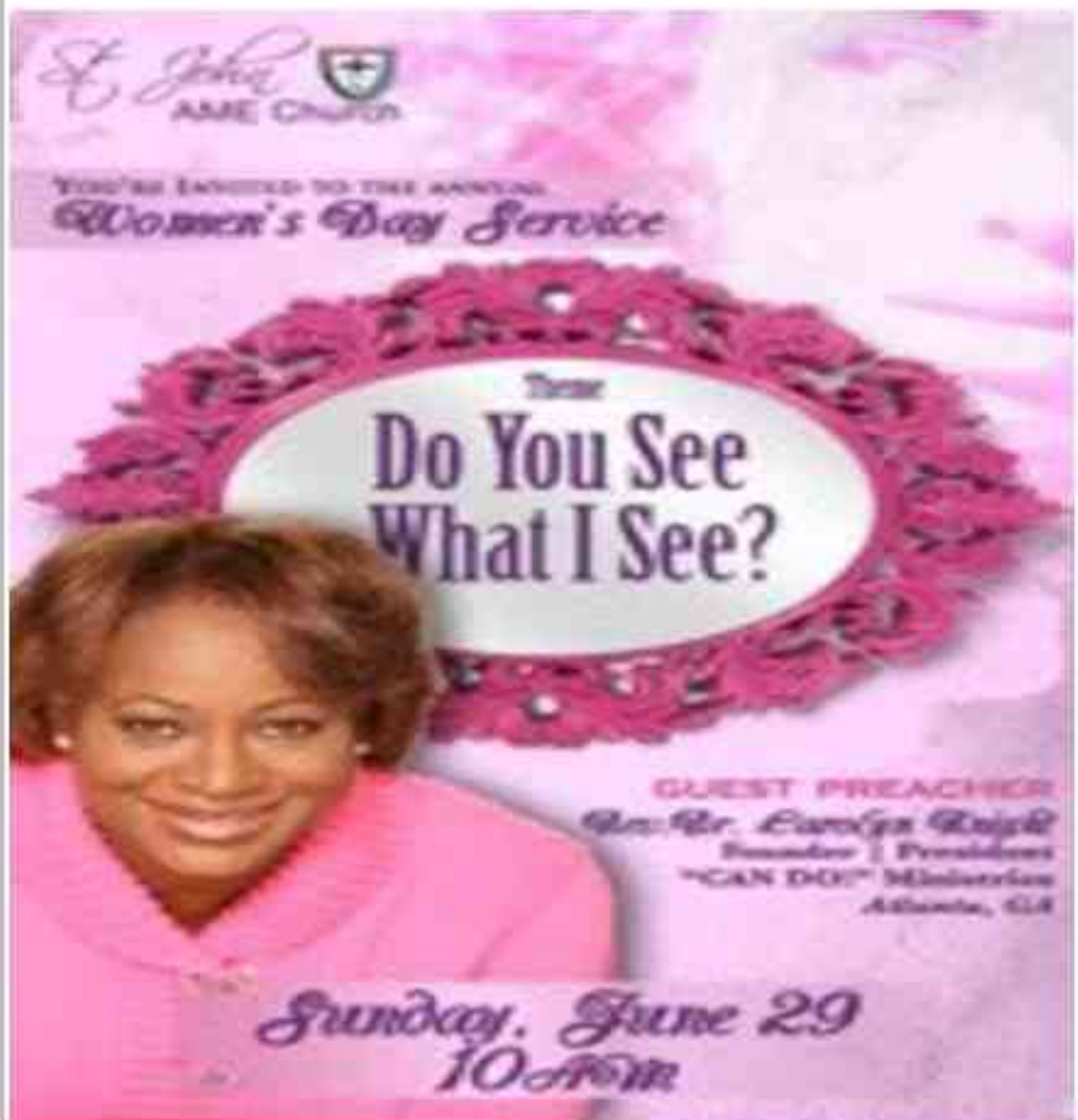
Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

tained, protected, and encouraged us. We thank You Lord for taking care of us as our dedicated Dad. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Let it be known - Jesus declared that His Father is working and that He is still working! I have no idea what you may be going through as you read this AMEN; but, you must know that your Heavenly Father is working --- for your good, for your health, for your family, for your finances, for your vocation, for your peace, for your joy, for your dreams, for your hopes, and for your needs. God is working! You may not see it; you may not feel it; and you may not comprehend it. Though that may be the case, it does not change the word of Jesus -- God is working! As a matter of fact, Jesus is working, too! Don't be discouraged and don't be afraid. God -- as a dedicated Dad -- is working for you!

Happy Father's Day!



St. John Observes Memorial Day at Church and in the Community

By James Heyward and Nedra McDaniel



Marjorie Reed presents information on Memorial Day



Wallace Parham portrays Crispus Attucks.



On May 25, the Sunday before Memorial Day 2014, a special Memorial Day commemorative presentation was made during each of the morning services. Wallace Parham portrayed Crispus Attucks, an African American who was the first casualty of the Boston Massacre, in Boston, Massachusetts, and is widely considered to be the first American casualty in the American Revolutionary War. Ms. Marjorie Reed, a veteran, presented information on the history and importance of observing Memorial Day. The information presented was adopted from a presentation made by Col. (Ret.) James O. Heyward and is printed below.

Originally called Flag Day, MEMORIAL DAY is a time of remembrance of those who have died in our Nation's Service. It started in the south, which is a claim that has been challenged by many who insist that the observance was initiated in their respective communities. Since 1906 communities all over the country have celebrated this day. But it was President Lyndon Johnson, who in 1968 officially declared Waterloo, NY as the birthplace of Memorial Day.

Regardless of where it started, the fact is, the nation tapped into the human need to honor the war dead. There are many ways Memorial Day has been observed in the past and some continue today. Many closed businesses, had parades and/or public programs, which most do not do anymore.

The traditional observance of MEMORIAL DAY has diminished over the years. However, there are many towns, cities, and individuals that have not forgotten the meaning and reason for Memorial Day. JUST THINK OF THE SACRIFICES MANY OF OUR MEN AND WOMEN HAVE MADE TO KEEP OUR NATION FREE AND FOR US TO ENJOY THE FREEDOMS WE HAVE. Many PAID the ultimate sacrifice: They wrote a check to this Nation with the amount left blank. Many filled that blank with their lives. When one thinks of the upheaval around the world or the nations with unstable governments, we can appreciate this great nation of ours. It began in 1770 in Boston, MA with Crispus Attucks, who is said to HAVE BEEN the first person to lose his life at the hands of British Soldiers in the American Revolutionary War. Incidentally, he was a man of color and has joined our worship service today "in spirit" through the characterization portrayed by Wallace Parham.

A few years ago, at Huntsville's Glenwood Cemetery, a marker was placed at the grave site for PVT John Reed Porter, who served in the First Alabama Cavalry during the Civil

(Continued on page 4)

St. John Observes Memorial Day at Church and in the Community

By James Heyward and Nedra McDaniel

(Continued from page 3)

War. He was the great grandfather of St. John member, Mrs. Sarah Alls, who as the next to kin, was presented the US flag at that ceremony.

In 1951, the Boy Scouts of America in St. Louis, MO began placing flags on the grave sites of all veterans at selected cemeteries.

But, regardless of how you celebrate Memorial Day, it is one of our most significant national holidays. We trust that all of us have a greater appreciation of Memorial Day and for the sacrifices by those who gave their all, and returned home with broken bodies, broken minds or gave their lives and went home early to be with the Lord.

May God bless the memory and legacy of the men and women of our Armed Forces who paid the ultimate PRICE.

LTC FELICIA Y. CARTER IS MEMORIAL DAY SPEAKER

The Boy Scouts of America 2014 Annual Memorial Day Ceremony at Glenwood Cemetery featured Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Felicia Y. Carter, of the U.S. States Army Reserve Support Command, Redstone Arsenal, Alabama and a member of St. John A.M.E. Church. The ceremony provides a fitting tribute in honor of our service men and women who have made great sacrifices and served this nation with honor and distinction. Colonel Carter's remarks included significant comments about the history of Memorial Day, the early years of Glenwood Cemetery and the significance it should hold in the hearts and minds of all Americans. She also offered encouragement to the youth to serve their country and humankind, whether in the military or as civilians in the community.

LTC Carter is a graduate of Alabama A&M University and received her commission through the ROTC Program as a Distinguished Military Graduate. LTC Carter has a varied background of service; her operational deployments include Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn. She retired from military service on May 31, 2014.



LTC Carter delivers speech.

The U.S. Army Materiel Command Band Brass Quintet provided appropriate music for the Ceremony. The program ended with Taps and a proper military salute. The Boy Scouts placed flags on the graves of all veterans buried at the cemetery.

Public attendance is always welcome in order to help reflect and honor those veterans who have passed on, but gave so much to their country and helped to secure the freedoms that we currently enjoy.

These two events served as a reminder of the sacrifices that were made to make possible the freedom Americans enjoy daily.



LTC Carter and Col. (Ret.) Heyward after the service

A Father's Love

By Tawanda Buford

*The righteous who walks in his integrity—blessed are his children after him !
Proverbs 20:7*

Dad, Daddy, Father, Papa..... however we call him, our father is the first man in our life, whether boy or girl. A father, along with the mother, has the opportunity for a positive influence over the life of their child, and has a unique task of shaping and molding the child's personal development. Fathers play a pivotal role of being a provider, protector, moral leader, and serve as the GOD-GIVEN spiritual head of the family.

Often we may witness a father throwing a football to his athletic son or daughter, which shows a strong emotional connection and indicates he is active in the life of the child. Also, we may witness a father smiling as he watches his little girl or boy play at her or his first piano recital. A child's first male role model is usually his/her dad.

When one thinks of the qualities of a good father, they may reflect on those fathers who

- Will actively play sports with their child just for the enjoyment and quality time;
- Will have a forgiving heart when he knows his child has done wrong;
- Will have so much patience while teaching his child to drive a car;
- Will cry openly while walking his daughter down the aisle to marry;
- Will encourage their child that they can do it, because all things are possible.

As we celebrate Father's Day, take time out to express gratitude and show appreciation and love to fathers all over while fostering paternal bonds.

What Makes a Dad

God took the strength of a mountain,
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea,
The generous soul of nature,
The comforting arm of night,
The wisdom of the ages,
The power of the eagle's flight,
The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete,
And so, He called it Dad

- Author Unknown



Plans Being Made for Women's Day 2014

Women's Day 2014 will be held on Sunday, June 29, at 10:00 a.m. The guest preacher will be the Reverend Doctor Carolyn Knight of Atlanta, Georgia.

The Women's Choir will consist of women who are active in one of the St. John choirs as well as others who have a gift for singing. Rehearsals will be held June 19 and June 26 at 6:00 p.m.

Mark your calendar now for June 29 and plan to be among those who will celebrate women on this special day!

Women's Ministry Tid-bit!

Lifting Others Up

There is something deep within each of us that loves to be first, to win, "to be in." We elbow up through degrees, titles, possessions, rights, privileges, connections, seniority and the like.

Writer Jan Carlberg asks what then? She writes, "God doesn't separate us from those who are lower on the totem pole than we are. He tells us to pull them up with us." God says we are to "Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 19:34

Do you know someone who needs a lift today?

Special Service to Honor Graduates and Retirees

A special service will be held on Friday evening, June 27, to honor St. John members who graduated from high school, college and/or received advanced degrees this year. Retirees will also be honored. Please attend this special service to acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of members of the church.

Online Giving Is Easy

1. Use your PayPal account to send directly to St. John at e-mail address stjohnameh@aol.com. Transfer from your banking account and specify donate/friends and family. THIS IS THE PREFERRED METHOD OF ONLINE GIVING.
2. Simply go to the St. John AMEC website www.stjohname-hsv.org then click on Online Giving. Follow the instructions from there.



AME Proud

The newly selected president of the NAACP, the Reverend Cornell Brooks, is an itinerant Elder in the AME Church. He has pastored in the Washington Conference in the Second Episcopal District. He is known for his work as a social justice activist. His former bishop, Bishop Adam J. Richardson described him as "a preacher (spelled with a capital P)" in an editorial in The Christian Recorder.

Congratulations to the Reverend Cornell Brooks!

Go Green

Support local farmers by purchasing locally grown fruits and vegetables. Plan menus around foods that are in season.

Men's Day

July 13, 2014
10:00 a.m.

The Reverend Bobby Cox, Guest Preacher

Habitat Build 2014 Nears Completion

This year's Habitat for Humanity Spring Build draws to a close. St. John is partnering with St. Matthew, United Church of Huntsville, Aldersgate United Methodist, First Presbyterian, The Church of the Nativity, and First Christian Church. Persons interested in serving on this ministry should report to the work site on the scheduled dates and times.

Here is the most recent schedule. Work hours are 7 am to 2 pm daily with a break at noon for lunch. St. John will provide lunch on June 28.

SCHEDULE FOR 2014 HABITAT HOUSE 2506 Small Brook Circle

DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY
June 17, 19, 21	Tue, Thurs, Sat	Paint walls, install shutters, install underlayment.
June 24, 26, 28	Tue, Thurs, Sat	Clean floors and windows, install vinyl tile, landscape.
July 1, 3, 5	Tue, Thurs, Sat	Install and paint interior doors and trim, install cabinets, and electrical fixtures.
July 8, 10, 12	Tue, Thurs, Sat	Install closet hardware, window blinds, bathroom accessories.
July 15, 17, 19	Tue, Thurs, Sat	Catch up work, touch up paint, clean and wax floors.
July 22, 24, 26	Tue, Thurs, Sat	Work punch list, DEDICATION CEREMONY.



St. John Congratulates Students for 2014 Honors



Alicia Brownlow

- ◊ A-B Honor Roll
- ◊ Yearbook Staff
- ◊ National Technology Honors Society

Destinee Buford

- ◊ A Honor Roll
- ◊ Perfect Attendance

Devin Buford

- ◊ Perfect Attendance

Jared Burns

- ◊ B Honor Roll
- ◊ Perfect Attendance
- ◊ Top SGP in Star Reading
- ◊ Outstanding Achievement in Reading
- ◊ Good Citizenship Award

Chelsea Carter

- ◊ A-B Honor Roll
- ◊ 3rd Place High School Cheerleader Regional Competition
- ◊ 4th Place High School Cheerleader State Competition
- ◊ Qualified for Indoor Track and Field for girls 80 meter/400 meter events
- ◊ 3rd Place Medal for Girls 4/100 meter relay at Huntsville Panthers Invitational Event
- ◊ Certificate of Scholastic Achievement at 2014 High School Honors Convocation

Michael James Clark

- ◊ A-B Honor Roll
- ◊ 1st place Science Fair (5th grade)
- ◊ Selected to attend Youth Leadership Program in Washington D.C.
- ◊ Recycle project participant award
- ◊ Spelling and Science Awards
- ◊ Graduated 5th Grade at First Missionary Baptist CDC & Academy

Patrick Clayborn, II

- ◊ A Honor Roll
- ◊ Athletic Award
- ◊ Character Award
- ◊ Music Award
- ◊ Science Fair Participation
- ◊ AR Reading Honors

Anthony Harbin

- ◊ A Honor Roll
- ◊ 2nd place for AR reading in 4th grade
- ◊ Presidential Award for A score on ACT ASPIRE
- ◊ Scored 98 on Benchmark Reading Test

De'Shaun Harden

- ◊ Star Reader (improved from 1st grade to 4th grade level)

Kennedy Harris

- ◊ A-B Honor Roll
- ◊ Student Government Association
- ◊ 2013-2014 Delta GEM
- ◊ 2013 Summer Leadership Academy at Tuskegee University (2nd Place Female Leadership Award Recipient)
- ◊ 2013 CETPS STEM Camp at AAMU (Placed in four award categories)
- ◊ 2014 Delta Honors Convocation Scholar
- ◊ 2014 NSF/AAMU HBCU-UP Project Summer Bridge Program Finalist
- ◊ 2014 USDA AfriTrek/SciTrek Tuskegee Summer Program Finalist

Caylon Mayes

- ◊ A-B Honor Roll
- ◊ Graduated Kindergarten at Union Chapel Christian Academy

Isaiah Mayes

- ◊ Graduated K-4 Program at Union Chapel Christian Academy

Robyn Sanderson

- ◊ Completed K-4 Program at Harvest Baptist Church CDC

Janise Williams

- ◊ Honor Roll
- ◊ Most Improved in Reading/Math
- ◊ Good Citizenship Award
- ◊ Math facts in a flash completion of 41 levels
- ◊ Six Flags Read to Succeed Award
- ◊ Math Achievement Award



50+ Auxiliary: Catching the Vision

By Mattie Ezell



Commentators from left to right: David Person, Preston Foster, Stephen Foster, Kenneth Anderson, Dr. Darrell Ezell, and Dr. Keith A. Burton.

When the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn came to St. John AME Church about three years ago, he had a vision for the church and invited all members, boards, ministries, and auxiliaries to share that vision with him. The 50+ Auxiliary, representing about one-half of the seniors in the church, is proudly catching and embracing the vision. As the 50+ Auxiliary plans each monthly meeting, they move closer to the vision with captivating programs while keeping their focus on being good disciples. What better way to embrace the vision further than by hosting the first ever live audience taping of 2nd Chance, a local radio show!

On Monday, June 2 at 10:00 am, the 50+ Auxiliary hosted the first ever live audience taping of 2nd Chance, "What's Going On?" radio broadcast at St. John. Mr. Kenneth Anderson, Host/Producer of 2nd Chance WJOU 90.1 FM and his very knowledgeable first Sunday commentators participated admirably in this first ever road taping. The commentators were Dr. Keith Burton, director of Oakwood University Muslim - Adventist Relations; Dr. Darrell Ezell, author of *Beyond Cairo* and Program Director of Interfaith Action Claremont Lincoln University; Mr. Preston Foster, former White House fellow and a political science instructor at Oakwood University; Mr. Stephen Foster, columnist and blogger; and Mr. David Person, USA Today contributor and Host/Producer of WEUP Talk.

In addition, Ms. Sharon Hicks, a magnificent vocalist, sang "To God Be the Glory" and Ms. Sherill Amber Humphrey, a local actress, performed a beautiful, spiritual, dramatic monologue which this writer entitled "Buddy." What a blessing!

In fact, God blessed this program from the inception of the idea until everyone left, stuffed from the best luncheon foods ever.

Jesus is expanding St. John's territory and the 50+ Auxiliary is, indeed, grateful to be a part of this expansion. With the leadership being provided by the Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn and his wife, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, Jesus' words and programs are touching lives.

Stay tuned for a repeat.



Some of the St. John Pentecost Explosion attendees pose for a group picture before boarding the bus for the return trip to Huntsville.

ON BEHALF OF Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Rev. Sheri and Nedra McDaniel (Pentecost Planning Committee): Thank you for your participation in Pentecost Explosion 2014.

THANK YOU to everyone who sacrificed time, money, and energy to attend the PENTECOST EXPLOSION in Montgomery, Alabama on June 8. Your desire to have your heart filled with the Word of God in a historic joint service of Methodists from across our state will surely be rewarded!

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to the Stewards who led the organization of St. John's attendance and participation: Hodges Washington (arrangements for the chartered bus and meal at Golden Corral), Adrienne P-K Washington (arrangements for snacks, water and return meal), Pam Whitehead (chartered bus coordinator), Guy Ginn (managing the ticket spreadsheet and the coordination of the St. John participants' bus), Willie Sandifer (church bus driver). Thank you to Reginald Pearson for coordinating all choir rehearsals, Jennifer Patterson for coordinating the dancers, Darwin Washington, photographer, Eddie Whitehead, bus coordinator, and everyone who purchased tickets, especially those who could not attend but donated them back to the congregation. St. John was well represented at the Pentecost Explosion. Choir members were Charlie Brooks, Reginald Pearson, Donnie Thompson, Edna Owens, Brenda Mack, Eleanor Burnett, Rosemary Wells and Guy Ginn. Ushers from the Sons of Allen were Bill Williams, Glenn Phippen, and Carl Lewis. Dancers and flaggers were Jennifer Patterson, Kaitlyn McClung, Wallace Parham, Xavier Rembert, and Korea Brunner. Kids Zone volunteers were Lauretta Teague, Dr. Thalia Love-Brown, the Reverend Dennis DeLoach, and Lorraine Parham. The special needs team included Paulette Williams, Elijah Wilson, Kenneth Parham, Walter Jenkins, and Aaron Dudley.

Thank you Huntsville sponsors Alabama A&M University and Marshall England, State Farm® Insurance Agent.

Thank you St. John for your prayers and support!



THE 9TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
OF THE
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
James Levert Davis, Servant Bishop
&
Arelis B. Davis, WMS Supervisor
Present
PENTECOST EXPLOSION, 2014

By Charles Brooks

Excitement rang throughout the Ninth months in advance until its culmination as plans from the Episcopal Office to every church began in preparation of the jubilant Pentecost Explosion 2014. Focus prayers and fasting were infused into every leader and member of the District. Servant Bishop and Mother Arelis of the AMEC; Bishop Dennis V Proctor, Presiding Prelate of Alabama/ Florida District of the AMEZC and Bishop Teresa E. Snorton, Presiding Prelate of the 5th Episcopal District of the CMEC, joined to form a team to bring a new thing to their congregants and this celebration.

What is Pentecost? According to the book of Acts, the church came into being on the day of Pentecost. As 120 worshippers, including the Disciples, were fasting and praying in an upper room in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit descended on them in a violent rushing wind that was heard throughout the city. Small flames like fires rested upon their heads and they began to speak in other languages. As crowds came to investigate the commotion, the Apostle Peter spoke to them about Jesus and exhorted them to repent. From the crowd of Jews and converts, 3,000 realized the truth of his words and became followers of Jesus.

The dynamic Pentecost Explosion was held with these three collaborating sister dominations on the beautiful campus of Alabama State University-Hornet Stadium, Montgomery, Alabama, June 8, 2014. This year's theme was "Over Flow – Catch the Fire." The mix of red (AMEs and CMES wore red) and gold (AMEZs wore gold) made a beautiful representation of the fire. As thousands of attendees began to enter to worship, the choir, orchestra and band along with 200 praise dancers rendered Pre-Praise Worship. Video recorded greetings filled the stadium as the growing crowd turned their attention to the huge screen to receive welcomes from the Montgomery mayor and bishops of the three denominations. Greetings were also extended by the President of Alabama State, Dr. Gwendolyn Boyd. After the "Why Are We Here" and other acknowledgements, the "Anthem of Praise" with the Mass Choir and praise dancers drew the amassing crowd onto standing feet.

The fire, already ignited, gained strength as prayer was offered by the Reverend Sammie Nelms and scripture was read in unison by readers in French, Spanish, Luganda, Tswana, Sotho, Zulu and Bedi. After the offering and special words by Bishop Dennis V. Proctor, the congregation heard and sang along with special guest recording artist and Grammy Winner, Mr. Earnest Pugh. The worshippers, for the moment, forgot the heat of the day and exploded with applause for the

(Continued on page 12)



(Continued from page 11)



beautiful music he shared.

The stage was completely set to then receive the Holy Ghost filled guest preacher, Bishop Paul S. Morton. His chosen text was Philippians 3:1 and the sermon topic was "Power of The Resurrection." Bishop Morton stated that Paul wanted to know clearly what this Power of the Resurrected Christ was. Matthew 10:19 states, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Bishop Morton illustrated by sharing that he gives, at appropriate ages, keys to his home to his children (heirs). He explains to them instructions they should follow as owners of these

keys: (1) Do not lose the keys of our home. Our possessions are housed there. (2) Do not give the keys to others. These are for our family; some do not have our values. Even with these specific instructions, he said that all of his children lost their keys. The lesson was "you stand outside your own home, peeking in as a stranger when you can't get in." Worshipers were reminded not to lose their keys or power to the kingdom. The preacher stated that "too many can only get in the lobby." Jesus holds the key to healing for He was slain for our iniquities. On the day of Pentecost we received the power of the Holy Spirit. This is a power that no one can steal. He concluded with a rousing rendition of his powerful song, "Open the Flood Gates of Heaven, Let it Rain."

The Invitation to Discipleship was given to a fiery stadium of worshippers by St John's own, Dr. Patrick Clayborn. As the heat drove all to shelter, they were heard to exclaim, "What a wonderful experience, what a joyous time."

The committees were numerous and all deserve accolades for an unforgettable worship experience. Special thanks to all planners, especially the core committee chairperson, Sister Nedra McDaniel of St. John AMEC, Huntsville. Thank you Sister Nedra!

A Pillar of the Church Memorialized

By James O. Heyward



A pillar of the church, Mr. Arthur A. Burks, Sr., was memorialized May 9, 2014. The homegoing services for Mr. Burks were held at St John and officiated by Pastor Patrick Clayborn, who provided a meaningful eulogy on love and service. Mr. Burks was a faithful and loyal member of St John, served on the Steward Board for many years, and was an active member of the Fifty-Plus Auxiliary.

Mr. Burks was a native Alabamian and attended public schools in Montgomery County, Alabama. He was a graduate of Alabama A&M University. He was an outstanding educator, having served as basketball coach, teacher and principal at Bibb County High School for many years. In 1968, he joined the staff at his Alma Mater and subsequently retired in 1984 as VP for University Relations. In fact, the popular current logo used by Alabama A&M University was designed by Mr. Burks. He also served the University as liaison to the State Legislature in Montgomery. He was well known and respected around the state. He worked tirelessly as an administrator and he loved his Alma Mater. His professional service memberships included the Kiwanis Club, the American Lung Association and the Children's Advocacy Center.

During the service, outstanding remarks and a resolution highlighting his service to the University, the community and his church were given by Dr. Andrew Hugine, President Alabama A&M University; Mrs. Carol Drake-Harris former Assistant and Secretary; Mr. William Bell; and Col. (Ret) James O. Heyward, long-time friend and church member. This giant, peaceful, dignified man touched the lives of almost everyone who attended the service. The love and respect was evident. There were many men who patterned their activities after Mr. Burks.

Mr. Burks was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He is survived by his wife, Altonette; a son, Arthur, Jr., a daughter, Brenda Burks-Evans; five grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren. His legacy of love, respect, and service will endure forever.

Soup Kitchen Corner



"PRAY WITHOUT
CEASING"
1 Thessalonians 5:15

What warm, gentle words written by Paul the Apostle in his letter to the Thessalonians, encouraging and reassuring them as they waited for the return of Jesus Christ. This tender directive reminds many of the love of their mothers and fathers that they still

treasure today.

As this ministry opens the St. John Soup Kitchen twice monthly, they bring forth basic beliefs to show love for their brothers and sisters. They hear the voices of their mothers and fathers reminding them to work hard and then go the extra mile for a perfect stranger and to help someone else along the way.

Their words remembered so vividly, during May (Mother's Day) and June (Father's Day), were to live in peace with one another—to forgive enemies, to bring love where there is hatred, light where there is darkness. Because of the faith instilled in many persons, they continue to feed those less fortunate and to bring good to the less fortunate neighbors.

The Soup Kitchen for the month of May served two hundred fifty meals (Mother's Day) and anticipate serving that many for June (Father's Day).

Rejoice and pray without ceasing that this ministry will continue to bless and bring joy to all whom they serve.



CHURCH PICNIC—AUGUST 16th!



In Memory of Mr. Larry Stanley

On April 22, 2014, Saint John and the Sons of Allen (SOA) lost a very special member. Brother Larry Stanley was a very special person and a very active member of the church and the Sons of Allen. Although Mr. Stanley had only been a member of St. John for a year, it seemed as though he had always been here.

Immediately after joining the church, he made himself known to many members and became active in several ministries. He participated in the Voices in Praise Choir, the Male Chorus and the Drama Ministry. He was a faithful member of the media ministry and the Sons of Allen. Mr. Stanley regularly attend Bible Study Church School.

The Sons of Allen highlighted some of the work done by Mr. Stanley in a resolution that was read at the homegoing service. The resolution included the following statements. From the time he became a member of SOA, he sought responsibility and was eager to make himself useful. He was a dedicated community leader in coordinating the annual Sons of Allen Thanksgiving Food Basket outreach that feeds families in need within the North Alabama Region and he was the lead member in organizing and assisting with the distribution of the food baskets. Brother Larry Stanley was an important factor in assisting with the Sons of Allen Annual Men's Retreat where men in Christ throughout the Huntsville/Madison area gather to fellowship and discuss the work of God for the purpose of becoming better followers, stewards, fathers, husbands, parents, teachers, and recognizing that God is our earthly and heavenly Father;

Mr. Stanley is greatly missed by his church family, his wife, Templena Stanley, father, brother, children and grandchildren.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.



Growing Your Garden

- Anonymous

Plant three rows of squash:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash criticism
3. Squash indifference

Plant seven rows of peas:

1. Prayer
2. Promptness
3. Perseverance
4. Politeness
5. Preparedness
6. Purity
7. Patience

Plant seven heads of lettuce:

1. Let us be unselfish and loyal
2. Let us be faithful to duty
3. Let us search the scriptures
4. Let us not be weary in well doing
5. Let us be obedient in all things
6. Let us be truthful
7. Let us love one another

No garden is complete without turnips:

1. Turn up for church
2. Turn up for meetings, prayer, and Bible study
3. Turn up with a smile, even when things are difficult
4. Turn up with determination to do your best in God's service

After planting, "Grow in Grace" and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (II Peter 3:18) And may you reap rich results. Ensure the garden gets plenty of exposure to the SON!



MS Walk 2014 Team Extends Thanks

By Pat Grier



Huntsville's 'PJ's Partners' team pictured above: From left to right: Lorraine Parham, Pat Grier, Kenneth Parham, Phyllis Barrett, Lillie Rivers, Lula Rochelle, Agnes Gilmore, (front) David and Jonathan Bailey.

Various members of the 'PJ's Partners' Team participated in MS Walks in Dothan on March 8th, in Tampa on April 26th, and here in Huntsville on May 3rd. The Dothan MS Walk was held at West gate Park; the Tampa MS Walk was held at the Lowry Park Zoo and the Huntsville MS Walk was held at the Botanical Gardens. For the 25th year the team had the opportunity to participate in this MS activity to raise funds for research and MS patients support services.

MS is a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system (CNS). Symptoms may be mild, such as numbness in the limbs; or severe, such as paralysis or loss of vision. The progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS are unpredictable and vary from one person to another. A significant portion of the funds raised from the MS Walks go toward the research for new treatments and for hopefully one day soon finding a cure for MS and for support of services for MS patients.

The 'PJ's Partners' team extends a gracious thank you to all of you for your generous contributions and support of this annual team activity and fundraiser. Thanks to your support, the 'PJ's Partners' team will be ranked in the top five for both the Dothan and Huntsville MS Walks for funds raised. The 'PJ's Partners' team members participating this year were Agnes Gilmore, Jackie Grier, Vellry Grier, Pat Grier, Bonnie Inmon, Kenneth Parham, Lorraine Parham, and Phyllis Barrett. Joining the team here in Huntsville this year were Lillie Rivers and Lula Rochelle.



VBS: Trending at St. John



"The Jesus Connection... What a Friend" was trending at St. John June 9-12, 2014. Look for the full report in the next issue of the AMEN.

The lessons from VBS will continue to be taught over the next few weeks at Wednesday Bible Study. Come out each week to continue the connection. VBS teachers will continue to teach their class on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm.



TRUSTEE CORNER

What can St. John members do to help?

As Christians, we all share in the spiritual development for eternal life, in a heavenly house not made with hands while at the same time we, the members and trustees of St. John AME Church- Huntsville, also share the responsibility of temporal but earthly houses that are made with hands.

Due to the increase in activities at the church, it is helpful when ministries, boards, organizations and members who use the Lord's house leave the premises in order and clean for the next event or group utilizing the same area. Presently, we do not have a full time maintenance staff that can respond appropriately after each event of facility usage; but with everyone pitching in and taking a little responsibility, this will certainly go a long way in achieving our goals.

The following are simple rules based on common sense and showing respect for God and others.

(Continued on page 17)

Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams



Coffee Shop Tech Etiquette 101

Many people find themselves often visiting a coffee shop. The reason may be to meet friends, a business arrangement or simply to drop in for a cup of coffee. Do you ever find yourself trying to get work or studying done at your favorite coffee shop but cannot seem to get things done for various reasons? With so many tech commuters today, everyone should use common courtesy during visits to the coffee shop. This article provides tips for "Tech Etiquette" for some common courtesies that can be used.

First, look at space. Knowing that people like to be comfortable while using their favorite tech gadget at the coffee shop, one must understand that space is limited and important to SHARE. That is correct. Share your space at the coffee shop.

Next, one must also have power in order to use the tech gadgets at the coffee shop. It is known that almost all power outlets are taken when at the coffee shop. To prevent this issue, purchase a small power strip and keep it in the backpack or laptop bag. A 2 to 3 plug power strip can be purchased at a low price at any store that carries electronics. The power strip can also be shared amongst others at the coffee shop.

Thirdly, know the tech device's capabilities. Assume that there is no backup power or charging unit for your device. If the device has four hours of battery life at a full charge, then one can dim the LCD screen or throttle down the CPU to extend the battery life while at the coffee shop.

Remember these etiquette tips when using tech devices at the coffee shop to create a pleasant experience for all users.

Pre-Pentecost Service Begins Spirit-filled Weekend



On Friday, June 6, 2014, worship services were held at 8:30 pm at St. John. This service was in preparation for Pentecost and was held in place of the normal Sunday morning worship service.

Music was led by the St. John Praise Ensemble and special selections were rendered by the Inspirational Choir of First

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, under the direction of Mr. Cleveland Wilson.

Pastor Clayborn preached from the text Acts 2:1-4 and the sermon was entitled "Cross Training: The Empty Place." His sermon centered on the "empty place" in which the Disciples found themselves after Jesus' ascension. To make it through the "empty places" in life, Pastor Clayborn stated that one must hang on, be in harmony with one another, and stay where God assigns.

The sermon was a foundation on which one could build as they prepared for Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. It prepared worshippers for the celebration that was to come on Pentecost Sunday.

St. John Welcomes New Members

St. John welcomes the following new members who joined during the third quarter of this conference year.

Jamela Bradford
Willie Bradford
Korea Brunner
Tenecia Crawford (Affiliated)
Celeste Gilmore
Sharon Hicks
Patrice Holland
Tyrrell Hutchins (Affiliated)
Dollie Mack
Jessika S. White and children Kae'Jon and Wesley Sims

Infant Baptism: Alani Victoria Mangrum

We thank God for the increase!



TRUSTEE CORNER

(Continued from page 16)

Honoring God Honors Us: If we keep God's commandments and honor the Lord's holy places, then we do honor to ourselves as well.

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness: Be certain to keep the church clean as a way to honor God. After church classes or church meals, make certain that all chairs and tables are where they should be and throw away all paper in trash bins. Clean up after yourself in the bathroom and cooperate with any other rules of the church sanitation staff.

No Food, Beverages or Chewing Gum in the Sanctuary: This is another way of respecting the sanctity of God's house. Use of these items is too casual in church and runs the risk of ruining church property and wasting tithes made to God on repairs that would not otherwise be necessary. While the chewing gum rule is sometimes broken, its use should be kept to a minimum, and it should always be disposed of properly (not under pews, in Bibles or on other church property). Please do not allow children to chew gum in the sanctuary.

Treatment of Church Bibles and Hymnals: Bibles and Hymnals that are placed in pews are to be treated with care and respect. They should not be written on or used to dispose of gum. They are the property of the church and should not be taken home. Let the church leadership know if Bibles and Hymnals are in need of repair.

Keep the Outside of the Church Building Neat and Clean: The outside of the church reflects the inside of the church. Help make certain that trash is picked up and that nothing unsightly mars the look of God's house.

Suggestions and concerns are welcomed. Make your recommendations to the Trustee Board for any physical church furnishings or equipment items that need repair, are not working or has out lived its designed purpose. Report these directly to any member of the Trustee Board or you can acquire a "Property Maintenance Notification" form from the church office.

You may also contact the Trustee Board via the website at stjohnname-hsv.org. The Trustee Corner information as well as a list of trustees is posted on the site.



Sickle Cell Anemia

By Rosemary Wells

World Sickle Cell Day is celebrated on June 19th; it is recognized globally and was created by the United Nations by resolution. This day is set aside to raise awareness of the disease in the world. In the United States, Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month is in September; it is not recognized in every state or globally. It is created by State representatives voting to recognize it in their individual state. World Sickle Cell Day and Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month are NOT the same.

Normally, a person inherits two genes that tell the body to produce normal hemoglobin A. One gene comes from each parent. Children with sickle cell disease have two defective hemoglobin S genes, one from each parent. People who inherit one defective hemoglobin S gene and one normal hemoglobin A gene have sickle cell trait. These people don't have symptoms of sickle cell disease, and their bodies don't make sickled blood cells. But they have a 1-out-of-2 (50%) chance of passing the defective hemoglobin S gene to each of their children.

If both parents have sickle cell trait, each of their children will have a 1-out-of-4 (25%) chance of having sickle cell disease. If one parent has sickle cell disease (has two genes for making hemoglobin S) and the other has sickle cell trait (has one hemoglobin S gene and one normal hemoglobin A gene), each of their children will have a 1-out-of-2 (50%) chance of having sickle cell disease and a 1-out-of-2 (50%) chance of having sickle cell trait. If one parent has sickle cell disease (two hemoglobin S genes) and the other has two hemoglobin A genes, each of their children will have sickle cell trait. None of the children will have sickle cell disease.

AN ESTIMATED 100,000 PEOPLE
LIVE WITH SICKLE CELL DISEASE
IN THE U.S. AND MILLIONS
AFFECTED GLOBALLY.



People whose ancestors were from Africa, India, the Middle East, the Mediterranean (Turkey, Italy, Greece), and some Latin American countries are more likely to inherit the gene that can cause sickle cell disease. In the United States, about 2,000 children are born each year with sickle cell disease.

Normal red blood cells have a 120-day life span. But people born with sickle cell disease have sickle-shaped blood cells that usually live no more than 20 days. These sickle cells

can get stuck in blood vessels, blocking vessels, and blocking blood flow. Painful events (sickle cell crisis) in the hands or feet, stomach, back or chest are the most common symptoms of sickle cell disease. This pain can last from hours to days, and can occur rarely to often.

People with sickle cell disease often have anemia, caused by a shortage of red blood cells. Anemia makes one feel weak and tired. People with sickle cell anemia may look pale or washed out. Their skin and the whites of their eyes may have a yellowish look (jaundice).

A simple blood test can show whether a person has sickle cell disease. Sickle cell disease is diagnosed when initial tests show abnormal hemoglobin, with more testing if needed. A sickle cell test looks for sickle cell trait and sickle cell disease. Doctors can diagnose sickle cell disease before a child is born (prenatally). Most states in the United States screen all newborns for sickle cell disease along with other common disorders before they go home from the hospital. Couples who are at risk for passing on this disease to their children may want to talk with a genetic counselor about prenatal testing.

Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that is not preventable. Having sickle cell disease means a lifelong battle against the health problems it can cause. Treatment involves getting routine tests to monitor health, managing pain events (crisis), and treating related health problems as they arise. Many people are able to have a very good quality of life by learning to manage the disease.



.....AWARENESS AND ACTION WILL CHANGE A CURATIVE INTO A CURE!

Church School Lesson Overview – July 2014

This month's reviews were written by Willie J. Sandifer and Claudinette Purifoy-Fears (July 13).

July 6, 2014

Lesson Title: Glorify God with your Body

Lesson Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:12-7:9

Print: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Devotional Songs: #21 [], #272 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?" (1 Corinthians 6:19).

Paul tries to resolve conflict when persons with different morals and values think they are free to do as they please. These folks thought they were free to establish rules that were outside of the boundaries set by Jesus. They overlooked the fact that Christian disciples were called to one faith, one baptism, and one God who sets the game plan for the actions of all believers without exceptions.

In this lesson, the emphasis is still on the temple, but the human temple, the body of the believer. Paul urged the Corinthians to have reverence toward their bodies, like the regard they had for the physical temple. In the temple, only certain prescribed rituals and ceremonies were permitted. The believer is to restrict what he/she permits for his/her body.

July 13, 2014

Lesson Title: Love Builds Up

Lesson Scripture: 1 Corinthians 8

Print: Same

Devotional Songs: #431 [], #251 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak" (1 Corinthians 8:9).

The lesson centers on the principles of love and knowledge. Having dealt with their questions about marriage and singleness, Paul now addresses (in 1 Corinthians chapters 8-10) the next of their questions regarding eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols. The meat offered on pagan altars was usually divided into three portions. One portion was burnt in honor of the god, one portion was given to the worshipper to take home and eat, and the third portion was given to the priest. If the priest chose not to eat his portion, he sold it at the temple meat market.

The issue raised many questions for the Corinthian Christians such as, can we eat meat purchased at the temple meat market, or can Christians eat meat that was offered to idols? Instead of addressing the issue of food, Paul first talked about the principles of knowledge and love. Christian behavior is founded on love, not knowledge, and the goal of the Christian life is not knowledge, but love. Paul cautioned that if persons think they know it all, they really do not know anything. Therefore, people should never be boastful and make others feel less than.

The Corinthian Christians who felt free to eat at the pagan temple or eat food sacrificed to idols may have based their freedom on correct knowledge (knowing that idols are nothing) and that there is only one God. Paul asked the Corinthian Christians who knew there was nothing to an idol to remember that not everyone shared this knowledge. And if someone believed there was something to an idol, and they ate meat that had been sacrificed to an idol, their conscience, being weak, would be corrupted.

You are not more spiritual if you know idols are nothing and feel a personal freedom to eat food sacrificed to idols (neither if we eat are we the better). No one is less spiritual for abstaining from food sacrificed to idols. This is the very point where most stumble in issues relevant to Christian liberty (such as movies, drinking, music, or television). They assume that one stance or another is evidence of greater or lesser spirituality.

Paul reminds us that love is the key to Christian behavior. Therefore, it would be better not to eat food, even if your consciousness allows, than to lead a fellow Christian to sin.

July 20, 2014

Lesson Title: Overcoming Temptation

Lesson Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:1-22

Print: 1 Corinthians 10:12-22

Tentative Devotional Songs: #413 [], #258 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also pro-

(Continued on page 20.)



Church School Lesson Overview – July 2014

(Continued from page 19)

vide the way out so that you may be able to endure it' (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Paul encourages and reassures the Corinthian church so it will remain on task and be faithful to the spiritual legacy Jesus left for us. This is particularly important today when electronic media is bombarding us with images and messages designed to cultivate our loyalty to false gods.

To really take hold of what Paul was saying to the Corinthians, we must grow in understanding of two things: 1. The church was new and most of the people in the church came from a background of either Judaism or paganism. So, it is easy to understand why converts to Christianity were still struggling with some of their former practices. 2. The idea of the people becoming one with God to whom they sacrificed was not a new concept introduced by the Apostle Paul. In Judaism when a worshipper offered a sacrifice, some of the offering was a symbol of reuniting with the God to whom the sacrifice was offered.

Paul was urging the believers to see themselves as united with Christ by way of the communion. And since the Jews held to the maxim of one God one Lord, the believers could not be one with Jesus and one with the pagan gods at the same time. Rituals relating to their former pagan religions had to go.

July 27, 2014

Lesson Title: Seek the Good of Others

Lesson Scripture: 1 Corinthians 14:13-26

Print: Same

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525 ☐; 77; and #243 ☐

Key Verses: "When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

The Apostle put speaking in tongues in a proper perspective for the church at Corinth. He did not condemn it, but pointed out the negative results from improper use. Speaking in tongues is clearly recognized as one of the spiritual gifts. It must not be abused and must not be used in a glib or used in an ostentatious way.

Paul's point is that in a corporate worship setting, what is permitted should be done for the building up of all persons present. Prophecy, which is the gift of encouragement, is far more appropriate in corporate worship services. All gifts have their purpose and place, and Paul gave a lesson in the relative use of those two gifts.

Church School Book Club

June 2014 Discussion Date: 21 June 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Delilah, Sheila M. Goss, 2010

July 2014 Discussion Date: 19 July 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

They Tell Me of a Home, Daniel Black, 2008

Twenty-eight-year-old protagonist Tommy Lee Tyson steps off the Greyhound bus in his hometown of Swamp Creek, Arkansas--a place he left when he was eighteen, vowing never to return. Yet fate and a Ph.D. in black studies force him back to his rural origins as he seeks to understand himself and the black community that produced him. A cold, nonchalant father and an emotionally indifferent mother make his return, after a ten-year hiatus, practically unbearable, and the discovery of his baby sister's death and her burial in the backyard almost consumes him. His mother watches his agony when he discovers his sister's tombstone, but neither she nor other family members is willing to disclose the secret of her death. Only after being prodded incessantly does his older brother, Willie James, relent and provide Tommy Lee with enough knowledge to figure out exactly what happened and why.

Meanwhile, Tommy's seventy-year-old teacher-lying on her deathbed--asks him to remain in Swamp Creek and assume her position as the headmaster of the one-room schoolhouse. He refuses vehemently and she dies having bequeathed him her five thousand-book collection in the hopes that he will change his mind. Over the course of a one-week visit, riddled with tension, heartache, and revelation, Tommy Lee Tyson discovers truths about his family, his community, and his undeniable connection to rural Southern black folk and their ways.



July 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	3 Office Closed	4  Office Closed	5
6 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship DEADLINE FOR AMEN	7 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	8 6:00 p.m. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	9 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	10 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	11 12 Sons of Allen Retreat	
13 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship MEN'S DAY	14	15 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	16 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	17	18 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	19 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:00 a.m. Church School Book Club 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir
20 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	21 22 23 24 25 26 9th District Christian Education Congress Troy University Troy, Alabama					26 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. WBSB Meeting
27 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	28	29 6:30 p.m. Church School Board Mtg.	30 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	31 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal		

St. John AME Church
229 Church Street
Huntsville, Alabama 35801
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(256) 534-6828 Fax

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The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop

Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

June 27, 2014	Graduate/Retiree Recognition, The Reverend Gregory Bentley, Preacher, 6:30 p.m.
June 29, 2014	Women's Day, The Reverend Doctor Carolyn Knight, Guest Preacher, 10:00 a.m.
July 11-12, 2014	Men's Retreat, Lake Guntersville
July 13, 2014	Men's Day, The Reverend Bobby Cox, Guest Preacher
July 21-24, 2014	Ninth District CEC and Ministers Training at Troy University
August 16, 2014	Church Picnic

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. Romans 10:9

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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 7

July 2014

Pastor's Message



Pastor Patrick D. Clayburn, Ph.D.



&



Power Up Acts 1:8

Matthew 18: 19-20 Get Connected

Praise God! This is turning out to be a blessed summer in the life of St. John. Last month, we celebrated the Pentecost Explosion in Montgomery, AL. Immediately following, we had Vacation Bible School (VBS). Our theme was "Get Connected." That is what we have been doing! We've been getting connected.

Our women had a fabulous retreat in Florence, AL, with powerful guest presenters: Rev. Sheryl Shipman – pastor of Mt. Zion AMEC in Trussville – and Rev. Agnus Lover – pastor of St. Paul AMEC in Florence. The event was led by Rev. Sheri, Sis. Laretta Teague and the Women's Ministry. Afterwards, we celebrated all of our graduates and retirees. That night, Rev. Gregory Bentley, the pastor of Fellowship Presbyterian, stirred our souls with a profound reflection on the feeding of the 5,000. Just as soon as we finished digesting that "manna," we received a challenge as we honored the women on Women's Day. Rev. Dr. Carolyn Knight, our guest preacher for that morning, asked us, "If Not Now, When?" As soon as the women began to gear up for more ministry in the present moment, the men were charged with being focused on the process of becoming greater. Rev. Bobby Cox, our Men's Day preacher, told us that "Greater Is Coming!" Through the ministry and work of our women, men, graduates, retirees, Christian Education Department who puts together VBS, and these wonderful guest preachers, we are getting connected to each other and to God.

Now, we are giving special attention to our youth and young adults as we approach our Christian Education Congress at Troy State University, our first iThrive Sunday morning worship service here at St. John on July 27th – with guest preacher Pastor Willie Diggs (youth pastor from Beacon) – and our next Friday Nite Live (FNL) on August 1st – with guest preacher Pastor Adrian Davis (pastor of All Nations). At FNL, DJ Sam will be on the FNL turntables; guest artist LP will minister through rap; and the Psalm 3 Ministry will share their gifts of miming. We thank God in advance for the blessings God will send through these wonderful guest preachers and worship participants. We welcome them with open arms and anticipate breakthrough!

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

In keeping with VBS, the iThrive team has chosen as its theme – "Power Up – Get Connected!" I can hear the same thought in the words of Jesus, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Jesus rehearsed this train of thought often: "Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:19-20). Jesus informs us that we power up through our connection to God. When we give control of our lives over to God's Spirit, we find that power is available. That power leads us to testify to God's goodness throughout the earth. As we meet fellow believers, we connect through our testimonies. When we find harmony, that connection leads to greater power. Our prayers are more powerful, and our harmony invites God's presence.

I realize that questions may arise out of practical need. How does this powering up help me pay my bills? How does all of this getting connected reverse the trauma of my childhood? Will this powering up give me a spouse? Will this getting connected get me better grades? Does powering up carry any weight in a job interview or school application? Why do I need this getting connected that iThrive is preaching when I have plenty of Facebook friends and Twitter followers? Is this powering up even necessary when I am in charge on my job and in my home?

To begin answering these questions and so much more, make your way to our iThrive service and our FNL worship experience. If you have prayer requests, email them to us at stjohnameh@aol.com. We will be sure to lift them at our FNL event.

"But the hour is coming and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him." (John 4:23)

It's time to POWER UP and GET CONNECTED!!!!



Weekly Prayer Time
Tuesday Mornings
6:00 am

Conference Call Credentials
US Toll Number* (530) 881-1212, Meeting ID: 876-863-940

All lines will be muted during the call. If you have special prayer requests, please e-mail them to the church at stjohnameh@aol.com prior to the call.

If you are not able to listen to the prayer call at 6:00 am, you may listen to the playback any time during the day. Playback Number* (530) 881-1219, Meeting Id 876-863-940, Press # twice and ignore any requests for reference number. A URL link to the recorded prayer is also e-mailed to everyone on the St. John e-mail list.

ITHRIVE & ST JOHN AME CHURCH PRESENTS

FRIDAYNITE LIVE

THE WORD & WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

GUEST ARTIST
L.P.

PASTOR
ADRIAN DAVIS
All Nations
Christian Center

7PM @ST JOHN AME CHURCH
AUGUST 1, 2014

FEATURING

S.A.M SMITE

PASTOR PC

WWW.FNLHSV.COM
229 CHURCH ST. HUNTSVILLE, AL 35801

St. John A.M.E. Church

FRIDAYNITE LIVE

S.A.M SMITE



Graduates and Retirees Honored at Special Service

The Annual Graduate and Retiree Recognition Service was held on Friday evening, June 27, 2014, at 8:30 p.m. The opening hymn, "We've Come This Far by Faith," was led by the Director of Music, Mr. Reginald Pearson. Prayer was offered by Brother Rufus Gilmore and scripture was read by the Reverend Meriam Garrett from Isaiah 43:18-19. Musical selections were rendered by two guest soloists. Brother Rodney Milton of St. Bartley Primitive Baptist Church sang "Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" and Brother Jonathan Bender of First Missionary Baptist Church played and sang "My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord."



The Reverend Bentley delivers the sermon.

The guest preacher, the Reverend Gregory Bentley, was introduced by Pastor Clayborn. The Reverend Bentley is the pastor of Fellowship Presbyterian Church, located on Meridian Street in Huntsville, Alabama. The message was centered on John 6:1-14 and entitled "In God's Hands." He began by stating that Jesus came to earth and did all the miraculous things that He did because He was "in God's hands." The Reverend Bentley's message highlighted the steps that Jesus took in the text when He fed five thousand with five (5) loaves of bread and two (2) fish and related the steps to directions for graduates and retirees. The steps taken from the text were elevation, invitation (by integration), preparation, investigation, organization, dedication, receiving, and preservation. To follow these steps, one must put themselves in God's hands and, as a result, He will bless them.

During the service, the honorees were recognized and presented gifts from the church. A fellowship reception was held following the service. Preparations for the reception were made by the kitchen and the hospitality ministries. This service is sponsored annually by the church's scholarship committee.

St. John 2014 Graduates and Retirees

High School Graduate

Wallace Edward Parham graduated from Sparkman High School with the Advanced High School Diploma. Wallace will attend the University of South Alabama and he plans to earn a degree in Physical Therapy and pursue a career that will allow him to assist others. Wallace Edward Parham is the son of Kenneth and Lorraine Parham, and the cousin of Walter Nikolby Jenkins.

College Graduates

Ashley-Ann C. Lewis graduated from J. F. Drake State Technical Community College with an Associate's Degree in Applied Technology. Ashley plans to further her education. Ashley-Ann C. Lewis is the daughter of Carl and Dawn Lewis.

Graduate School Graduates

Keri Vochon Daniels graduated from Strayer University with a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Keri is currently employed by the Corp of Engineers as an intern. Keri Vochon Daniels is the daughter of Angelia and Sylvester Daniels.

Timyra Marshall graduated from Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University with a Master of Science Degree in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling. Timyra plans to work as a vocational rehabilitation counselor and/or a substance abuse counselor, helping individuals overcome their addictions in the area of substance abuse.

Glenda Faye Sconiers graduated from Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University

(Continued on page 5)

Graduates and Retirees Honored at Special Service

(Continued from page 4)

with a Master of Science Degree in Counseling Psychology. Glenda plans to work as a therapist/mental health counselor. Glenda Faye Sconiers' family members who attend St. John are Arthur Sconiers (husband), Rakita and Adrina Sconiers (daughters), and Vercie and Valora Johnson and Audrie Jones (grandchildren).

Medical School Graduate

Chariss Chambers graduated from the School of Medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She affiliated with St. John while completing her medical residency in Huntsville. The church prays God's blessings upon her, wherever the Lord may send her.

Retirees

Jill Burwell retired from Huntsville City School System with 25 years of service in May 2014. During her tenure at Huntsville City Schools, she held many positions, starting as a clerk typist during the late 1980's; taught 4th grade for 10 years; served as assistant principal for 7 years and finished her career as Principal of Davis Hills Middle school. Her future plans are to relocate to Georgia with her fiancé Sammy Jackson.

Lieutenant Colonel Felicia Carter retired on June 1, 2014 after a 28 year career, she served ten consecutive years on active duty prior to being assigned to the Army Reserves. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from the Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University and graduated as a Distinguished Military Graduate. LTC Felicia Carter is married to Clarence L. Carter of Mobile, Alabama. They have one daughter, Chelsea.

Donnie Thompson retired from Madison County Department of Human Resources after 25.5 years of service as a Senior Social Worker. Donnie's future plans include becoming a business owner. Deetra, Drucilla and Earl Fitchard are Donnie's family members who also attend St. John AMEC.

Kenneth R. Parham retired from the United States Army Aviation and Missile Command. Brother Parham plans to continue to work in his current field as a Safety Engineer with a Department of Defense Contractor. Kenneth R. Parham's family members at St. John are Lorraine Parham (wife), Wallace (son), and Walter Nikolby Jenkins (nephew).



Pictured (from left to right): The Reverend Bentley, Pastor Clayborn, Wallace Parham, Ashley-Ann Lewis, Kenneth Parham, Donnie Thompson, Tamara Marshall, Felicia Carter and Glenda Sconiers.

Women's Retreat Focuses on Theme "Prayer and Praise: Your Passport to Abundant Living"

By Bridger J. Floyd

The Women of St. John and friends came together at the Shoals Marriott Resort and Spa in Florence, Alabama for a time to reflect spiritually and participate in fun and relaxing activities. People began gathering in the afternoon of Friday, June 20th and events culminated mid-afternoon on Saturday, June 21st. The Women's Day theme was "Do You See What I See?" The retreat focus was "Prayer and Praise: Your Passport to Abundant Living". Leaders/presenters were the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, Executive Minister of St. John AME Church; the Reverend Agnes Lover, Pastor of Greater St. Paul AME Church, Florence, Alabama; and the Reverend Sheryl Shipman, Pastor of Mt. Zion AME Church, Trussville, Alabama.



In picture on the left, the Reverend Sheri leads the attendees in reflections prior to the worship. On the right, some attendees participate in an illustration on stage.

The Reverend Sheri led the women in reflection before the worship service led by the Reverend Lover. The Reverend Sheri set the tone with an overview for retreat participation, guidelines, and the spiritual focus on prayer and praise. She noted the importance of seeking "what God wants for us" and seeking "wise counsel". She highlighted the deleterious role of fear and the positive aspect of "extending grace as we would like to be extended grace."



Praise service in preparation for the preached word on Friday

The Reverend Lover preached on the topic "Open Your Eyes" from the text II Kings 6: 8-17. She emphasized the importance of having a relationship with God and to be mindful that "you are a virtuous woman"; and as such should not be swayed by "reality" television and the phoniness associated with that and much that is in the world. The Reverend Lover stated, "We have Christian values... open your eyes". She indicated the importance of having a relationship with God, reflecting on the text where Elijah prayed and the Lord opened the servant's spiritual eyes and the enemy was struck by blindness. The encouragement given by the preacher was that "the battle is not yours, it's the Lord's" and that in life and relationships there is the need for change and adjustment, and that *adjustment* needs to start with *prayer*.

Friday night events culminated with fun and laughter during "Sistah Talk" a Pajama Party activity.

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Women's Retreat Focuses on Theme "Prayer and Praise: Your Passport to Abundant Living"

By Bridger J. Floyd



The Reverend Agnes Lover presents Saturday workshop on prayer.



The Reverend Sheryl Shipman presents workshop on praise.

(Continued from page 6)

Saturday morning began with independent waking and exercise. The first gathering was for prayer, followed by a delicious breakfast buffet and then the workshops began. The first workshop was on *Prayer*, followed by the second which was on *Praise*. The Reverend Lover presented/preached the first and the Reverend Shipman presented/preached the second.

The Reverend Lover instructed that one should "pray from the heart" which will "change your experience in life ... blessings will flow. God will give you strength to overcome". She noted that "in its highest form prayer is communion with God". Prayers do not have to be complicated because "God meets us where we are." The Reverend Lover highlighted the instructions as to what prayer should be in Matthew 6: 5-8. Numerous scriptural references were given as guidance for prayer.



Group photo opportunity.

The Reverend Shipman entitled the praise workshop, "What Does Your Praise Look Like?" She referenced Psalm 150, noting that the command to praise God is in the Old and New Testaments. She stated that "praise is more than what we say or do... praise is who we are when we're in a real relationship with God". She asked, "Does your praise encourage others or is it a show on Sundays?" The Reverend Shipman haikened to the past in terms of worship years ago when "they came with praises on the inside". She supported praise in terms of sincerity versus "show" and that it may manifest itself in a myriad of ways and may be more external for some while others may be less demonstrative. She indicated that "only you and the Lord know what your praise looks like and if it's for real."

Lunch was served and participants reflected on their experiences during the retreat. Many shared what they found enlightening and encouraging. One significant result of the warm welcoming spirit of St John ladies and the word of God, as presented by the women called to ministry, was the addition of a new member to the St John family. The women in attendance related in fun, relaxation, but most importantly, spiritually. The Reverend Sheri, Mrs. Lauretta Teague and the committee did an outstanding job of coordinating a well-rounded retreat.

"Do You See What I See?" "If Not Now, When?"

2014 Women's Day Service

By Barbara Johnson



Dr. Knight and Pastor Clayborn

Look into the mirror. "Do You See What I See?" The journey to discovery for the women of St. John A.M.E. Church began the weekend of June 20-21st at the Women's Retreat. It culminated on Sunday, June 29th with the dynamic preaching of our guest minister, the Reverend Doctor Carolyn Knight, Founder/President, "Can Do!" Ministries in Atlanta, Georgia. The women's spiritual pumps were primed at the Women's Retreat by the Reverend Agnes Lover of Greater St. Paul AMEC, Florence, Alabama and the Reverend Sheryl Shipman, Mt. Zion AMEC, Trussville, Alabama. To really see what's in the mirror, the Reverend Lover suggested we "Open Our Eyes." Open our eyes to worship and learning to pray. The Reverend Shipman followed with, after we've learned to worship and pray, we need to learn how to "PRAISE!" Between Worship, Pray and Praise, the women were ready for the Reverend Knight, "If Not Now, When?"

The Sunday Women's Day service opened with a current rendition of, "Savior More than Life to Me," sung by Sister Amber Davis. Little Misses Channing Wilson and Callyn Williams served as acolytes. The Call to Worship was offered by the Reverend Merriam Garrett. The congregation joined in the singing of the opening hymn, "Praise Him." Sister Pamela Whitehead gave an inspirational prayer, after which the scripture, Exodus 14:10-14, was read by mother and daughter, Sister Karen Minor and Sister Shayla Wilson. Sister Donna Gullatte and Sister O'Torria Williams spoke on the occasion of the event by highlighting several women of the Bible (Eve, Deborah, Esther, and Mary) as women used to reflect the image of godly women, worshiping and living authentically. The guests and visitors were recognized in a unique way by Sister Mary Rankin.



Ministry in music was led by the Women's Choir (left) and duet (right) by Jakeyah Williams and Deidre Walton

The congregation was treated to three dynamic, dramatic and theatrical presentations. The first by Miss Amber Humphrey, a spoken word presentation entitled, "Buddy." The second, an original poem, "Do You See What I See," written and performed by Miss Kaitlyn McClung. Third, Miss Mariah Gullatte ministered in liturgical dance to the song, "Imagine Me," by Kirk Franklin.

Pastor Clayborn introduced the Reverend Doctor Carolyn Knight, founder/President, "Can Do!"

(Continued on page 9)

2014 Women's Day Service

By Barbara Johnson

*(Continued from page 8)*

Ministries, Atlanta, Georgia, by not only sharing highlights of her vitae, but also sharing a brief anecdotal story.

The Reverend Carolyn Knight greeted the congregation with the usual Methodist protocol and then offered the scripture, Daniel 3:1-18. While viewed as a very familiar scripture, (the story of the three Hebrew boys, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego), Dr. Knight explained that the understanding begins to deepen as one hears these familiar Bible stories over and over again. The Reverend Knight lifted this subject from the scripture, "If Not Now, When?" Four points were derived from the sermon.

First, when critical, life-altering decisions arrive, it is important to ask, "If not now, when?" The three Hebrew boys were at a critical, life-altering state. They had heard the command, however, they refused to bow down and worship the golden image King Nebuchadnezzar had erected. When called before the King to explain their actions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego took a stand and declared that their God would deliver them and even if He did not, they would still worship Him. The King sent the three to the fiery chamber, but when he looked in he saw four instead of three. When the boys were allowed to walk out, they were not singed, and did not smell of smoke. The king wanted to know, why?

The second point, while a person may be pushed or pulled into a problem situation, similar to the Hebrew boys, God is still there with them and he will see them through. The Reverend Knight stated, "Whatever you're going through, it is better to go through it with God, than to go through it without God."

(Continued on page 10)

2014 Women's Day Service

By Barbara Johnson

*(Continued from page 9)*

Thirdly, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, had come to a critical bend in their lives where they had to "put some flesh on their faith." They had to really believe that God would deliver them. The preacher then explained how believers should handle critical situations in their lives. "It is our time now, to stand up straight and not bow down, because God is bigger than our circumstances. We should not limit God. When trouble comes into our lives, don't try to compare your outcomes, but trust God, even when you don't know God's plan. Trusting God, calls for following the process. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, followed the God process. Even when they did not know that God would deliver them, they were still going to worship Him. Even if God does not deliver you, He will sustain you. He will give you peace in the midst of your situation. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, told the king, we would rather burn than bow down. God delivered them because He is able!"

Finally, God did deliver Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And just as He was able to deliver them, He can still do it for persons who trust Him. "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego exercised proactive Faith. They got out in front of the situation. 'And even if you don't deliver us,' they said, 'we will still praise you.'" They called to memory those other times when God had delivered them and began praising Him. And they knew, if He did it then, He would do it again. "I don't know what you see, but I see them pressing the rewind button to see when God had come through for them before." The Reverend Knight then related one last image to culminate her sermon. Being an avid golfer, she related a story about Tiger Woods. "When asked how he, in 2000, used a six iron to hit a ball out of the sand, across the water, had it to land in the green, six inches from the hole, to tap it in for birdie, in the dark, Tiger replied, 'I've done it before.'" "How do I know God's going to bless you; keep you; make a way for you; ensure you meet your destiny---HES DONE IT BEFORE!"

The Reverend Knight ended her powerful and spirit-filled sermon by saying, "Whatever you see in your future, you need to 1) be prepared to take a stand, 2) know that it is better to go through it with God, than to go through it without God, 3) believe that God will deliver you, but even if He does not, continue to praise Him, and 4) If He did it once....GOD WILL DO IT AGAIN!" At which time the congregation erupted in praise, thanksgiving and singing, "He's Able!"

While the spirit was still high, all the women of the church were invited to the altar for a special prayer for women given by the Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn.

The Women's Day Committee was chaired by Mrs. Yvonne Barbour, with assistance from the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn. Additional committee members were Sisters Mattie Ezell, Janette Smith, Donna Gullatte, Pamela Whitehead, O'Torria Williams, Mary Rankin and Shayla Wilson.



TRUSTEE CORNER

Completed Project

HVAC Upgrade: Our sanctuary has experienced excessive high temperatures during summer months due to lack of current HVAC (btu) capacity available to handle this load. In addition, yearly historical temperature data has shown a progressive trend of increased temperatures in the Huntsville area over the past years, since 2008 with the exception of 2013CY. The Trustee Board has investigated various proposals to resolve this problem. Members may notice additional units in the sanctuary and on the roof of the church.

Upcoming / In -Progress Major Projects

1. Automated Security Access & Monitoring
2. Eaves Repair and Painting (Exterior)
3. Landscape Grounds and Beautification (Exterior)
4. Fellowship Room divider repair

iTHRIVE Ministers to the Young and Young at Heart

By Janette R. Smith



"Reclaiming our Youth and Young Adults" is more than a catchy phrase for St. John AMEC - it is a priority and mission. iTHRIVE ministry was created in the spring of 2012 to help add support to the existing YPD program by offering more mentoring, life skills workshops, and hands-on family, relationship and career coaching. Since that time the youth membership numbers have increased at St. John AMEC and the congregation has witnessed the evangelism power of our youth as many have led their parents and families to Christ and church membership. In an innovative move for the AMEC legacy, iTHRIVE created *Friday Nite Live (FNL)* the Word and Worship event that ministers to the youth, young adults and young at heart in a contemporary and relevant way. Attendees have come to Christ, gotten counseling for suicide risk, joined the church and rededicated their lives to Christ through this ministry vehicle.

NOW iTHRIVE ministry is taking another step toward bridging the gap between youth ministry and regular adult services by holding its first Sunday morning service at St. John AMEC July 27th. At the second service (10:50am) a more contemporary expression of our order of service will usher in the presence of God with creative spoken word ministry and ministry through dance and song. The congregation will "enter into His courts with praise" as they are met in the sanctuary by high praise led by the St. John AMEC musicians and praise and worship ensemble. The guest preacher, Youth Pastor Willie Diggs, from the Beacon Worship Center in Huntsville, Alabama will bring a powerful word for youth and parents, and the following Friday - FNL will welcome North Alabama's youth back for the August 1, 2014 event. Doors will open at 7 pm. "Power UP: Get Connected" is the theme for both the service and the FNL event. You can be sure 'wow' moments are planned for both.

Stay tuned, as iTHRIVE ministry is working on an iTHRIVE summit with workshops and life classes, free and open to churches across the Tennessee Valley.



St. John A.M.E. Church

Picnic & Family Fun Day

Saturday, August 16, 2014

10:00AM - 2:00PM

"A Summer Garden Party"

Bring the family and come enjoy a relaxing day of fun and fellowship!

Location:
Carol D. Hudson Recreation Center
Redstone Arsenal, AL

Want to volunteer to assist with the picnic?
Sign-up today!

**St. John A. M. E. Church Picnic
and Family Fun Day**

Mark your calendars, grab your folding/lawn chairs, and come out for a day of fellowship, food and fun for the entire family. The St. John A. M. E. Church Picnic and Family Fun Day, "A Summer Garden Party," will be held Saturday, August 16, 2014, at the Carol D. Hudson Recreation Center, Redstone Arsenal, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There will be games, sports, music, and entertainment for all ages.

Please note that in order to access Redstone, if driving, you must have a valid driver license. Persons may access Redstone via Gate 8 (Goss Rd. at Drake Ave) or Gate 9 (Research Park Boulevard). All persons over the age of 18 in vehicle must have a picture form of identification. Transportation will be provided on the hour from the Visitor's Center located at Gate 9 where parking is available. If you need directions, maps will be available outside of the church office.

It's not too late to volunteer to assist with the picnic, so sign up today!

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Brother Hodges Washington or Sister Cassandra Ingram.

The Story of Meriam Yehya Ibrahim Ishag

By Paulette Bargon

Meriam Yehya Ibrahim Ishag is a young Sudanese Christian woman who was recently sentenced to be executed for refusing to renounce her faith. The Sudanese court considers her to be a Muslim. Meriam was born to a Sudanese Muslim father and an Ethiopian Orthodox mother. Her father left when she was 6 years old, and Ibrahim was raised by her mother as a Christian. The court also convicted her of adultery and sentenced her to 100 lashes because her marriage to a Christian man is considered void under Sharia law. At the time of her sentence hearing Meriam was 8 months pregnant and had a 20 month old son who remained with her during her imprisonment.

"I am a Christian and I will remain a Christian." That is what Meriam told the court. That is a very powerful statement. Just think, not only is her life at stake but so is her unborn child's life. What a way to prove your faith in God. She knows that her God will set her free, one way or the other. Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, she did not bow down. She knows that giants do fall down, and she just keeps praying and praising her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The point in this story is this: God is sovereign ruler of the world, at all times and all places. For us Christians, that means God wants total loyalty to Him. No matter how powerful the opposing forces may be, we must stay faithful and true, for He will defeat them all in His own time.

If you stay strong in your faith you will receive praise and honor. 1 Peter 1:7

Post Note: Meriam Ibrahim Ishag was recently released from prison. She tried to leave Sudan for the United States with her American husband and their two children but they were detained at an airport in Khartoum. They were accused of traveling with falsified documents. This is just a very short synopsis of Ms. Ibrahim Ishag's story. If you would like to read her entire story you can go to CNN.com or google her name.

Please pray for Meriam Ibrahim Ishag and persecuted Christians all over the world.

Soup Kitchen Corner

A New Way to Serve



"You shall live in booths for seven days...so that your generation may know that I made the people of Israel live in booths." Leviticus 23:42-43 (NR SV)

Some stories are universal: "What do we do with our homeless population?" Many in Huntsville, as in other cities, question where should the homeless live? Do they live in camps or shelters? Why should shelters be provided? Many people dismiss those who really need these facilities. You will not find the answer in this article; however, we do know that many homeless people are medal-rich veterans; they are parents and laid-off workers. Yes, many are really sick, mentally and physically, too many are alcoholics and drug addicts.

We know we have been instructed to serve those who are in need, the least of these, our brethren. "Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." Matthew 25:45.

The Israelites were made to live in booths, in order that they knew less. We sometimes forget that except by God's grace and mercy we too could be homeless and in need of shelter. Therefore, we work while we can to humbly provide meals twice monthly for the hungry and the homeless.

To God we give honor and glory that we may serve the least of these.

St. John Congratulates Students for 2014 Honors

The following persons were accidentally omitted from last month's report.

- Blake Johnson
- ◊ A Honor Roll
- ◊ Perfect Attendance
- ◊ Native American Achievement Award
- Wallace Parham
- ◊ Perfect Attendance
- ◊ High School Graduate



Vacation Bible School 2014 The Jesus Connection-What a Friend

By Monica Dillihunt

Photography by Mary Rankin

This year's VBS was held June 9th - 12th and was yet another success. The theme Scripture was "God...invited you into this wonderful friendship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9, TLB). The VBS participants journeyed into a new connection with Jesus, were welcomed each night by the registration committee and were provided a delicious meal by the kitchen ministry. During nightly devotions attendees learned the theme song, danced with the dance ministry and made a new commitment through nightly litanies.

Classes were available for all ages. The classes and their teachers were as follows: Preschool, Ms. Yvonne Sanderson; Primary, Ms. Pamela Whitehead and Ms. Yvette Clark; Juniors, Reverend Dennis DeLoach and Mr. William Bell; Teens, Ms. Janette Smith; Alternative Adults, Dr. Thalia Love-Brown and Dr. Monica Dillihunt; Adults, Ms. Lillie Rivers, Ms. Claudette Fears, and the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn. For all youth, there were also science classes with Ms. Abreeotta Williams, tennis lessons with Mr. Booker Rankin, and outdoor activities with Mr. Eddie Whitehead and Mr. Jason Gilmore.

The first night's lesson, "Created with a Purpose" (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:19), focused on learning to be trustworthy and learning that believers were created in God's image and are made for greatness. The lesson emphasized that although tempted by other things in life, falling for those temptations only leads to pain and sorrow. Since Christians are created with a purpose the object of life is to find that purpose which is wrapped in Christ.

The lesson for the second night was "Say No to SIN" (Genesis 39:2-9). This lesson focused on understanding that the goal is to seek God's purity, freedom from sin, as temptations are encountered by the people of God. Through the exploration of Joseph being tempted by Potiphar's wife, the class discussed that at times believers will be confronted with temptations that



VBS decorations includes a replica of an iPhone displayed on the wall.



VBS Students participate in devotion as they get motivated for the activities of the evening.

will call them to go places and do things that they know are not healthy or wise. Yet, they must summon the resolve to focus on the person they are striving to become, knowing that God is with them and will provide His presence and assurance in whatever they go through.

The lesson for the third night was "Winners Pray" (2 Chronicles 14:8-13). It opened with the question, "When we find ourselves in circumstances that are out of control, how do we respond?" Many respond in panic, fear and even frustration. In the lesson, Asa's example reminded participants that when they focus on the Lord they allow themselves to focus their atten-

(Continued on page 15)



Vacation Bible School 2014 The Jesus Connection-What a Friend

By Monica Dillihunt
Photography by Mary Rankin



The Kitchen Ministry prepared/served a meal each evening.

(Continued from page 14)

tion on the Lord and trust what God will do in their lives. The prayer he prayed speaks to the resolve of Christians needing God's deliverance and instruction on what to do. Just like Asa, when faced with anxious situations Christians must trust God.

The last lesson, "It Takes Courage" (Esther 4:9-16), focused on being proud of the person God has made you to be. The focal point of the lesson was to have faith that God has created in the believer, what is needed to accomplish God's plan for their life. This lesson helped in understanding that it takes courage to step out on faith; it takes faith to have the courage to believe and trust that God has placed in the believer what is needed to fulfill His plan for his/her life. One must focus on the vision or desire that God has given to them in order to accomplish His glory.

On the last night prizes were awarded and certificates were given to all attendees, teachers, and the planning committee. Special thanks to Pastor Clayborn for allowing this writer to serve, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn for her guidance, Mary Rankin for her hard work, support, words of wisdom and creative insight, Donna Gullatte for the awesome decorations, all of the teachers, kitchen ministry and registration. It takes a TEAM and Together Everyone Achieves Much!





Vacation Bible School 2014 The Jesus Connection-What a Friend

By Monica Dillihunt
Photography by Mary Rankin



Common Sense Ways to Wellness and Successful Living

By Angela Daniels

*Listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who lives on the inside of all believers. *Keep a positive attitude. *Stay active. *Do Self exams. *Stop smoking now. *Face your fears. *Challenge your mind. *Get a massage. *Budget your time & money. *Forgive and forget. *Walk miles each week. *Enjoy the outdoors. *Go bananas for fruits and value your veggies. *Avoid overload. *Apologize. *Exercise your mind, body & spirit. *Avoid the bad fats. *Think happy thoughts. *Trust God. *Avoid dangerous drugs. *Eat a balanced diet. *Go meatless once a week. *Eat more chicken, turkey & fish. *Drink green or black tea. *Avoid carbonated beverages. *Maintain a lower blood pressure. *Decrease your sugar intake. *Learn to breathe deeply. *Rinse fruits and veggies. *Practice cleanliness. *Take medicines as directed; know the side effects. *Count your calories. *Count your blessings. *Scale down our weight. *Walk briskly. *Curb your food cravings. *Eat oatmeal. *Keep up with your check ups. *Give people more than they expect, and do it cheerfully. *Talk slowly, but think quickly. *Cherish your values. *Share your feelings with others. *Meditate. *Appreciate your life and journey. *Don't compare yourself with others. *Keep an open mind. *Protect your hearing — avoid loud noises. *Eat smarter. *Warm up and stretch before exercising. *Buckle your seatbelt. *Drink 8 glasses of water each day. *Take charge of your own money. *Tithe. *Don't drink and drive. *Eat fruits for desserts. *Learn to say no. *Learn to stay at home and shop less. *Ask your doctor questions. *Don't believe all you hear. *When you lose, don't lose the lesson. *Get enough sleep. *Manage anger wisely. *Fuel up with fiber. *Dress for the weather. *Sit up straight. *Work at relationships. *Shun the sun. *Accept success and learn from your failures. *Try new things. *Take responsibility for your actions. *Resolve conflicts peacefully. *Never put down other people. *Recognize that we are blessed, favored and loved. *Pay attention to your body. *Respect yourself and others. *Don't neglect diabetes. *Weight train for bone and muscle strength. *Cut the caffeine. *Brush and floss often. *Get regular dental checkups. *Take vitamin E. *Practice stretching during the day. *Don't overeat. *Organize your closets and garage. *Cool down after exercising. *Avoid eyestrain. *Detox with antioxidants. *Be adequately insured. *Practice humility. *Mind your own business. *Don't gossip. *Look for the goodness in others. *Substitute the salt. *Read the bible and attend church regularly. *Practice portion control. *Practice smiling. *Laugh at yourself. *Laugh often. *Celebrate your life. *Love God. *Love yourself. *Love others. *Be a peaceful person. *Limit television time and the use of tech devices. *Practice living in the present moment. *Choose your friends carefully. *Continue to learn. *When you know better, do better. *Practice kindness. *Read. *Say informed. *Don't worry. *Pray and give thanks. *Take supplements. *Don't practice hoarding. *Don't spend money you don't have. *Learn the serenity prayer.

This list can go on and on. We already know to do these things. We must not only know to do, but we must put the above strategies into action. We must keep trying and trying and trying because all of us can do better. Let all of us pledge to keep trying.

Church School Lesson Overview – August 2014

This month's reviews were written by Kenneth Parham.

August 3, 2014

Lesson Title: Consolation Granted Through Prayer

Lesson Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Print: Same

Devotional Songs: #387, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation" (2 Corinthians 1:7).

The reviewer interprets Paul's letter to the Christians of Corinth as an attempt to provide encouragement. In Paul's writing, he revealed that all Christians were under personal attack. He relayed that if not for affliction, the Christians could not be consoled and seek salvation. Paul indicated that the group that he was with was undergoing some personal trials by non-believers. He indicated that their trials were so difficult to bear that they had even welcomed death. But he indicated that at that moment of despair is when believers must rely on God's power to see them through trials and tribulations.

Those who study the bible know that during the darkest of times is when God does His finest work (provides comfort when life looks the most difficult to continue). There are countless examples of God's divine power being showered on mankind, providing comfort and healing to the masses.

August 10, 2014

Lesson Title: A Community Forgives

Lesson Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:23 – 2:17

Print: 2 Corinthians 1:23 – 2:11

Devotional Songs: #403; #251; and #243

Key Verse: "Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:10).

It appears that Paul's trials noted in the first letter somehow effected the close relationship that was established with the people of Corinth. The strain was such that it caused Paul much distress and even tears. He indicated in his letter that it was probably best that he not see them in his condition noting that if he caused further pain, who then would bring happiness? Therefore, he decided to write a

follow-up letter to convey what he had in his heart.

Paul spoke on forgiveness. He indicated that an unknown person had not caused Paul pain, but the people of Corinth, and that this collective punishment by the people of Corinth against this man would be too much for him to bear. Paul reminded the Corinthians of the Christian walk of forgiveness; if they could forgive one another, God would forgive each of them, which is true for today's Christians.

August 17, 2014

Lesson Title: Treasure in Clay Jars

Lesson Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:2 – 15

Print: Same

Devotional Songs: #460; #258; and #243

Key Verse: "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

Paul reaffirmed the essence of Christianity. He indicated that Christianity is an open faith. It is a faith centered on Jesus and one bathed in light. He indicated that the world has attempted to crush the Christian spirit by personal attacks of physical harm, false accusations, and even death. Through it all, the Christian spirit has been victorious.

Paul reminded the Christians that they symbolically carry the essence of salvation (the crucifixion of Christ and His resurrection) in their hearts (clay jar). And since they carry Christ in their hearts, they can withstand all that Satan devises for them – affliction, despair, persecution and even death. He reminded the people of Corinth that by remembering Christ's suffering and His conquering death, they were constantly aware of the same "light" spirit that resides in each Christian today. And in this regard, Christians must not remain silent. By speaking out or sharing Christianity with others, Christians are increasingly providing thanksgiving (by others) unto the glory of God.

August 24, 2014

Lesson Title: An Appeal for Reconciliation

Lesson Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:1-7:4

Print: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13; 7:2-4

Devotional Songs: #525; #77; and #243

(Continued on page 19)



Church School Lesson Overview – August 2014

(Continued from page 18)

Key Verses: "Make room in your hearts for us; we have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, and we have taken advantage of no one" (2 Corinthians 7:2).

For some reason the new Christians of Corinth began to waiver in their belief and to pull away from the relationship that Paul had earlier established with them. Paul wrote the Corinthians in order to request that they search their hearts and minds like children experiencing unconditional love.

Paul indicated that the Christian faith was not forced on anyone who was seeking the truth. He indicated that the concept of Christianity had been severely tested. The Christians had undergone affliction, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonment, riots, forced labor, sleepless nights, and even hunger in profession of their love for Jesus. He also indicated that the true Christian had met the test by showing purity in spirit, knowledge, kindness, holiness of spirit, love, and truthful speech to both the sinner and the saint.

Paul closed the letter by indicating that he understood why they wavered in their beliefs. They were only human. Paul asked that the Corinthians stand steadfast and not give up. He indicated that the Church of Corinth was his greatest pride and joy. He openly boasted about his relationship with the Corinthians and their accelerated growth in accepting Christianity. He indicated that though the relationship may have been strained, it was at that moment that they could share in the affliction amongst each other and then be consoled together.

August 31, 2014

Lesson Title: A Community Shares Its Resources

Lesson Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8-9

Print: 2 Corinthians 8:1-14

Devotional Songs: #424; 77; and #243

Key Verses: "As you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you - so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking" (2 Corinthians 8:7).

The reviewer came to the conclusion that this lesson is a carryover from the August 24, 2014 lesson. It is human nature that once enthusiasm wanes for a given cause, so does financial

support of that cause. Paul attempted to appeal to the Church of Corinth by making a parallel with the up and coming churches of Macedonia. He noted that the people of Macedonia were so worked up in accepting the faith that they first submitted themselves unto God, committed to service towards mankind, and gave all that they had financially. He asked that the people of Corinth once again look inward, to catch the zeal that they once shared in accepting and spreading the gospel (Christianity) and then to financially support the cause.

Paul closed the letter by indicating that one must give with eagerness. He indicated that there is a delicate balance between identifying a need and satisfying the need and that this balance can only be achieved with a pure heart.

Church School Book Club

July 2014 Discussion Date: 19 July 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

They Tell Me of a Home, Daniel Black, 2008

August 2014 Discussion Date: 23 August 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Peace of Me, T.N. Williams, 2010

Celia Alexander assumed she had faced the ultimate test of faith when her husband, Khalil, went to prison, and she's still trying to get her life back to normal in spite of her inability to forgive him. When she discovers that her husband is somehow connected to the disappearance of a young girl in Detroit, Celia soon discovers evil has no boundaries. She revitalizes a search that may be more than she can handle. Khalil Alexander may be incarcerated, but he is far from confined. He has created an unusual business operation to feed his disturbed mind and fund his quest to be released. With a family in turmoil, their daughter, Kaleia, hides her pain like a well worn diary. The troubled sixteen year old heads down a destructive path, invisible in plain sight. While mysteries unravel and truths are unveiled, Celia learns that her family's peace will depend on faith and wisdom. -- Amazon



August 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 FRIDAY NITELIVE 7:00 pm	2 9:30 am. Dance Ministry
3 COMMUNION 8:00 am Worship 9:45 am. Church School 10:30 am. Worship DEADLINE FOR AMEN	4 6:00 pm. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	5 6:00 pm. Stewardless Bd. Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	6 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	7 6:00 pm. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	8	9 9:30 am. Dance Ministry 10:30 am. AMEN Class
10 8:00 am. Worship 9:45 am. Church School 10:30 am. Worship WMS DAY	11	12 6:00 pm. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	13 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	14	15 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	16 CHURCH Picnic & FAMILY FUN DAY
17 8:45 am. Church School 10:00 am. Worship Pastor's Appreciation	18	19 11:30 am.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 pm. Trustee Board Mtg.	20 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	21	22 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	23 9:30 am. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 am. USBO Meeting
24 8:00 am. Worship 9:45 am. Church School 10:30 am. Worship	25	26 11:30 am.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 pm. Lay Meeting 6:30 pm. Church School Board Mtg.	27 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	28 6:00 pm. Mass Choir Rehearsal	29	30
31 8:45 am. Church School 10:00 am. Worship						

Celebrating 18 Years of Service



"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

July 2014 is the 18th anniversary of the St. John AMEN ministry. The first issue of the St. John newsletter, in the current format, was published after the AME General Conference in 1996. Over the years the staff has expanded, some have come and some have gone. Some standard articles continue to be included each month, like the Pastor's message, recipes, potpourri, recipe of the month, birthdays and anniversaries, prayer of the month and scripture of the month. Others vary depending on the season of the year or activities of the church. The first issue was eight (8) pages; now the average number of pages is twenty (20). The AMEN is now printed in house and in color. The Annual Taste Tea Fellowship (sponsored by the AMEN Staff) began in 1997 and continues each year. The staff has published two (2) cookbooks. Circulation of the printed and electronic formats continues to increase. To God be the glory!

The staff expresses thanks and appreciation to all who support this ministry as readers and/or contributors. Our vision for the future is to continue to reach readers of all ages with spiritually enriching articles that promote participation in worship and ministries of St. John or their local churches.



Please give my love and acknowledgements to all. I truly appreciate the newsletter. I feel connected to my St John AME Church family in Huntsville through it. I share in your joy, your honors, your grief, your ministry within the community, and the wonderful preaching/teaching of your pastor. I smile and touch the screen when I see the growth of the teenagers who were toddlers when I initially arrived, and I pray that The Lord will forever keep them safe in His care.

Thank you for being my spiritual family, I love you and God loves you best.

Judith

(The Reverend Judith Gardner, Itinerant Elder, Hamilton, Bermuda)



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The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop

Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| July 21-24, 2014 | Ninth District CEC and Ministers Training at Troy University |
| July 27, 2014 | Morning Worship, 8:00 a. m.
iThrive Worship Service, 10:50 a. m. |
| August 1, 2014 | Friday Nite Live, 7 p.m. |
| August 16, 2014 | Church Family Fun Day |
| August 17, 2014 | Pastor's Appreciation, 10:00 a.m. |



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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 8

August 2014

Pastor's Message

A Heart of Gratitude and Joy

Psalm 9:1; Psalm 4:7



Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D.

We have come to the end of our annual conference year, and I am so glad for all of the wonderful blessings God has given us at this time. The psalmist declared, "I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders" (Psalm 9:1). Let us praise God with all of our hearts. Let our hearts be filled with gratitude for all of the love that God has poured on St. John.

I must tell of God's wonders! Over sixty persons have joined our congregation, and several of them were saved in the process. We began a tutorial program in which we adopted Davis Hills Middle School and sent tutors there regularly. We also donated school supplies to teachers and uniforms to students. Through St. John's iThrive ministry of Friday Nite Live (both in November 2013 and August 2014), a number of youth from our church and community were turned away from suicidal thoughts. Some members found healing through the Selah Memorial service, which honored church and family members who passed away. A number of people were enlightened and empowered as we hosted a community forum on relations between police and the African American community. Others found joy in our Thankful People service just before Thanksgiving, where our sole focus was giving God thanks! Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, we donated over 100 food baskets to persons in need, the Soup Kitchen served over 1,400 meals. Our Watchnight service included a heart-warming video reflection of our ministry efforts over the 2013 calendar year. We celebrated the birth of our daughter Joya, and we praised God for bringing my father through surgery to remove colon cancer. During Lent, we took the Journey of Faith as we studied seven aspects of stewardship. Testimonies poured in from those who began to tithe, others who began better health practices, some who reprioritized their time to honor God, still others who began offering their talents to the Lord, and a few who began to give back to their communities. The 50+ Auxiliary brought the radio show 2nd Chance (hosted by Kenny Anderson) to our church for a live taping. We then journeyed to Montgomery, AL, for the 9th District Pentecost Explosion, where over 12,000 persons gathered at Alabama State University Stadium to celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. Upon our return, our Vacation Bible School lifted the idea of getting connected to God and had great participation. At Troy State University, the 9th District held its Christian Education Congress. There, one of our members was recognized as Layperson of the Year for the 9th District – Sis. Nedra McDaniel! (We will hold our own celebration for her at our church picnic later this month.) We also had our first ever iThrive Sunday (celebrating youth and young adults). As well, we had a number of guest preachers: Dr. Keith D. D. Lawrence (Harvest Sunday), Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry (Founder's Day), the Reverend Bankole Akinbinu (Holy Week Revival), the Reverend Carolyn Ann Knight (Women's Day), Rev. Bobby Cox, Jr. (Men's Day), Pastor Willie Diggs (iThrive Sunday), and Pastor Adrian Davis (Friday Nite Live).

For this wonderful journey, we thank God! It is because of God's grace that we were able to accomplish all the above and more! We thank God for my wife and our executive minister – the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn. Without her, none of these ministry efforts would have been achieved with the kind of excellence that they exuded. We thank God for our staff ministers who are always ready to serve. We praise God for the office staff, financial officers and volunteers.

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor's Message



(Continued from page 1)

who keep the office running efficiently and effectively. We praise God for all of the music staff, custodial staff, and security team. All of your hard work and diligence has not gone unnoticed!

I thank God for Bishop James L. Davis, who has given me this opportunity to serve, and I thank God for Presiding Elder Oliver Allen for his support and guidance. For all of the officers, members, and ministries of St. John, I bless God! Even though every great deed of each member or each ministry cannot be recorded here for lack of space, please know that my heart is grateful. My heart is also joyful. "You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound" (Psalm 4:7). St. John, you have made my heart joyful as you all have allowed me to serve as your pastor. I am anticipating that God will do even more for all of us as we enter this new conference year. Let us pray for one another that we may see another aspect of God's glory as we seek to do even more ministry together in Jesus' name. Let us be sure to do that ministry with hearts of gratitude and joy!

From all of us on TEAM CLAYBORN (Patrick, Sheri, P2, & Joya):

THANK YOU!!!

St. John Welcomes New Members for the 4th Quarter



Mr. Marcus Hill, Mrs. Angela Hill,
Martine Hill, Kelson Hill



(Top to bottom, left to right) Ms. Kendra Eliard, Mrs. Paula Eliard, Mr. Maurice Eliard, Ms. Patricia Little, Ms. Jameika Little, Ms. Keri Daniels

Men's Day Service Was Spirit-Filled

By Bridger J. Floyd



Pastor Clayborn and the Reverend Cox after service.

The Reverend Bobby B. Cox, Jr., pastor of Bethel A.M. E. Church, Mobile was the preacher for Men's Day on Sunday, July 13th. The theme was "Daring to Walk on Water". The Holy Spirit was truly present from the moment of the Doxology and the opening hymn of praise, "Holy, Holy, Holy" and the special Call to Worship led by Mr. Bill Williams. The Reverend Charles Glover offered prayer which was followed by a spirit filled prayer response of "Pass Me Not". Mr. Karl Gullatte read the scripture taken from Matthew 14: 23-33 and Mr. Kenneth Parham led the litany. Visitors were welcomed by Mr. Aaron Dudley and Mr. Justin York invited the men of St. John to become active members of the Sons of Allen, noting the activities of the organization and the just-completed Men's Retreat which occurred as part of the Men's Dayweek end.

The Male Chorus and musicians, directed by Mr. Reginald Pearson, set the tone and led the congregation in an abundance of praise in music and song. A liturgical dance continued to inspire praise and worship, as Brothers Jason Gilmore, Wallace Parham, Xavier Rembert, and Carl Lewis performed to "I am" by Kirk Franklin. Pastor Clayborn introduced the preacher of the day.

The Reverend Cox preached on the topic "Greater is Coming" based on the text Philippians 3: 12-14. He began by defining and explaining "process theology" as established by Alfred North. The premise being that God and His relationship to believers/the world is a dynamic one, never static, and always in the process of "becoming". There is an emphasis on connectedness, according to the Reverend Cox, "We don't live in isolation...every experience is related and gives us greater understanding of God's purpose for us." He explained that "The Christian journey is a process...you can't handle all that God wills for your life at one time", therefore there is a process/greater is coming. Referring to the text, he indicated that when in a problem situation or having a sense that one has not become all that they could/should be, it is important to remember that this problem is part of the process and greater is coming (it will change).

The Reverend Cox cautioned to avoid staying in a "comfort zone", in that even if things are great they can become greater. He also noted the mind is extremely powerful and plays a significant role in going/pushing forward. He indicated that it is important to relinquish the past; that is do not focus on past mistakes, again highlighting that Paul moved forward rather than focusing on the past. Finally, the Reverend Cox noted it is important to, "Remember the Lord, there is no one like Him...He stands at the apex of creation...He promised never to leave you alone" (in the process of becoming).

After the inspiring message and the invitation to discipleship, Pastor Clayborn offered a prayer for the men as they were invited to the altar. All congregants, not just the males present, were blessed by a wonderful service of worship and praise. The Men's Day Committee did a wonderful job.



The Male Chorus renders music during the service.

iTHRIVE Sunday

Power Up...Get Connected

By The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn

Exciting, powerful, power packed, full of spirit, and much needed are some of the words and phrases used to describe iTHRIVE Sunday, July 27, 2014. This ministry geared toward the older youth, young adults, and the young at heart had its first Sunday morning worship experience. Sister Donna Gullatte, mother of two of our youth, posted on social media regarding the iTHRIVE worship service, "The iTHRIVE service on yesterday gave new life to parents and I surely hope the youth 'Got It' too."



VIP Choir ministers in song

The theme for this service was *Power Up...Get Connected*. The goal was not to have so many bells and whistles that worship could not be recognized by all attendees. Actually, the goal was to catch the attention of the youth in such a way that they would be able to connect the dots between regular Sunday morning worship services and Friday Nite Live (FNL). The heartbeat of this particular service was to turn toward God using traditional AMEC foundations for worship service while translating them in a contemporary language that would allow young people and maybe even some who are not familiar with the liturgy, to hear it and see it in a different way, a way that would allow them to connect to God and others.

The traditional AME Church Call to Worship was used; however, it was a different translation. The Call to Worship was led by Patrick Clayborn, II and Darius Scott. The prayer was lifted by Pastor Clayborn, the offertory prayer was given by Eddie Whitehead, Jr., the welcome was extended by Sister Abreeotta Williams, and the introduction of the morning's guest preacher was given by Pastor Clayborn. A praise ensemble of St. John members opened hearts to God through songs that were of the praise and worship genre, a genre that usually speaks to God as opposed to just telling others about God. The Voices In Praise Choir sang to God with selections that invited the whole church to give God praise. The dance ministry, led by Dr. Jennifer Patterson, ministered to a mix of contemporary music that kept all waiting in anticipation of what would come next. People of all ages participated in the service, as was reflected even in the dance ministry.



Pastor Diggs

Youth Pastor Willie Diggs of Beacon Hill Worship Center, ministers primarily to the youth of Beacon Hill (Madison, Alabama) through Amplified Youth Ministry. Pastor Willie is the Director of Come Thirsty Ministry, a non-profit mentorship program for boys. Pastor Willie's experience as a minister, social worker, and student of hard knocks was foundational in molding the message he would preach that morning. The non-traditional preaching style with visual examples gave life to Pastor Willie's message in a way that allowed all to grasp. The title of the sermon was "Stay in the Blessed Place" and the biblical text used was Luke 15:11 – 24. Pastor Clayborn prayed over all students, most of whom would return to school the following week.

Special thanks to Pastor Clayborn for his leadership, Sister Janette Smith for her ministry to youth, Pastor Willie Diggs and wife Shataun (and family), participants, and parents. We thank the officers and members of St. John for their willingness to worship God in different ways in order that ALL people would be drawn to Jesus Christ.

FNL Emphasis Being "Plugged In"

By Janette Smith, Director of iTHRIVE Ministry



As part of the St. John AMEC movement to reclaim our youth and young adults, iTHRIVE ministry welcomed North Alabama attendees back to experience its annual Word and worship event that was held August 1, 2014. The theme of "Power UP: Get Connected" continued with a focus on challenging attendees to evaluate the ways and mediums they use to connect with others daily and make their connection, or relationship, with God their primary focus. The FNL team staged a power outage to emphasize the importance of being 'plugged in' to the Source of all things (GOD). Pastor Patrick Clayborn helped give context for the theme and used a powerful spoken word piece on video pointing out the flaws in 'religion', which was created by man, versus 'relationship' which was God's first intention for creating man and woman. True to its reputation for being one of the few truly inclusive faith-based events in the Tennessee Valley, Pastor Adrian Davis from All Nations Worship Center in Huntsville, Alabama, was invited to bring a Word nugget. His mini sermon "Time to Disconnect", challenged those in attendance to first purge and get rid of all the alliances, habits and connections they have that pull them in the wrong direction so they can get 'plugged into' the connection that truly matters. Imagine a lamp plugged into an electrical outlet, yet emitting no light. No matter how many bulbs you replace, or how many different lamp shades you put on it - light cannot be generated if the lamp is plugged into a faulty source. There is no power. In the spirit, power comes through relationship with God and is strengthened through time in His presence, time in His Word, and time conversing through prayer.

That Word flowed seamlessly into a special call for prayer and the altar was filled, as most every attendee went to the altar to take part. While in prayer, Pastor Clayborn and Pastor Davis called out the suicide spirit, discerning there were some attendees grappling with that burden. Those few came forward and received a special impartation and were lead to counselors to be offered resources for plugging into counseling sessions outside the church. In another powerful move, each Pastor prayed for the other, showing tremendous care and concern for their fellow brothers in ministry. Rev. Sheri Smith and Sis. Janette Smith shared the importance of prayer through personal testimony.

Stellar-nominated youth pastor and rapper, L.P. (Like Paul) ministered as did the Psalm 3 Mime ministry. DJ Sam Smite served as the house DJ and St. John AMEC Music Director, Reginald Pearson, led the crowd in praise and worship. Burdens were removed and yokes were destroyed. As always, the event was free and open to churches and individuals across the Tennessee Valley.

You may check out one of the videos shared during the program at www.youtube.com/watch?v=11AhDGYlpxY.

FNL Emphasis Being "Plugged In"

By Janette Smith, Executive Producer of FNL



Sons of Allen Men's Retreat 2014

By Justin York



Sons of Allen Pose for a group picture during the retreat.

The Sons of Allen held their annual Men's Retreat on July 11-12, 2014 at Lake Guntersville State Park in Guntersville, Alabama. There were 25 men in attendance at this year's retreat. The Men's Retreat is always filled with fun and laughter. Most of all, the attendees depart with a wealth of knowledge, memories of wholesome fellowship and in-depth discussions about the Word of God. This year the Sons of Allen held workshops on finance (Mr. Rickey Gosa), Three Things A Christian Should Know (Dr. Jesse Wilson), Evangelism 101 (Dr. Lee Williams), and concluded with a message from the Presiding Elder.

The weekend began with food and fellowship as the men of St. John gathered on Friday evening. The brothers talked

and laughed as they awaited the meal prepared by "Master Chef" Brother Theodore Tyson. Silence dominated the room as everyone enjoyed their meal. The news of LeBron James returning to Cleveland quickly broke the silence and the fellowship and conversation continued. The first day of the retreat ended with more fellowship as the men enjoyed relaxing and watching movies.



Above: The men of St. John enjoying the scenery and fellowship as the food is prepared and more attendees arrive on Friday evening.

Saturday morning began with breakfast at Lake Guntersville's main lodge. Everyone enjoyed the breakfast buffet as always.

After enjoying breakfast the men got down to business. Mr. Rickey Gosa, a financial advisor with Edward Jones, spoke about the importance of having conversations about money and financial planning. Financial advisors help their clients prepare for the future and give the tools for investing. Having a clear understanding of financial needs helps prepare for the future. His advice was to develop a strategy and be realistic about the goals.

(Continued on page 8)

Sons of Allen Men's Retreat 2014

By Justin York



From left to right: Saturday presenters Mr. Ricky Gosa, Dr. Jesse Wilson, Dr. Lee Williams and Presiding Elder Allen

(Continued from page 7)

My Financial Needs: 1) Where am I today? 2) Where would I like to be? 3) Can I get there? 4) How do I get there? (Financial advisors should be able to help you here) 5) How can I stay on track?

Dr. Jesse Wilson from Oakwood University spoke to the men on the topic of "Three Things A Christian Should Know." The text was from Luke 15 (parable of the lost sheep). Dr. Wilson's main point was that lost people do matter to God. Every Christian should know that lost people matter to God. Every Christian should know that you can be in the house and still be lost. Every Christian should know that if you get lost, God will find you.

Dr. Lee Williams spoke to the men about evangelism. Evangelism is the spreading of the Christian gospel by public teaching or personal witness. Dr. Williams' session was filled with plenty of scripture references that reminded everyone that they have marching orders to evangelize. Christian men must stand and witness to those things shown to them. They cannot be selfish with God's word. They must share their faith in order to win souls. They must evangelize because being Christ-like means they have compassion and God has commanded them to do so.

Presiding Elder Allen charged the men with an important task: evangelism. This charge was not taken lightly as Dr. Williams spoke before Presiding Elder. The messages throughout the day were also centered around evangelism. Looking at the text (Genesis 3:3-9), Satan knows what he is doing...he has been doing it since the beginning. He knows where a person should be even if they do not. Even when they are lost, God knows where they are. God will let them know when He is trying to get in touch with them, like He did with Samuel. All Christians have a charge from God. They have to be prepared to answer His call and do His will.

Final thoughts from Presiding Elder Allen: "Somebody, somewhere needs you to help them grow. God knew where Adam was. He wanted Adam to take a look at himself. Evangelism is the key. Fish won't jump in the boat."

The Sons of Allen of St. John meet the second Tuesday of each month and is open to all men of the church. Mr. Theodore Tyson is the president.

Ninth Episcopal District Christian Education Congress and Clergy Institute

By The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn

God Is Greater Than ...



Bishop Davis addresses the CEC.

The Ninth Episcopal District Christian Education Congress (CEC) and Clergy Institute was held July 21- 24, 2014, on the Campus of Troy University in Troy, Alabama. A delegation of members from St. John AME Church, Huntsville, Alabama, attended. This delegation included youth, young and senior adults, lay persons and clergy. The theme for this Congress was *God Is Greater Than...* Special attention was given in preparing workshops and worship services that would turn the focus to acknowledging, accepting, and walking in the fact that God Is Greater Than ALL things, situations, and people who would try to convince us that "they" are greater than God.

There were workshops for all ages. Workshops included: The Struggle Is Real But God Is Greater: Overcoming the Desires of My Flesh, Facing the Giants: Dealing With SADness (Stress, Anxiety, and Depression), My God Is Greater Than Any Place, Help My Unbelief: God Is Greater Than Everything. The final session was a general session that included a panel discussion focused on, God Is Greater Than My STUFF (Stress, Trials, Uncertainties, Failures, Finances). Ages 4-7 were taught by St. John's Sister Mary Rankin. Their classes included: My God Is Greater Than Anybody, My God Is Greater Than Anything, My God Is Greater Than Any Place. In each class Sister Rankin taught from 36-42 children between the ages of 4-7 years old. Sister Rankin used music, visuals, movies, art, books, and love to teach her classes. The children were blessed to have such a loving instructor.

Youth Participant, Mariah Gullatte's reflections on CEC 2014:

We, as Christians, are the followers of God through Jesus Christ. We, as Christians, don't always follow the word of God and live in God's image. We often conform to worldly demands and forget our Christian roots. CEC set the stage through worship experiences and workshops to remind us that God Is Greater than anything we will face. I think this was an important and much needed reminder as we prepared to start the school year.

At the Ninth District Christian Education Congress we: attended workshops to fellowship among our 9th district Christian family, debated hot topics such as the stand your ground law and human sexuality (We are proud of our sister, Kaitlyn McClung who represented St. John- Huntsville well in two debates), witnessed a beautiful Christian Debutante and Masters Ceremony which was for young people growing in their Christian lives, a special guest artist provided entertainment that spoke to our hearts and our minds, and of course worship! Through all of the teaching, debating, giving, and worshipping we were reminded that God Is Greater Than anything we are facing or will ever face.

I left CEC reminded that we as Christians have to accept each other with love and battle through our problems together. It is our Christian duty to lead others to God without judgment, put downs, or bashing, but all in LOVE. Above all, remembering that God Is Greater Than ALL of our struggles. As long as we keep God first, we are unstoppable!

St. John AME Church- Huntsville, Alabama is proud to have within its membership the Layperson of the Year. On Tuesday, July 22, 2014, at the end of the Christian Debutante and Masters Ceremony Bishop James and Episcopal Supervisor Arelis Davis presented the Layperson of the Year Award to Sister Nedra McDaniel. Sister McDaniel has been a faithful member of St. John AME Church since 1994. Within the local church Sister McDaniel serves as a steward, church treasurer, AMENewsletter editor, and has served as a coordinator of the dance ministry. Sister Nedra has served as the Chairperson of the Pentecost Planning Core Committee since its inception. Her grace-filled demeanor, faith-filled conversation, willingness to serve, and love of God through Jesus Christ show in her everyday life. We are blessed to have Sister Nedra McDaniel.

CEC was a success! The fellowship between believers was encouragement for the journey. The

(Continued on page 10)



Pastor Clayborn, Kaitlyn and P2 after the debate.



Sis. Nedra McDaniel named Layperson of the Year

Back to School: A Few Suggestions

By Bridger J. Floyd



It is that time of year. The joy (and pain) of returning to school is here. There is back-to-school shopping, earlier bedtimes and wake-up calls, and the traffic. There is the expectation of seeing friends, starting/continuing extracurricular activities and of course, learning and studying, which will lead to the goal of graduating and progressing to the point of being gainfully employed (full-fledged adulthood).

This involves change/transition, which can be difficult even if one wants the change. There are those who eagerly anticipate the next grade, new teacher(s), new phase (middle school, high school, college). Even when difficult, change is good. (It is necessary to venture forth from first grade.)

The key to a smooth transition is planning and structure. Changing the sleep routine is important. It is not good to suddenly change from staying up most of the night and sleeping until noon, to returning to the "school night" routine of 8 or 9 p.m. bedtime the night before school begins. The amount and quality of sleep is crucial to good school functioning. A problem in this area can result in poor attention, learning problems, as well as mood issues and irritability. Likewise, a healthy meal to start the day is important.

Study habits are crucial. There are different study styles. Briefly, active learning, or building on daily lectures or lessons is the best way to learn. This prevents the need for "cramming" before tests, as only a review of the daily learning/homework is needed. It is important to note the type of test that will be given because studying for recall versus recognition can make the difference between an "A" and "C" or lower. Studying for recall means that one can generate or explain the information for the test (fill in the blank, short answer, essay), while recognition means that the person can choose the correct answer (correctly spelled word, multiple choice, matching). If the type of test is not known, it is best to study for recall, so that one can generate the answer and easily pick the correct answer from the options.

Parents should communicate with teachers regarding assignments, finding out how the child is progressing (prompt them to give the positives / progress, not look for negatives). Be sure to have the PIN to access the online information if the school system has computer based instruction. Check the computer periodically because if games or other non-educational downloads have occurred, the student might lose their computer and the capacity to effectively do the school/homework.

Having a study routine is important. Parents should let their children know the expectation is that homework will be done before video / computer games, television, going outside to play. Having a break is good as long as it does not take twenty minutes to convince the person/oneself to return from a five or ten minute break). There should be a cap on video game time (for some it has been found best to have video game time "saved up" for the weekend, especially if there is a lot of homework or studying that extends to the normal bedtime. There should not be exciting television or video game activity during the hour before bedtime, especially if a young person has difficulty winding down at the end of the day. Lower the lights, have quiet activities, engage in a bedtime routine that slows/calms down the activity with bedtime being a natural segue.

Christian Education Congress and Clergy Institute

(Continued from page 9)

worship experiences propelled us forward. The workshops raised issues that need to be addressed while reminding us that whatever we are facing is NOT greater than God. We give God praise for our Episcopal Leadership, Christian Education Leadership and all who worked so diligently to prepare such a powerful experience. Special shout out to the Reverend Charlotte Greene for reminding us through her rap that God Is Greater Than!

Looking forward to CEC 2015!

Quiet Defense

By Paulette Bargon

Some of us are quick to defend ourselves whenever we encounter criticism or conflict. We will think that they don't know what they are talking about or they are just plain wrong. We might just get angry or try to blame others for our wrongs. However, James 1:19 instructs us to handle disputes differently: "Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger." We might say or do something to hurt someone and not really realize it. So if we are in the wrong we should apologize and ask for forgiveness and if we are not wrong then we should try to take the time to listen to the concerns of the other person. Maybe together a new solution can be reached.

We should pray and ask the Lord to give us patience and to hold our tongue when we want to retaliate and say something that we might regret later. James 1:26 says, "If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are just fooling yourself and your religion is worthless."

Sometimes someone will say hurtful things just to cause a conflict. We should forgive them. After all if Jesus died to absolve us of all our sins, then we can certainly forgive others.

To sum it all up solving conflict involves compromise, finding common ground that is bigger than our differences. If we cannot take the initiative or show the necessary humility to seek common ground, conflict will result in broken relationships in all aspects of our lives.

...a wise person stays calm when insulted. An honest witness tells the truth; a false witness tells lies. Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing.

- Proverbs 12: 16-18

Soup Kitchen Corner



Be kind to one another,
tenderhearted. -Ephesians
4:32

Thank you Father for the compassion, which is love shown when someone we know is struggling, that is shown every third and fourth Tuesday, by the dedicated "Soup Kitchen" volunteers. They serve if help is offered or if not. The church holds them in prayer and appreciates the love that inspires them to love others without limit.

They know that all human beings have the same basic needs. They wish the same for those they serve as they wish for their own loved ones: safety, love, family and friendship, opportunities to thrive and a sense of well-being. These needs are hard to realize when one is suffering from the lack of food.

The church thanks the Soup Kitchen Ministry for their acts of compassion and encourages others to act with loving-kindness. The church grows in awareness as they acknowledge that they are the love of God in expression and action.

Thank you "Soup Kitchen" volunteers.

Go Green

Green Tip for Summer*

Keep your refrigerator well stocked. Refrigerators that are full of food don't warm up as quickly when the door is opened, so they require less energy to stay cool.

*<http://www.webmd.com/health-ehome-9/green-home-cooling-tips>

Peace Within

May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be confident knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle within your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us.

-- St. Therese of Lisieux

*Try saying this prayer with the pronoun "I" or "me" and with "you", as St. Therese originally wrote it and then with the pronoun "we" and you will experience the divine interconnectedness of all of God's children on earth.

Women's
Ministry
Tidbit



In Memory of Joyce Cooper

On July 7, 2014, Joyce Cooper made her transition to be with the Lord.

Joyce was a faithful member of St. John for many years. She was a former member of the choir and the Stewardess Board. She often volunteered to assist with youth activities when her sons were growing up in St. John. Mrs. Mable McCall shared in her remembrances of Joyce, "She was always willing to help with anything that you asked her to do. She

always wore hats. Anytime you saw her at church, she had on a hat." Several persons, in speaking of Joyce, mentioned how much she loved to read the bible and to discuss scriptures with others.

Joyce was a patient person. She attended church regularly with her husband and waited patiently, reading or discussing family with other members, while he performed his finance committee duties. Often she spent the time sitting quietly in the empty sanctuary and reading her bible.

St John offers condolences to her husband, Carol Cooper, her sons, Donell and Jason, and to all of her family members.

*I'll say yes, Lord
I'll say yes
To Your will Lord, I'll say yes
Where You lead me,
I will go.
I'll say yes, Lord
I'll say yes...*

- Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir



AAMU Athletic Day

10:30 a.m.

The Knight Center on the campus of
Alabama A&M University

Worship service will be held at St. John at 8 a.m. and Church School will be held from 9:20—10:20 a.m.



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

Buying a Laptop

Now that the school year has begun for many of the local schools and will soon be starting for universities, many students will be purchasing laptops. This article will review some of the main specifications to consider when purchasing a laptop. First, determine how the laptop will be used.

Netbooks are designed to contain enough power to get basic and quick essentials done. They are very light in size and many models can be purchased at a low cost. The lightness makes it easy to carry when visiting the coffee shop or traveling. Minimum netbook requirements are an Intel Atom CPU (N280 or N450) that is better for multitasking. The netbook should also contain an HDMI port so that the netbook can be used as a media player at home. The netbook should also contain at least 8-7 hours of continuous battery life.

If the netbook is not powerful enough and the user is a gamer, a 15-18" desktop replacement notebook with a high resolution, a good processor, at least a 512 MB video card and at minimum a 500 GB hard drive should be purchased. If a lot of downloading and storing of games will be taking place, purchase a lot of disk space or an external hard drive.

If the laptop will be used for school to do homework, research papers or light educational activities, a 13-15" notebook computer should be suitable. The notebook should contain at least 4GB of RAM to run Microsoft applications and doing a lot of research using a web browser. Most notebooks can be purchased with a 260 GB hard drive but for storing many Microsoft documents a 500 GB hard drive may be best. The 64-bit operating system is more suitable for the notebooks that are built.

As many of these features are similar, purchasing a laptop with the correct configurations is very important. The listing of the specifications for a laptop could go on forever, but the specs that have been mentioned are some of the most important.

FIFTH SESSION OF NORTHWEST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY– SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10-13, 2014

FAIRFIELD CIVIC CENTER

6509 EAST J. OLIVER ROAD, FAIRFIELD, ALABAMA 35064

MT. ZION A.M.E. CHURCH, CO-HOST - THE REVEREND SHERYL SHIPMAN, PASTOR
SADDLER'S CHAPEL A.M.E. CHURCH, CO-HOST - THE REVEREND THOMAS FRANKLIN, PASTOR
WARD CHAPEL A.M.E. CHURCH, CO-HOST - THE REVEREND LEVI BILLIPS, PASTOR

THE REVEREND OLIVER O. ALLEN, HOST PRESIDING ELDER

THE RIGHT REVEREND JAMES L. DAVIS, SERVANT BISHOP
MOTHER ARELIS BEAVERS DAVIS, EPISCOPAL SUPERVISOR

WEDNESDAY

WMS Conference (8 am – 5 pm)

4:00 PM
7:00 PM

ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Opening Session, Roll Call
WMS Night in White Candlelight Service,

THURSDAY

8:20 AM
8:30 AM
9:00 AM
9:45 AM

Devotion
Morning Glory Bible Study
Conference Institute
BUSINESS SESSION—(Reading of minutes, Financial Reports, Conference
Component Reports, Pastor's Report)

12:30 PM
3:00 PM
7:00 PM

HOUR OF POWER WORSHIP SERVICE
BUSINESS SESSION—(Administrative Committee Reports, Pastor's Report)
OPENING WORSHIP SERVICE

The Reverend Cleophas Guice, Preacher
Pastor, Jones Chapel A.M.E. Church, Fairfield, Alabama

FRIDAY

8:20 AM
8:30 AM
9:00 AM
9:45 AM

Devotion
Morning Glory Bible Study
Conference Institute
BUSINESS SESSION—(Reading of minutes, Pastor's Report, Daniel Payne College
Report)

12:30 PM
3:30 PM

HOUR OF POWER WORSHIP SERVICE (Sons of Allen)
BUSINESS SESSION—(Literary Reports, Ministerial Efficiency Committee, Retirement
Acknowledgement, Statistician Report, Disciplinary Questions)

7:00 PM

LAY NIGHT (NEW LIVES IN CHRIST CELEBRATION)

SATURDAY

8:00 AM
9:30 AM
11:15 AM
11:30 PM

YPD Session
YPD Program
Praise Service
CLOSING and COMMISSIONING SERVICE
Preacher: The Reverend Doctor Ann Lightner-Fuller
Pastor, Mt. Calvary A.M.E. Church, Towson, Maryland

NOTE: There will be a combined Ordination Service at the Ninth District Planning Meeting for all candidates for ordination.

Seven New Food Rules for Health and Longevity

By Angelia Daniels

Americans are turning to real healthy foods, not just to lose weight but to reverse diseases, maintain health, and live longer. Physicians, chefs, farmers and foodies give new ideas that will change the way people eat. This is not a diet, but a movement, a revolution, and everyone should jump on board.

Rule Number 1 – Cook "Real" Food

The most radical thing to do in order to improve their health is to cook "real" food at home. Cooking is healthier than not cooking. Studies show that home-cooked meals contain fewer calories than meals eaten outside of the home. Nearly everything cooked at home is superior in quality and nutrition. It is cheaper, especially for four or more. Cooking gives control and knowledge of what is in the dish. Letting restaurants prepare food gives them control. Choose the healthier food.

Rule Number 2 – Eat Bacteria

Andrew Weil, MD, alternative medicine expert, recommends adding sauerkraut and yogurt to the diet.

Rule Number 3 – Reduce Meats

Eliminating a day of meat can cut saturated (bad) fats by 15%. It also saves on fossil fuels.

Rule Number 4 – Ditch Dieting for Good

The popular Mediterranean diet is not a diet, but a way of eating for life. According to recent studies, eating vegetables, nuts, olive oil, and fish lowers the risk of heart disease and increases the chances of living a healthy life past seventy. People need to revisit their relationship with food and dieting. They should cultivate good habits that become automatic. Having good home food habits means one can socialize and eat freely without counting calories and feeling guilty.

Rule Number 5 – Eat to Heal the Body

Can delicious dishes cure bodies of sickness and disease? The answer: "yes". There are many health benefits of eating certain foods. Eat foods high in fiber such as chickpeas or beans to reduce blood sugar spikes and inflammation. Extra virgin olive oil has antioxidants which reduce inflammation. Red peppers and cauliflower are good for the immune system because they are high in Vitamin C, a potent antioxidant that mops up free radicals and helps regenerate other antioxidants, like Vitamin E. Black grapes have compounds that inhibit activity of an enzyme that causes depressive symptoms as well as increase the feel good hormones, serotonin and dopamine. Dark chocolate can enhance mood. Eating salmon, tuna, and cod fish give a balance of Omega 3 and 6. Celery contains apigenin, a strong inflammation-fighting phytonutrient.

Rule Number 6 – Get Back to the Basics

Cook real food and serve as close to its original form so that it looks like something grown in nature that brings one to the original source, creator God. Use natural ingredients and everything will taste better. Eat whole foods and plant-based foods. Avoid processed and refined foods to reverse heart disease and Type-2 Diabetes as well as help to decrease body weight.

Rule Number 7 – Buy the Best Food in the Store

As fruits and vegetables have been bred to be bigger and sweeter, key nutrients have been stripped away. Science-backed tactics help to navigate the produce aisle. Go for tiny tomatoes which have more lycopene than larger ones. Buy equal amounts of fruits and vegetables, unless restricted by health reasons. Fruits have more antioxidants. Large, whole carrots have more nutrients than baby ones. Cook bold onions and eat sweet raw onion. Pungent onions are healthier. Choose bunch spinach over bagged and prewashed greens. Processing makes them less flavorful and nutritious. This is true for kale, collards, mustards, turnips and cabbage. Buy fresh herbs and spices which are most potent. Lastly, if it is black, blue, red or purple, just buy it.

Everyone needs to get out the grocery list, go shopping, pick up a pan or pot, and get in the kitchen to put these new food rules into practice so that they will live longer and healthier.

Reference: "The 7 Rules of the New Food Revolution," *Prevention Magazine*, March 2014

Church School Lesson Overview – September 2014

This month's reviews were written by Willie Sandifer.

September 7, 2014

Lesson Title: A Vision of the Future

Lesson Scripture: Jeremiah 30

Print: Jeremiah 30:1-3, 18-22

Devotional Songs: #450, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their ancestors to possess," says the LORD." (Jeremiah 30:3)

Jeremiah's forty year career as a prophet witnessed both sides of that disaster as God used him to warn Judah and its kings of pending divine judgment. God's patience with His people had ended. He spoke (through the prophecy of the problem as a wound that would not heal (Jeremiah 30:12). Even though Judah had had a brief period of religious revival under King Josiah, it did not persist after that man's death (2 Kings 22-25). Jeremiah's message moved from a call for national repentance, to a warning of national disaster by the hand of the Lord, to promise of restoration. The latter is the subject of this lesson.

King Solomon built a temple in Jerusalem as a permanent "temple of the Lord" to replace the portable tabernacle that had been in use for several hundred years. As a result, the temple became the new home for the Ark of the Covenant. The capital city thus became the temple city. The magnificent temple was dedicated around 960 BC. It stood until it was destroyed by the Babylonian army of King Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC.

Another powerful factor for reestablishing a city was religion. Places deemed to be holy needed to be rebuilt simply because they were deemed to be holy. This lesson looks at a city that met this criterion as well as the others above: the city of Jerusalem—perhaps the most famous city in the history of the world with regard to religion. Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 BC, and the text will help to understand why there was such a strong impetus to rebuild the city.

September 14, 2014

Lesson Title: Hope for the Future

Lesson Scripture: Jeremiah 31

Print: Jeremiah 31:31-37

Devotional Songs: #484; #251; and #243

Key Verse: "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah." (Jeremiah 31:31)

This lesson addresses God's covenant with Old Testament Israel and looks at His promise through Jeremiah of a new covenant—a better one.

Covenants in the Bible feature agreements that express or imply obligations and benefits between parties. The Old Testament sometimes speaks of covenants made between two people, such as the one between Laban and Jacob. The most important covenants in the Bible, though, are those between God and people. They are both like and unlike human-to-human covenants in various ways.

The first mention of *covenant* in the Bible is in reference to promises the Lord made to Noah. This is followed by other God-to-human covenants: with Abram and his descendants Isaac and Jacob, with the people of Israel (after their departure from Egypt), and with King David. The covenants after Noah reflect the progress of the people of God from a family group headed by Abraham to a developed nation with a king, land, capital city, and temple.

We should note God's covenants to be one-sided affairs in a couple of ways. First, God establishes the terms of His covenants; there are no give-and-take negotiations in this regard. Second, God always keeps His side of His covenants. Humans may fail, but God's promises are always true. The weakness of the covenant to Old Testament Israel was never on the part of God, but on the part of the covenant people. The relentless cycle of sin, sorrow, supplication, and salvation proved that people needed a new covenant.

Jeremiah 31 speaks of a time of restoration that was not to come until after 538 BC, the year the exile ended. The prophet pictured this restoration as a great parade of the "remnant of Israel" returning from all directions. This throng is not a victorious army, but includes pregnant women, the blind, and the lame, all weeping with joy. This sets the tone for Jeremiah's broader vision of a new covenant.

(Continued on page 16)



Church School Lesson Overview – September 2014

(Continued from page 15)

September 21, 2014

Lesson Title: Anticipation of the Future

Lesson Scripture: Jeremiah 32

Print: Jeremiah 32:1-9, 14, 15

Tentative Devotional Songs: #424; #258; and #243

Key Verse: "For this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land." (Jeremiah 32:15)

This lesson involves "redemption" of a parcel of land; some information on that concept is in order. The "right of redemption" within the Law of Moses was a provision designed to keep family properties intact. The land of Canaan, the Promised Land, had been given to the Israelites by the Lord. Since possession of plots of land was to be seen as a sacred trust, the law made provision for redeeming property that had been sold outside the family. This was something like the modern "right of first refusal."

Israelite families retained ultimate rights over land they had sold. If economic hardship necessitated selling a parcel of land, such land was first to be offered to other family members. There was even a sense that a relative who had the means to buy this property from the distressed family member was obligated to do so to keep the land in the family. The seller retained the right of repurchase if his finances improved, but at current market value. All unredeemed land was to revert to the original family owners every 50 years, when a year of jubilee was observed.

The intended effect was to tie people to the land so that an ongoing possibility of economic prosperity could be retained for every family in Israel. From a modern perspective, it placed severe limits on land speculation practices as a means to accumulate wealth.

September 28, 2014

Lesson Title: Future Peace and Joy

Lesson Scripture: Jeremiah 33

Print: Jeremiah 33:1-11

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525; #77; and 243

Key Verses: "'I will restore the fortunes of the land as they were before,' says the Lord" (Jeremiah 33:11)

In last week's lesson Jeremiah was detained at a courtyard prison connected with King Zedeki-

ah's palace as the Babylonians besieged Jerusalem. The prophet's situation and the reason for it still hold. Jeremiah's imprisonment seemed to have been as much about taking him out of the public square as about any treasonable offense. The besieged city was on edge, and the king did not want that prophet exacerbating the morale problems.

Jeremiah had been serving as a prophetic voice in Jerusalem for some 40 years at the time of this lesson (587 BC), so he was a well-known figure in the city. Although he was never popular because of his dire warnings and harsh condemnations, his longevity attests to some degree of acceptance by the people. He was not easily silenced.

Church School Book Club

August 2014

Discussion Date: 30 August 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Peace of Me, T.N. Williams, 2010

September 2014

Discussion Date: 20 September 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Other Side of Goodness, Vanessa Davis Griggs, 2012

How far will faith and love go when an ambitious man finds himself in the fight of his life—with a woman who knows the other side of goodness all too well. . . .

Fifty-year-old Alabama congressman Lawrence Rudolph Simmons will do whatever it takes to get re-elected—even switch parties from Democrat to Republican. With the political tide turning, Lawrence feels it's his best shot—along with his charisma, solid twenty-nine year marriage, and three great kids. But a buried secret from his past is about to be resurrected. . .

It's been eight years since Gabrielle Mercedes gave up her baby for adoption. But when she learns the child desperately needs a bone marrow transplant, she doesn't hesitate to contact the congressman. Like Lawrence, Gabrielle will fight for what she wants, even if it means the truth could ruin someone else's life and career.

— From Back Cover



September 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 LABOR DAY Office Closed	2	3 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	4 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	5	6 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
7 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship DEADLINE FOR AMEN	8 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	9 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Bd. Mtg. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	Fifth Session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference Fairfield Convention Center - Fairfield, Alabama			
14 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	15	16 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	17 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	18	19 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	20 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. AMEN Staff Meeting
21 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	22	23 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Lay Organization Mtg.	25 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	25 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	27 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	27 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. WMSM Meeting
28 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	29	30 6:30 p.m. Church School Board Meeting				

POTPOURRI

Pray for our Sick & Shut-ins

Susie Alin

Jason Brown

Altonette Burks

Mildred Hereford

Evelyn Hildreth

Robert Hyder

James Jamar

Ernest Jones

Lorene Jones

Homer McCraw

Idell Merrell

Pray for our sick and shut-in.

About St. John Members

Ms. Janel Williams was awarded the distinct honor of "Class of 2013 Hall of Fame Inductee", Boys and Girls Clubs of North Alabama on July 15, 2013. Janel received this award at the 5th Annual Leaders & Legends Dinner with Alabama Coach, Nick Saban, speaker.

This award stated Janel has been a member of the Boys and Girls Clubs since the age of 9 and grew into a leader amongst her peers and staff. In 1999 she was named the Alabama Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year and was one of the first high school students in the nation to receive the \$25,000 Oprah Winfrey Network Scholarship. She completed her BS Degree in 2011 from Athens State University, and is currently pursuing a MBA in Logistics.

Janel is the mother of Jared and Janese and is a member of the Voices of Praise Choir of St. John.

Congratulations, Janel!

Judge Martha Lynn Sherrod received the 43rd Annual Thurgood Marshall Judicial Award, presented by the National Bar Association (NBA). The award was presented at a luncheon, which was part of the NBA's 89th Annual Convention and Exhibits. Convention attendees participated in a variety of forums, and symposiums that addressed the unique challenges and issues faced by legal professionals.

Congratulations, Judge Sherrod!

REMEMBER OUR MILITARY

ABE Joseph, Daisha
230 Chevalier Field Ave.
BKS George Washington
Pensacola, FL 32508-5151

Please remember St. John's military family members by sending cards or little reminders of home. Keep them in your daily prayers.

If you know of any member of the St. John family who has a loved one deployed overseas as well as those stationed in the US, please contact any AMEN staff with their name and address. You may also e-mail the contact information to stjohnameh@aol.com.



AME Proud

Click on these AME Facebook Pages and Groups

AMEC Connectional Health Commission
AME Church Members Connecting Around World
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AME Church History Discussion
The Ninth Episcopal District AME Church Official Group
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The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop

Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| August 16, 2014 | Church Family Fun Day |
| August 17, 2014 | Pastor's Appreciation, 10:00 a.m.
Bishop Clement Fugh, Guest Preacher |
| August 23, 2014 | South Birmingham-Huntsville-Bessemer Harvest Home,
Grady Madison AMEC, Madison, Alabama |
| August 24, 2014 | AAMU Day, The Knight Center, A&M University Campus, 10:30 a.m. |
| August 31, 2014 | Pastor's Appreciation for the Reverend Dennis DeLoach,
At 2:00 p.m., Matthews Chapel AME Church, Fackler, Alabama |
| September 10, 2014 | WMS Annual Convention
Fairfield Civic Center, Fairfield, Alabama |
| September 10-13, 2014 | Northwest Annual Conference
Fairfield Civic Center, Fairfield, Alabama |

*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. Romans 10:9*

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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 9

September 2014

St. John
AME Church

Welcome
Back



St. John rejoices in the return of the Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn as its pastor and the Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr. as its presiding elder.

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now."

- Philippians 3:3-5

St. John is thankful for every remembrance of the outstanding leadership of Pastor Patrick Clayborn and Executive Minister Sheri Smith Clayborn.

Thank you for the fervent prayers each Tuesday on the Prayer Call.

Thank you for the anointed Holy Ghost-filled preaching each Sunday.

Thank you for the energetic Bible teaching on each Wednesday (at noon and 6 pm).

Thank you for the godly representation of St. John in the community, district and across the connectional AME Church.

Thank you for heart-felt ministering to those in need, especially to the sick and the bereaved.

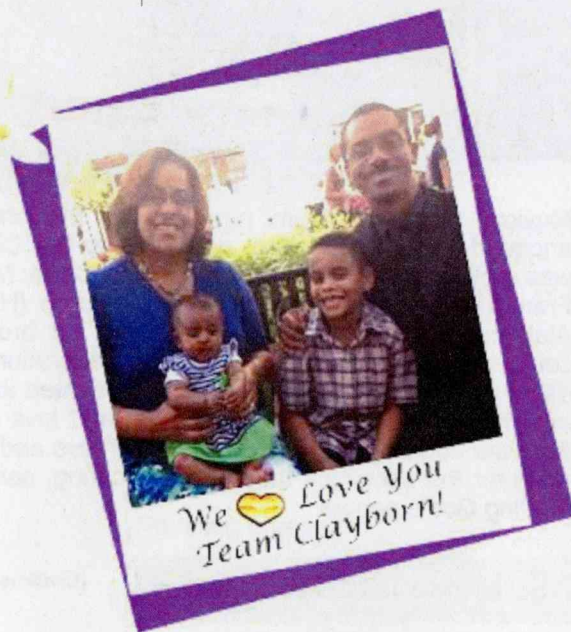
Thank you for the example of how to walk with God in every aspect of life.

Thank you for your love for God, for one another, for the church and for the people.

Thank you for leadership in the growth of all ministries of the church.

Thank you for development of heart-warming special worship services.

Thank you for your faithfulness.



"I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."

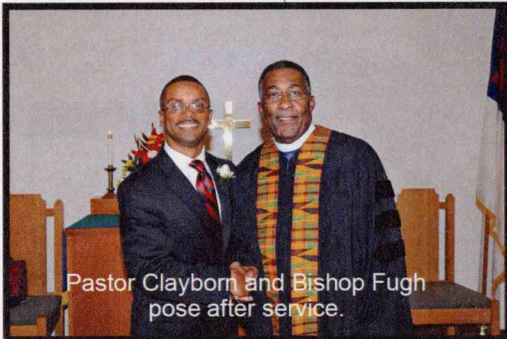
- Philippians 3:6

St. John expresses thanks in advance for the work that you will do this conference year. God is doing a great work in the leadership and the congregation of St. John. Key points for this conference year come from *The Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. They are getting grounded in prayer and passionate worship, radical hospitality (striving to be a welcoming space), intentional faith development (learning how to apply the scripture to our daily lives), faithfulness in giving, and expanding our level of service to the community.

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow!"

Pastor's Appreciation: "A Man of Faith with a Passion for Praise"

By Jeanette Jones



Pastor Clayborn and Bishop Fugh pose after service.

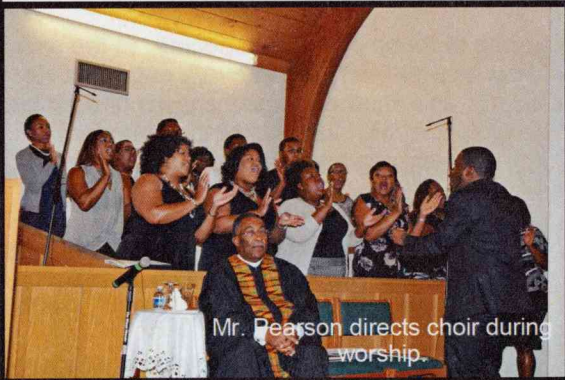
On August 15-16, 2014, The St. John AME Church family held a pastoral appreciation celebration for the first family, the Reverend Doctor Patrick DeWitt Clayborn, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, Patrick II, and Joya. Coordinated by the Board of Stewards and directed by the Holy Spirit, the weekend began with a fun-filled church picnic and culminated with Sunday worship and a leadership luncheon.

The theme, "A Man of Faith with a Passion for Praise", was inspired by Pastor Clayborn's demonstrated desire to live an exemplary life of praise and devotion before God. Pastor Clayborn is known throughout the Episcopal District for his anointed preaching, insightful teaching and fervent prayers – all evidence of a committed walk with God. Since the beginning of his tenure at St. John, Pastor Clayborn has been consistently faithful in his duties as shepherd over the Lord's flock.



Bishop Fugh preaches inspiring message.

The guest preacher for Sunday worship was The Right Reverend Clement W. Fugh, presiding prelate of the 14th Episcopal District. His inspiring message, "Tell Them - Even if They Do Not Believe You" (Luke 4 and Isaiah 61), was a focused, biblical charge to Pastor Clayborn and the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, as well as a blessing for all who share the good news of the gospel in word and deed. Bishop Fugh spoke of the "strange paradox" of the preaching that enables a preacher to also be blessed by the same words they minister to others. He then contrasted the challenges of Jesus' ministry with the challenges of contemporary preaching. Bishop Fugh concluded with a pointed pastoral challenge: "Keep preaching, make full proof of your ministry."



Mr. Pearson directs choir during worship.



Mrs. McAlpine-Franklin, Guest Soloist.

Musical selections were rendered by the choir. An anointed musical selection, dedicated to the Clayborns, was delivered by guest soloist, Mrs. Carla McAlpine-Franklin of First Missionary Baptist Church (Huntsville, Alabama), that not only blessed them, but brought the congregation to their feet in praise and adoration to God. The service ended as the Stewards presented the Pastor and the first family with special gifts and love offerings from the congregation - expressions of love and appreciation for the sacrifices they make in caring, serving and feeding God's people.



Dr. Jones presents gifts to the Clayborns.

(Continued on page 3)

Pastor's Appreciation: "A Man of Faith with a Passion for Praise"

By Jeanette Jones

(Continued from page 2)

Pastor Clayborn graciously thanked the stewards and congregation as he graciously received the gifts on behalf of his family and expressed personal gratitude to Bishop Fugh for his presence and preaching.

Following the worship service, leaders of the various ministries of the church joined the Clayborns, Fughs, and other special guests for a leadership luncheon on the campus of Alabama A&M University.



Stewards pose for picture with the Clayborns and Fughs at the leadership luncheon.

Ninth Episcopal District Dates to Remember

Alabama River Region Annual Conference WMS Convention, Oct. 2, 2014 Opening Annual Service, Oct. 2 at 7pm	Thurs. - Sat. Oct. 2-4, 2014	Brown Chapel AME Church Selma, AL 36703
Northeast Alabama Annual Conference WMS Convention, Oct. 15, 2014 Opening Annual Service, Oct. 15 at 7pm	Wed. - Sat. Oct. 15-18, 2014	St. John AME Church Fort Mitchell, AL 36856
Southwest Alabama Annual Conference WMS Convention, Oct. 22, 2014 Opening Annual Service, Oct. 22 at 7pm	Wed. - Sat. Oct. 22-25, 2014	Metropolitan AME Church Mobile, AL 36603
Planning Meeting	Nov. 13-15, 2014	Daniel Payne Plaza
9th District Annual Lay Convention	Nov. 21-22, 2014	Sheraton, Birmingham, AL



St. John Goes to Campus to Worship for AAMU Day

By Bridget J. Floyd

On Sunday, August 24th, St. John marked AAMU Day differently. That is, St. John conducted a special worship service at the Knight Center on the campus of Alabama A & M University (AAMU). St. John members and the student-athletes, coaches, faculty, and staff converged at 10:30 a.m. The Voices in Praise (VIP) Choir with featured soloists and various harmonious choral combinations enhanced a spirit-filled worship experience. The combined representation of the Dance Ministry (adult, youth, children) received a notable response from the student - athletes with a hip-hop-inspired performance. Student athletes and AAMU staff/faculty participated in the AME order of worship along with St. John clergy and members.

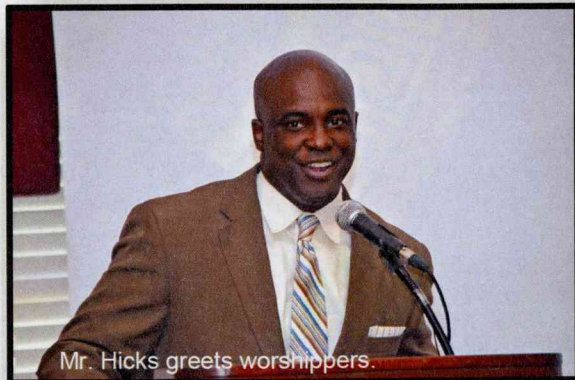


Rev. Sheri leads praise and worship



VIP Choir leads in music ministry!

Executive Minister, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn was the worship leader for the service. The Stewards of St. John coordinated the special service. A male and female student-athletes shared the duty of reading the scripture. President and Mrs. Andrew Hugine welcomed all to worship and introduced the administrators, faculty, and the coaches who in turn presented their respective student-athletes. The Hugines have dual roles in terms of AAMU administration as well as St. John members. Athletic Director, Mr. Bryan Hicks, brought greetings and expressed appreciation to St. John from the AAMU athletic department.



Mr. Hicks greets worshippers.



Dr. & Mrs. Hugine extend welcome.



Student-athletes read scripture.



Teams were introduced by coaches.

(Continued on page 5)



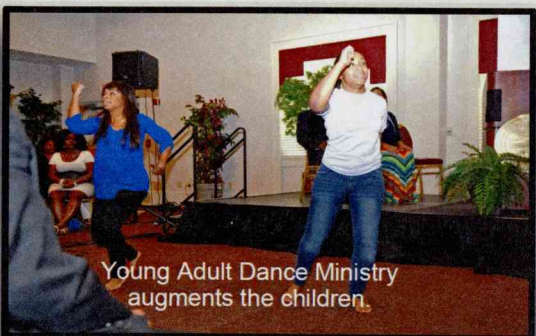
St. John Goes to Campus to Worship for AAMU Day

By Bridget J. Floyd

(Continued from page 4)



The Children's Dance Ministry leads in praise through dance.



Young Adult Dance Ministry augments the children.

Pastor Clayborn preached on the topic of "Lost and Found" from the text Luke 15: 8-10. He began by posing the question of whether the congregants had ever been lost and noted one could be confused, and even "unsure of whose you are." He indicated that it can be hard to admit being lost. Dr. Clayborn offered suggestions as to "how to get found." The primary recommendation was to notice what is out of position; as in the text where the woman "knew she had lost one of ten coins". He indicated that the problem that the coin could not be located was likely due to disarray in the woman's home. He recommended that one not "adjust to the mess" but rather, "clean it up". Further, he suggested that, as in the text, one must shed a glimmer of light (the woman lit a lamp) in order to break from the darkness in one's life. He encouraged to "never, never, never give up" in the words of Winston Churchill. He indicated a "found" person will rejoice.



After the encouraging sermon, a special prayer was offered for the students. Grace was offered as the students were to transition to the cafeteria after the service. They responded in a prayerful manner and they softly joined in singing the words as Mr. Reginald Pearson led the congregation. Their spontaneous blending of their voices was touchy.



Student-athletes illustrate the message.



As the invitation to discipleship was offered, so was an open invitation to worship at St. John at any time.

The Stewards gave gift bags/"survival kits" to the students as they headed for the cafeteria. The service was different this year but appropriate for the audience, who were greeted warmly by St. John members and officers, with the hope that the students will accept the invitation to worship "at" St. John soon and often. This was an inspirational service on several levels.

St John A.M.E. Observes Annual WMS Day

By Paulette Bargon



WMS and YPD pose after the WMS Annual Day.

"Missionaries with a Passion to Serve" was the chosen theme for the St. John A.M.E. Church 2014 Missionary Day for the Betty E. Derrick Women's Missionary Society (WMS), celebrated on Sunday, August 10, 2014, during the 10:50 am worship service.

Sister Claudinette Purifoy-Fears shared the announcements in her own charming way and also led the worship service. Sister Lorraine Parham led the Summary of the Decalogue. Sister Eleanor Burnett offered prayer and Sister Ashley Lewis read the scripture from John 13:4-14.

After greetings, Sister Charlsie Brooks emphasized that this was not just an annual day but an opportunity to show who the WMS is and to invite others to join the team as they minister with a passion to the needs of the sick, poor, hungry, homeless and to support those with other needs. The WMS not only serves the local community, but the global community as well. She stated that the WMS also has one of the best jobs in St. John AME, working with the children in the YPD. Sister Alicia Brownlow led the Litany, which was entitled, "We've Got to Have Heart."

Sister Kaitlyn McClung recited a wonderful poem, which she composed, entitled "WMSW." This poem described the duties of the Women's Missionary Society and the passion and the spiritual way in which they serve. This young lady is truly gifted. Sister Mariah Gullatte welcomed visitors and guests. Sister Angeline Brownlow rendered the offertory prayer.

The WMS President, Sister Felicia Carter, introduced the Reverend Meriam Garrett, the speaker for the service. Following the introduction, the St. John Gospel Choir, with guest soloist, Ms. Danita Wilson-Jones, rendered a soul stirring and uplifting rendition of the gospel song, "When I Get Home."

The Reverend Meriam Garrett's sermon was entitled, "Is He Here?" She based the message on the scripture, Matthew 6: 1-4 and the Missionary purpose taken from The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012. The Reverend Garrett focused on three words in the Missionary Statement that should describe every member of the WMS. Here are just a few highlights from her sermon.

- **Called:** WMS are all called by God. They are all gifted, needed, invited and sent by God for the sake of the world to do His work. God's call is for all to be united with Him and to use their gifts in service for their neighbor. Since there are many gifts, why not use them?
- **Committed:** Being committed to God's message means being committed to His will. God's mission for believers focuses on three things: evangelism, edification, and encouragement. To accomplish these read the Bible daily and pray constantly, share your faith with others, improve your moral and intellectual state, support confidence and hope, and lift up, do not tear down.
- **Challenged:** Once committed to God, prepare to be challenged. One of the greatest challenges is believing in Jesus Christ; believing Jesus hung on the cross and died. He was removed from the cross and was buried in a borrowed tomb and on the third day He got up from that grave and is alive today. There are many challenges in life: Family, health, living conditions, and even church. Even worldly life is tempting when one tries to live for God. Challenges cannot be avoided, but one can learn to live with them if prepared to deal with

(Continued on page 11)

St. John Enjoys "Summer Garden Party" at Redstone

Over 200 St. John members and friends gathered on August 16, 2014 for a church-wide day of fellowship, food, and fun. The event was held at the Carol D. Hudson Recreation Center and The Cliffs Lodge, Redstone Arsenal, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The idea originated with the Congregational Care committee of the Steward Board and grew to encompass several ministries of the church. The theme was "A Summer Garden Party" and the decorations helped to set the tone for this theme.

The venue allowed for activities outside in the hot August sun as well as activities in a comfortable, air-conditioned lodge. The fun and games were age appropriate and provided something for everyone. Brother Justin York coordinated/supervised the games on the recreation field. Board games were available for persons in the lodge.

In addition to the games, there was entertainment by the St. John Rappers, line dancing, and door prizes. St. John took this time to recognize their member, Nedra McDaniel, who was named Lay Person of the Year for the Ninth District of the AME Church. She was presented a framed certificate and a beautiful dish garden flower arrangement. Members who joined during the 2013-2014 conference year received special recognition.

Food was catered by Nash's Barbecue and the men of St. John. Food from Nash's Barbecue included smoked chicken, vinegar and mustard slaw, baked beans and rolls. The men of St. John enjoyed grilling hamburgers (and veggie burgers) and hot dogs, which were popular items on the food table. Ice cream and other frozen treats were the dessert.

The committee made special efforts to accommodate the needs of everyone. Park and Ride transportation was provided from Redstone Arsenal Visitors Center to the picnic site and golf cart transportation was available from the recreation field to the lodge. Greeters welcomed each person as they arrived and set the atmosphere for a fun time.

Feedback was very positive. Members were very pleased with the location and especially liked the option of being inside or outside. They liked the fact that there were activities for all age groups and enjoyed the food and the scenic view from the patio of the lodge.

Steering committee members were Abbiegail Hugine, Hodges Washington, Cassandra Ingram, Willie Sandifer, Guy Ginn, Tami McGhee, Donna Gullatte, Carol Ball, Claudinette Purifoy-Fears, Angeline Brownlow, Pamela Whitehead, Justin York, Yvonne Sanderson, Kennedy Harris, Lula Rochelle and Lorraine Parham. Many other members worked on the various subcommittees. Everyone working together resulted in a great day of food, fun and fellowship for the St. John family at the "Summer Garden Party."



St. John Enjoys "Summer Garden Party" at Redstone



St. John Celebrates Pastor's Appreciation for the Reverend Dennis DeLoach

By Charlsie Brooks

At Matthews Chapel AMEC, Fackler, Alabama, St. John celebrated the First Year Anniversary of the Reverend Dennis DeLoach on Sunday, August 31, 2014. Amid clouds and stormy skies, along with turbulent rain, worshippers and well-wishers pressed on for this wonderful celebration. Nothing deterred the members from bringing sunshine and cheer to this church family.

The worship service began flowing smoothly with Presiding Elder Oliver Allen, officiate. The Call to Worship was led by Sister Michelle Reed and was based on Psalm 6, offering Praise to God for Pastor DeLoach. Music was rendered throughout the program by the Mass Choir of St. John, with Mr. Reginald Pearson, Director of Music. Dr. Jennifer Patterson, St. John Dance Ministry Director, rendered a beautiful testimony and praise dance to the selection, "Father, Wrap me in Your Arms." Visitors were welcomed by Miss Michelle Harris. The visitors included ministers and members from St. John and family members of the Reverend DeLoach.

The Reverend DeLoach introduced the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn. He thanked the Reverend Clayborn for being with him and his church family and agreeing to speak for his First Anniversary. He said that Dr. Clayborn was his mentor and that he knew he was a special preacher when he began pastoring at St. John on the first Sunday of December, 2011. The Reverend Clayborn then presented a check to the Matthew Chapel and a love offering to the Reverend DeLoach from the St. John Church family. He stated that the Reverend DeLoach is dear and close to St. John's heart and thanked Matthews Chapel for taking care of him and allowing him to do what God wants him to do. He also made comments on behalf of the Reverend Timothy Nathan and the Board of Examiners acknowledging that they are proud of the Reverend DeLoach's progress.

After prayer, Dr. Clayborn delivered the preached word with biblical text was 2 Kings 6:17; and Mark 7:34. The sermon was entitled "Be Open." He began by referencing many problems that can and will close people up. The body produces physical changes—muscles and organs tighten; people close up. They close up from societal problems (pay differentials, crime and murders in communities, unrest in Ferguson, Missouri), etc. But, no one wants to talk about these problems—They Tighten Up! Problems also present themselves in local churches. Christians, however, must do the right thing; stretch out on faith—then things happen, they change.

In the text, Elisha, man of God, could hear the enemies plan. As a result they tried to slay him. This was not a good plan. Some people come after the anointed, thinking that God is not watching. Woe to the man who tries to destroy God's chosen! Elisha's servant was fearful. Dr. Clayborn continued by stating that people hurt when they are fearful and they can be assured that when God is with them, His eyes are always open. He directed the Reverend DeLoach to keep his eyes open so that he can see beyond confusion, beyond nature; see beyond what is in front of him. As Moses told his people, "Stand still and see what God will do."

Pastor Clayborn then focused on the second text from Mark. To the Reverend DeLoach and church he said, "We also need our ears open". Sometimes the opening process is not pretty. This scripture's healing is not pretty. He (Jesus) stuck his fingers in the man's ears, spit and touched the man's tongue. He continued, "The devil is always trying to talk to you with stuff that will keep you down, negatives." Believers need a heart with faith that comes from hearing. We were reminded that Matthew told the people not to bring gossip, or tell who or what. When we are closed to negatives we can start to hear God's plans for us.

In conclusion, he charged the Reverend DeLoach to open his mouth, ears and eyes, to preach in season and out of season, for God will pour out a blessing he cannot contain. He should also open himself to praise, for God has done too much for him to close up.

After the Invitation to Christian Discipleship and other special presentations, remarks and the Benediction, everyone joined in fellowship before returning home amid lifted clouds.

St. John Completes Habitat for Humanity Project

By Tami McGhee



Home built in partnership with other local churches, at 2506 Small Brook Circle.

Thanks, St. John, for supporting another Habit for Humanity Spring Build. The Hunter Family Home, located at 2506 Small Brook Circle, was dedicated on Saturday, September 6, 2014.

St. John's own, the Reverend Patrick Clayborn delivered the home dedication prayer and the benediction. Special thanks to St. John members who sacrificed their time to volunteer at the work site and those who prepared lunch for the volunteers. Another family has been blessed because of St. John's love and support. To God be the glory!

*Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain.
Psalm 127:1*

**Habitat for Humanity
of Madison County**

**The Hunter Family
Home**

in partnership with

**Church of the Nativity Episcopal Church
First Christian Church
St. John A.M.E. Church
First Presbyterian Church
United Church of Huntsville
St. Matthew Episcopal Church
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and gifts in kind from

Dow Schneider Electric valspar Whirlpool Yale

Habitat for Humanity of Madison County is an Equal Opportunity employer.
This is a drug & alcohol free work site.

Pastor Clayborn and St. John volunteers with new home owner

Habitat family receives ownership of new home



Grandparents

(Submitted by the Reverend Meriam Garrett)

Grandparents are special people
with wisdom and pride.
They are always offering love and kindness
and are always there to guide.
They often make you feel
so confident and strong.
Their arms are always open
no matter what you did wrong.
They try to help out
in every way that they can.
They love all their grandchildren
the same whether you're a child,
woman or man.
They are always there to listen
and to lend a helping hand.
They show you respect
and they try to understand.
They give their love, devotion and so much
more,
that's easy to see.
Grandparents,
what perfect examples
of the kind of person that we should be.

~By Stacy Smith~

WMS Annual Day

(Continued from page 6)

the challenges. Learn to incorporate joy in life and cut down on the negative. Allow the Holy Spirit to take control.

To encourage the WMS, the Reverend Garrett shared her two favorite scriptures, Matthew 7:12 and Proverbs 3:5-6. She concluded her sermon by stating that the members of the WMS are strong, faithful, Christian women who have a huge responsibility to God, church, community and each other.

WMS President, Sister Felicia Carter presented the Lifetime Member Award to Sister Mary Powers. Sister Mable McCall received the Silver Member Award. Both awards were for their many years of dedicated service in the Women's Missionary Society.

The Women's Missionary Society Annual Day concluded with the Missionary Benediction, led by the Reverend Patrick Clayborn.

This was a joyous and spirit-filled celebration of the Women's Missionary Society.

Pray For Peace

By Paulette Bargon

It seems like there is so much turmoil in the world. Whenever I read a paper or watch the news on TV all I see is wars, riots and murders. Our black children shot down just for walking down a street and minding their own business or knocking on someone's door just to ask for help. I am tired of the same old excuse: "I was in fear of my own life!" I get very distraught when I hear how an innocent child is killed because of gang violence or other Black on Black crimes. I ask myself over and over again, "What can we do to save ourselves and our children? Do we protest, riot, or get our own guns?" Then someone whispered in my ear, "PRAY FOR PEACE." This might sound redundant but that is what we should really do. Not only should we pray for peace but we must live peacefully. I think that is what our Lord and Savior would want us to do.

Prayer is a power that is honored by God in His rule of the world. "I urge you, first of all, to pray . . . for kings and all others who are in authority so that we can live in peace and quietness, in godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases our Savior" *1 Timothy 2:1-3*.

Don't let Satan have the victory. Trusting in God brings peace. *Isaiah 26:3*

A PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE

We are moulded, each one of us,
in the image of God,
and within our souls there is a fingerprint
none can erase.
We pray for those who have no regard
for anyone but self,
who put no value on human life.
For nations and individuals who abuse and kill.
We are not called to be judge or jury,
but we are called to be agents of change,
and if the butterfly that flaps its wings
should be our attitude to others
then so be it, Lord,
and may the hurricane this generates
somewhere within the world
reach into the hearts and souls of those
for whom we pray, and reveal to them
how precious are those
for whom they have no love,
and how precious are they
who now bring tears to the eyes of God.

©John Birch

Becoming People of Prayer

The Hebrew word for prayer, Li-heet-pallel, means to inspect oneself. Prayer is not waving a magic wand, hoping for the best, nor begging God to make it right for you. When we pray we look inside and question:

"What do I need to change about myself in order to get what I really want out of life."

Learning & Growing through the Power of Prayer

Join Us

This weekly Prayer Journey is a group-supported, journal-guided experience of self-discovery.

October 5 - November 16

WORDS TO LIVE BY
FOUND IN OLD SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH;
DATED 1692

AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT Surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen even to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. If you compare yourself to others, you may become vain and bitter; for there will always be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. 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 & stars; you have a right to be here. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever your labors & aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.

Found, framed in the home of Mrs. Rosa Whitaker.

Women's Ministry Tidbit

Soup Kitchen Corner



GOD'S LIGHT

"The people who walk in darkness will see a great light, those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them."
-Isaiah 9:2

Praise God, a Soup Kitchen recipient attended morning worship services. Dressed in her finery, she participated wholeheartedly in worship and praise.

As "The Soup Kitchen" provides hot meals, with smiles, they strive to serve as a balm so that those suffering will experience God's love. On the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month it is their prayer to let their light shine before men and women in such a way that they may see the good works and glorify the Father who is in heaven.

The prayer of this ministry is that this visitor, as well as others, will continue to come, not only for physical nourishment, but also to praise God with a Christ-loving people.

Go Green

Turn off the lights in unused rooms.

Transportation Ministry Seeks Volunteers

The Transportation Ministry is being organized at St. John to provide safe, dependable group transportation for the church family. The ministry is seeking members who are willing to volunteer to serve as a driver for the church bus, church van, as well as persons to use their personal vehicles to provide transportation to and from church for members.

A commercial driver's license (CDL) is required to drive the church bus. All applicants must provide proof of license and proof of insurance. Background checks on driving records will be made periodically. Applications are available outside the main office. Please complete an application if you are interested in being a part of this exciting ministry.

In Memory of Ernest Jones



Mr. Ernest Jones' connection to St. John AMEC spans several generations. His grandfather was a founding member of the church and his parents, Preston and Mildred Jones, were also members of St. John. He departed this life on August 25, 2014, at home surrounded by family.

Mr. Jones was an entrepreneur and civil rights activist. This past February he was recognized among the "firsts" in their profession and/or service" during St. John's African American History program. A feature story on his life was printed in the September 7th issue of *The Huntsville Times* (http://www.al.com/news/huntsville/index.ssf/2014/09/erney_jones_life_story.html)

He attended St. John along with a number of his family members who are very active in the ministries of the church. His family at St. John includes his wife, Sister Lorene Jones; his daughters, Karen Minor, Yvonne Barbour, and Donna Gullatte; and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Please pray for the family during this season of bereavement.

God Saw You...
by Author Unknown

God saw you getting tired,
When a cure was not to be.
So He wrapped His arms around you,
and whispered, "Come to me".
You didn't deserve what you went through,
So He gave you rest.
God's garden must be beautiful,
He only takes the best
And when I saw you sleeping,
So peaceful and free from pain
I could not wish you back
To suffer that again.



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

Properly backing up data on a laptop or desktop is something that is often forgotten. There are some ways to safely back up data. It is recommended that a main folder be used to store files that will need to be backed up. This helps in the case that a quick backup to an external storage device has to be done, and provides a centralized location for personal data. There are also other mechanisms that can be used to backup or store data, such as the cloud, external hard drives, CDs/DVDs, or flash drives.

There are several back-up solution providers that offer cloud services. The cloud service allows uploading files/data to the solution provider's servers and the data can be accessed from anywhere. The issue with storing data in the cloud is that the person does not know the physical location of the data. The next mechanism is to store or backup data to the external hard drive. Most external hard drives can be purchased in small portable sizes. External hard drives are some of the most widely used sources of backup and data storage. The external hard drives can be easily recognized regardless of the operating system that may be installed on the computer. Unlike using the cloud mechanism, the external hard drive must be carried around and can be easily lost if not secured properly.

The opposite in size of the external hard drive is the flash drive, sometimes referred to as a jump drive. These are smaller in storage and can sometimes be purchased with built in encryption which provides a safety net if the drive is misplaced. CDs/DVDs are the most cost effective mechanism for backing up data. The issue is that if there is a lot of data to be backed up, it can take an extremely long time to copy data to the discs.

As mentioned, these are some of the most commonly used mechanisms of backing up data. Each one may have an advantage over the other, but the most important mechanism is being knowledgeable of the location of the data and how it is being used.

September is National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

By Rosemary Wells

One in six men in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime. It is the second most common cancer in the United States, and each year about 30,000 men die from this cancer.

Prostate cancer occurs in the small, walnut-sized gland called the prostate that sits just below a man's bladder. Like other cancer, prostate cancer begins when cells in the prostate begin growing and dividing more rapidly than normal cells. When other cells complete their life span, they die off. Cancer cells continue living and reproducing. As these abnormal cells accumulate, they can develop into a tumor. This tumor can eventually spread (metastasize) to nearby tissue, organs, and eventually bones.

Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screenings detect the amount of PSA in the blood. PSA is a protein produced by the prostate gland, and when the gland is affected by cancer, infection, inflammation, or enlargement, it releases higher than normal levels of the substance.

As part of a regular physical, doctors may begin performing a digital rectal exam (DRE) on men around the age of 50 or in those with risk factors for the cancer. If the doctor detects any changes or abnormalities, s/he may suggest an ultrasound to check for the presence of a tumor. The results of a PSA and a DRE are reported as a Gleason score. The higher the Gleason score the more likely it is that the prostate cancer has spread past the prostate into nearby tissue, organs, or bones.

The most common symptoms of prostate cancer include trouble urinating, decreased force when urinating, blood in the urine and semen, swelling in the legs, discomfort in the pelvis and hips, and pain with ejaculation. For some men, prostate cancer can develop for months or years before it begins causing symptoms.

The following factors increase a man's risk of developing prostate cancer:

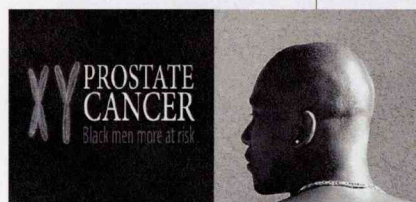
- Age - most common in men over 65, but the likelihood of developing prostate cancer begins increasing at age 50.
- Race - **African American men** have a higher risk, while Asian men have the lowest.
- Family history - men with family history of prostate cancer have an increased risk of developing prostate cancer. The closer the relation, the higher the chance.
- Obesity - overweight and obese men are more likely to have prostate cancer than men of a healthier weight.

Men with prostate cancer have several treatment options. These options include:

- Removal of the prostate gland (radical prostatectomy).
- Radiation therapy, high energy radiation that can shrink and kill cancer cells.
- Chemotherapy, drug treatment that uses chemicals to kill cancer cells.
- Hormone therapy, stops the body from producing the hormone testosterone, which prostate tumors use to grow.
- Brachytherapy, radioactive seeds are planted in or near the tumor to shrink and kill it
- Cryosurgery, freezing tissue to kill cancer cells
- Ultrasound therapy, heating the prostate to kill cancer cells.

Early-stage prostate cancer can often be treated and cured, but advanced-stage prostate cancer becomes harder to treat. Plus, the treatments that are usually most effective for advanced prostate cancer tend to have the most negative side effects. These include urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction (ED). Based on the individual risk for the disease, the lifestyle, and age, persons can work with their doctor to decide how often they should be screened and when these screenings should start. **The earlier prostate cancer is found, the better!**

For more information go to the website www.cdc.gov/cancer/prostate.



Church School Lesson Overview – October 2014

This month's reviews were written by Willie Sandifer.

October 5, 2014

Lesson Title: The Rewards of Patience

Lesson Scripture: Job 1; Psalm 56; Habakkuk 1-3

Print: Habakkuk 2:1-5; 3:17-19

Devotional Songs: #327 [], #272 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3:18)

Habakkuk likely ministered in the final decade of the seventh century BC, although some date his prophetic ministry to as early as 630 BC. The closing decades of the seventh century BC saw Israel under stress. The northern kingdom of Israel had been destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 BC as God's judgment on His people's idolatry, social injustice, and unholy political alliances came to fruition. The people of the southern kingdom of Judah did not learn from what happened to the northern kingdom and the same sinful patterns became their norm.

The prophet Habakkuk cried out about the violence, injustice, and wide-scale abandonment of God's laws that resulted in the trampling of Israelites by the wicked. The prophet pleaded as one who had been crying out to God for a long time without receiving an answer. God answered. Not only was He aware of the sins of His people, He planned to use the Babylonians to level the southern kingdom of Judah just as the Assyrians had done to the northern kingdom of Israel.

Habakkuk was not comforted by that answer. He complained that the Babylonians were far more treacherous than the Israelites, and that they were known for trampling the righteous.

October 12, 2014

Lesson Title: Confident of Redemption

Lesson Scripture: Job 19; Psalm 57

Print: Job 19:1-7, 23-29

Devotional Songs: #400 []; #251 []; and #243 []

Key Verse: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth" (Job 19:25).

Though Job lived a righteous life—righteous enough to receive a divine endorsement in that

regard —Job experienced terrible adversity. God, unbeknown to Job, was in the process of disproving Satan's contention that Job lived an upright life only because God had blessed and prospered him. God then granted Satan permission to test Job.

The majority of the book of Job features conversations among Job and the friends who came to console him. Their dialogue was different from the one between God and Satan. Job and his friends shared the simplistic view that bad things happen only (or mainly) to bad people. According to that view, if one wants to know whether people are righteous or not, all one has to do is look at how well that person is faring. If one were thriving, then one must be doing right. If one were suffering, then one must be doing wrong.

Since the friends saw that Job was suffering terribly, they assumed he was guilty of some grave offense. Perhaps Job would have agreed under normal circumstances. But Job was the one suffering, and he could recall no wicked action or set of habits that warranted the magnitude of his downfall. Job had no defense other than his own claim of innocence.

October 19, 2014

Lesson Title: Defiant Faithfulness

Lesson Scripture: Job 5; 24 Psalm 55:12-23

Print: Job 24:1, 9-12, 19-25

Tentative Devotional Songs: #84 []; #258 []; and #243 []

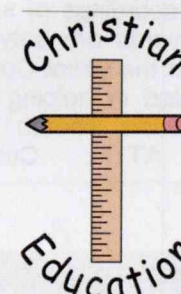
Key Verse: "I call upon God, and the Lord will save me" (Psalm 55:16).

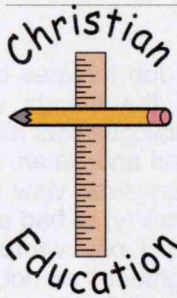
The background of this lesson is the same as the previous lesson, so that information will not be repeated here. In the interim between the last lesson and this lesson, Job has undergone two more rounds of counseling—one by Zophar and one by Eliphaz.

The friends' counsel did not comfort Job. They said he was guilty of wrongdoing that deserved to be punished. They accused him of pride in being unwilling to confess his guilt. They called him to heed time-tested wisdom, to repent of evil, and get right with God so that God could prosper him again.

Zophar seemed to have taken the response from Job as a personal insult. In turn, Job

(Continued on page 16)





Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 15)

viewed Zophar's reply as mockery and falsehood. When it was Eliphaz's turn, he accused Job of great wickedness, the cure being repentance.

In reaction, Job expressed his wish to gain access to God's presence so Job could plead his case and be acquitted. Job then confessed that it was impossible to do so and that he was powerless to do anything about God's plans for him.

October 26, 2014
Lesson Title: Who's in Control?
Lesson Scripture: Job 42; Psalm 86
Print: Job 42:1-10
Tentative Devotional Songs: #394 []; 77; and #243 []
Key Verses: "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2).

We are close to the end of the book of Job, and a lot has happened since the previous lesson. Bildad was the last of Job's three friends to speak and he spoke briefly, only six verses. He added nothing new to the friends' case against Job, so Job continued to assert his innocence while waxing eloquent on the nature of God.

Job was then followed by a man named Elihu. He is not mentioned until this point in the book and is not mentioned again after he finishes speaking. Neither Job nor God responded to Elihu's thoughts. The man just mysteriously showed up, offered his thoughts, and disappeared.

Then God finally spoke. Posing a series of rhetorical questions, God accused Job of lacking knowledge. The gist of God's line of questioning was that He, and not Job, was the one who established and sustained creation. God then invited Job to respond. Job declined to answer, merely citing his own unworthiness to do so.

God was not satisfied with Job's reaction. Job was not going to get off the hot seat that easily! God demanded a real answer, rejected Job's accusations, and reminded Job that he could not justify or save himself, for no human could stand up even to creatures God had made—creatures such as Behemoth and Leviathan. Job was required to answer for what he had said.

Appeal for Media Ministry Members

The Media Ministry brings support to the St. John worship experience through technology. Recording and reproducing recordings of sermons and supporting live events are only a part of how this ministry fulfills the Great Commission. If you are interested in helping to grow this ministry, e-mail the church at stjohnname.hsv@gmail.com, ATTN: Curtis Mayes or Darwin Washington.

Church School Book Club

September 2014
Discussion Date: 20 September 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Other Side of Goodness, Vanessa Davis Griggs, 2012

October 2014
Discussion Date: 18 October 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Retreat, Moss, 2010

For those who have ever wondered what goes on at a men's retreat, The Retreat is an in-depth look into the lives of four men who have looked for answers in all the wrong places . . . until now.

Quincy is in the final stages of his divorce, but he still wants to know which church member had an affair with his wife. Jamal is on the verge of the promotion of a lifetime, but unresolved issues with his son, Jamir, threaten everything. Chauncey is a man who will go to great lengths for his church, but not for his terminally ill brother. Will is a young hustler who has been given a rare opportunity to make a choice that will change his life forever.

These four men are all at a crossroads in their lives. Will they lay their burdens down at the cross, or will they choose paths that will cause more harm than good? It will all be revealed at the men's retreat, where they learn that they need God and his wisdom more than ever.

— From Back Cover

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 No Bible Study	2 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	3	4 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
5 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship DEADLINE FOR AMEN	6 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	7 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Bd. Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	8 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study People of Prayer	9 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	10 6:00 p.m. AMEN Staff Meeting	11 9:00 a.m. Official Board 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
12 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	13	14 6:00 p.m. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	15 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study People of Prayer	16	17 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	18 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:00 a.m. Church School Book Club 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal 1:00 pm Breast Cancer Workshop
19 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday Wear Pink	20	21 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg.	22 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study People of Prayer	23 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	24 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	25 9:30 a.m. Women's Ministry Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. WMS Meeting
26 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	27	28 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:30 p.m. Church School Board Meeting	29 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study People of Prayer Love Feast	30 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	31	

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Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor
The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Rev. & Mrs. Robert Hereford, Sr.
5305 Matic Rd.
Huntsville, AL 35810

Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| October 1-9, 2014 | Girl Trek, Women Walking with Jesus |
| October 5, 2014 | Prayer Kickoff |
| October 18, 2014 | Breast Cancer Awareness Workshop, 1:00 p.m.,
S. S. Hereford Fellowship Hall |
| November 13-15, 2014 | Ninth District Planning Meeting
Daniel Payne Complex, 1500 Daniel Payne Drive, Birmingham, AL |
| November 21-22, 2014 | Ninth District Lay Convention, Birmingham, Alabama |

St. John
AME Church

Welcome
Back



ST. JOHN A.M.E.N NEWSLETTER



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 11

November 2014



Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D.

Pastor's Message

Gratitude & Laughter

In every thing *give thanks*: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven... *a time to laugh*.... ~Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4

As we approach Thanksgiving, many of us are making preparations. I am sure that in the midst of all busy holiday preparation, we – the people of faith – are also counting our blessings. As a matter of fact, many of us are NOT waiting until Thanksgiving to tell God how grateful we are for all of the blessings God has provided. On Facebook, thirty days of gratitude is trending well. Some are taking the thirty days leading up to Thanksgiving and posting each day on their Facebook pages reasons for being grateful to God. People of faith are preparing for Thanksgiving by BEING thankful!

The bible is clear: we are to give God thanks in all things (1 Thess. 5:18). We may not be thankful FOR everything, but we must show God gratitude in every aspect of our lives. We are to praise God at all times (Psalm 34:1). This can be difficult when we consider how many treacherous moments we have to endure. Some of us quietly believe that these verses are impossible to perform (just as some of us quietly think that praying without ceasing is impossible too). I say that it is impossible if we believe thanksgiving only to be a happy activity. As humans we will not be happy all of the time. Therefore, if our praise and gratitude are founded on our happiness, then they will be inconsistent.

Yet, I contend that there is a way we can be thankful in everything. We can show God gratitude by being honest about our feelings as we give God thanks. When a person expresses displeasure with a loved one, that person is no less thankful for that loved one's place in his or her life. That person is honest about his or her feelings with that loved one and is STILL thankful for that loved one's presence and care. The same dynamic applies to our relationship with God. When the scripture says to give God thanks in every situation, it did NOT say that we had to be dishonest. We can express hurt to God for the passing away of a loved one and still be grateful that God allowed that person to be in our lives. The expressions of anger, confusion, disappointment, fear, uncertainty, and grief do not negate our ability to give God thanks. Thanksgiving is a choice! It is a choice we make that should be primarily founded on the character and gracious activity of God. Our feelings about our circumstances may impact what our praise looks like, but it should not sway us to stop giving God praise.

I realize that this is easier said than done, especially during the holiday season. Yes, giving God thanks when remembering that loved one you lost can be challenging. Counting your blessings is tough when you just lost your job. Blessing God at all times is hard-hitting when a spouse walks away. Giving God glory is rough when the doctor tells you there is nothing that can be done about your illness. When loss or tragedy either happens or is easily remembered during the holidays, giving God praise at that time seems to become an impossible task. AND, the steps I listed above appear to be useless.

St. John has endured much loss this year. Some members have gone home to be with the Lord. A few members have lost loved ones. Sickness has hit some of our families. Financial crisis, family stress, unemployment, taking care of aging relatives and challenges on the job have gripped a

(Continued on page 8)

Celebrate Thanksgiving Everyday!!!

By Tawanda Buford

Thanksgiving is a major holiday in American history, set aside to give thanks to God Almighty for His many blessings and mercies toward us throughout the year. It is observed the fourth Thursday in November. This day is known for the assembly of families for the traditional "special meal", that typically consist of mouthwatering flavored vegetables, casseroles, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pies, and of course the featured "stuffed turkey."

Many homes are adorned with a cornucopia of festive decorations symbolizing the Earth's abundance of harvest. Whether you are one of those families with lots to eat or just a little, our focus must always remain on the blessings of God, no matter how great or small.

Although Thanksgiving is celebrated nationally once a year, in the words of gospel songwriter, Leonard Burke, "Everyday is a Day of Thanksgiving". The lyrics of the chorus and first verse state:

*Everyday is a day of thanksgiving.
God's been so good to me,
Everyday He's blessing me.
Everyday is a day of thanksgiving;
Take the time to glorify the Lord today.*

*I thank God for the moments
when I worship His name,
I thank Him for the sacrifice of praise.
It's no mystery to say,
how my God is everyday;
making my way through clouds so dark,
bringing His light into my heart.*



Reflect for a moment on the above chorus and think:

If you can open up your eyes and see, BE THANKFUL there are many who are blind.

If you can walk on both legs, BE THANKFUL there are many who have no legs or just one.

If you have a roof over your head, BE THANKFUL there are many who are homeless.

If you have food in the refrigerator, BE THANKFUL there are many dying of starvation.

If you have family to spend time with on Thanksgiving, BE THANKFUL there are many who will be alone.

Even in saying this, we realize that there are those of you who may read this and find yourselves in one of the situations of loss listed above. Even in this, God's love still shines in your life. We are thankful because we know that God will continue to keep you.

As the celebration of Thanksgiving approaches, think about the abundant and countless blessings God has provided. Everyday is truly a day of Thanksgiving because no matter the circumstance, God is still in the blessing business. Therefore, take the time to glorify Him each day.

References

<http://www.higherpraise.com/lyrics/praisethelord/praisethelord680.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornucopia>

A large, stylized American flag is positioned on the left side of the page, with its stars and stripes flowing upwards. The flag is partially obscured by the text on the right.

Do You Know Why Veterans Day is Celebrated?

By Paula Eliard

The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month is when the armistice ending World War I began in 1918 and that is the origin of Veterans Day. Veterans Day honors all American veterans, living and dead, and has a special emphasis on thanking living veterans for their service to our country.

In November 1919, one year after the armistice ending World War I went in to effect, President Woodrow Wilson declared Nov 11th as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words:

"To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

In 1938, congress made November 11th an annual, federal holiday known as "Armistice Day" to honor the cause of world peace, but it was primarily used to honor World War I veterans. After World War II, in 1954, the law was changed, and "Armistice" was changed to "Veterans." November 11th became a day to honor veterans of all wars.

At 11 a.m. on November 11th at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a color guard with members of every military branch renders honors to America's war dead. The United States president places a wreath at the tomb and the bugler sounds "taps." So although Veterans Day was observed on the 11th of this month, acknowledge throughout the month the men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces by saying "thank you." They sacrificed everything to make this world a safer place for all.

VETERANS DAY

Thank You For Your Sacrifice

Trunk or Treat and Magic

By Lauretta Teague

Waking the streets in a night of cold, wet, and darkness, miniature human creatures scamper to find refuge in homes where jack-o-lanterns grace the doorsteps. Dressed as creatures of the night, they knocked on doors seeking that elusive taste of sweetness. Some will have tricks for their treat and some will not. It is hard work to fill the bag with goodies.

On that same evening, children of St. John and their families came together for an evening of fun and laughter. Dressed as Ninja Turtles, Spiderman, Darth Vader, and other fairytale characters, children enjoyed an abundance of favor. A splendid display of goodies in car trunks provided an invitation to "take as much as you want." Children were met by magician, Dr. Daryl Osborn, who designed balloon sculptures for every attendant and presented a show of magic where children and adults alike gasped at the wonder of the tricks. "How did he do that?" The hour of fun was then complimented with refreshments of hot dogs, chips, and juice. Who has time for candy? The evening was an opportunity for fun and enjoyable for all who attended.

A special thank you, to the coordinators of the YPD and Children's Ministry, for getting the word out. It is hard to name everyone, but special thanks to Yvonne Sanderson, Shannon Lott, and Mary Rankin who moved the project forward. Thanks, Pearlean Myhand for feeding so many people. The ministries collaborated and it was great. Pastor Clayborn and Rev. Sheri, you are appreciated. Thanks to parents and attendees for making it a success.



Mary Rankin (left) and Erin Lott (right) show off their trunk treats.



Dr. Osborn has the attention of the children.

Trunk or Treat and Magic

By Lauretta Teague





St. John Celebrates Breast Cancer Awareness Month

By Paula Eliard

On October 18, 2014, members of St. John participated in a Breast Cancer Awareness Workshop held in the S.S. Hereford Fellowship Hall at St. John. Sister Rosemary Wells, St. John Health Ministry co-chair, hosted the event and spoke on the importance of Breast Cancer prevention/detection and gave guidelines for breast self-examinations. Workshop attendees learned that breast cancer is the most common cancer that women may face in their lifetime. It can occur at any age, but is more likely after age 40; however, the risk goes up as you get older. Some signs include a lump or mass, swelling of the breast, skin irritation or dimpling, pain in the breast or discharge from the nipple. Sister Wells included videos with facts on breast cancer in her presentation.



Sister Rosemary Wells (left) and Sister Angela Daniels (right) make workshop presentations.

Sister Angela Daniels, a member of St. John's Health Ministry and a nurse at Huntsville Hospital, was the guest presenter. She shared her personal breast cancer journey and spoke on how cancer is not a death sentence. She stated, "The best defense against cancer is early detection." Discovering cancer early before it spreads gives one the best chance to do something about it, and may save their life. She also expressed that African American women have lower incidence of breast cancer overall, but unlike any other race, are most likely to die from breast cancer. Many factors, from socioeconomic to heredity, are blamed for the treatment and outcomes for African American women. Lack of insurance, lower income and poor health are just a few examples. It is crucial that women faithfully perform monthly breast self-examinations, have a health care provider perform a clinical exam yearly and schedule regular mammograms.



(Continued on page 7)



St. John Celebrates Breast Cancer Awareness Month

By Paula Eliard

(Continued from page 6)

Prior to closing the Breast Cancer Awareness Workshop, door prizes were given to attendees whose names were drawn from a special basket. The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn and Sister Mary Rankin were the winners! Ladies gathered in a prayer circle at the close of the workshop and the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, executive minister of St. John offered prayer for all present, for all who are currently facing battles with breast cancer as well as all forms of cancer and for all cancer survivors.



Sisters Daniels and Wells provided an information table that included fact sheets, breast exam information, even models for the women to practice self-examination techniques. Refreshments were prepared and beautifully arranged by Sister Nedra McDaniel and attendees departed with a promise to develop stronger sisterhoods, and to advocate and support each other in being healthy. Everyone appeared to have had a wonderful time!

On the following Sunday, St. John members wore pink in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The order of service included a special litany and participants in the order of service were persons whose lives have been impacted by breast cancer.



Empowered Living!

By Janette R. Smith
Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

2014 is coming to an end and some are already looking to 2015 as an opportunity to start fresh, do better, become more this or that, more specifically — begin...again. It is not an uncommon practice to start the new year reflecting on the changes people want or need to make. What is uncommon is actually achieving the goals or creating the changes they enthusiastically 'resolve' to tackle.

For this reason and more I am excited and honored to have the opportunity to introduce this new column *Empowered Living* to AME-Newsletter readers. The truth is, no matter where we are in the year most have changes we would like to make in our lives, from work and finances to health and relationships. But often, despite years of effort, we do not get very far. So, what is standing in the way?

These are the questions the column will be addressing while offering strategies to help you #PushPastStuck.

Questions and comments are also welcomed. Write to me and stay connected through social media as we begin this journey together into 2015 with the intention of living on purpose, staying present, learning, laughing, and living your best life. Like Pastor Clayborn says, *"Fully immerse yourself in the voyage toward living on purpose. Don't hold back. Let go and allow God to do a new thing in you! You will be surprised how God will meet you in this season."*

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It's Giving Time



Again this year, St. John will donate food baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas to families in need. If you know anyone in need of a Christmas food basket, please place their name (and other specified information) on the form posted outside of the main office.

Gratitude & Laughter

(Continued from page 1)

number of us. Then, there are some who are just TIRED! Things are going well, but there are a lot of "things."

We thought that laughter would be a wonderful way to buoy our spirits this Thanksgiving. I realize that the bible declares that sorrow is better than laughter (Eccl. 7:3); however, it did not say that laughter was unacceptable. There is a divine time set aside for laughter (Eccl. 3:4). In the midst of Job's hardship, Bildad told him, "[God] will yet fill your mouth with laughter, and your lips with shouts of joy" (Job 8:21).

It is now time to LAUGH! At our Thankful People service – Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 6:30 P.M., Ms. Chinnita Morris, aka "Chocolate," will be ministering in comedy. We welcome her to St. John and pray that the anointing will open up a healing spirit of laughter through her in our worship experience.

I pray that - through laughter - we will be able to handle the stresses of this upcoming holiday season. I hope that laughter will help each of us to recognize our true feelings about our situations and our need give God thanks in the midst of them. I trust that God will keep the promises to supply all of our needs (Phil. 4:9) and to fill our mouths with laughter. When God sends the "funny" blessing, go ahead and respond – LAUGH!

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!

Give Thanks

A Thanksgiving Message
By Paulette Bargon

I think we could all agree that it seems that Thanksgiving is becoming a fading holiday. Once Halloween has passed we start planning for Christmas. But Thanksgiving should be one of the most important days of the year. Historically it started as a time of feasting for the pilgrims and Indians. During the first year after the pilgrims had arrived in America, half of their population had died of disease or starvation. The pilgrims hosted the first feast to celebrate life with their Indian friends and give thanks to God for His provisions during difficult conditions.

Some take this day for granted. They worry about the big dinner they have to plan and cook or the family member they have to tolerate at the dinner table. But Thanksgiving should be one of the most important holidays of the year because it is a day to give special thanks to God as we gather around the table with immediate and extended family members. Let us give thanks to our Savior for surviving this year. Yes I said surviving this year. Think of all the catastrophic events of just the year 2014. Yet we are still here. So let us give thanks. God loves to hear from us. He takes great pleasure in receiving our thanks and our love. Remember when you did something very special for someone. They were thrilled but they failed to thank you. You were a little hurt. That is how God feels when we forget to thank Him. We should not take His grace for granted.

Thank Him for His grace and mercy.
Thank Him for being in your life.
Thank Him for your peace.
Thank Him for your healing. And if you are not healed, thank Him anyway.
Thank Him, Thank Him, and Thank Him.

We must also instill in our young people the importance of Thanksgiving so that they can pass the tradition down to the next generation.

Please do not let Thanksgiving become the biggest shopping day of the year!

"I will thank you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done. I will be filled with joy because of you. I will sing praises to your name, O Most High"

Psalms 9:1-2

Soup Kitchen Corner



Created to
Do Good Work

"We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works".

Ephesians 2:10 NIV

Everything that Jesus did in His lifetime was intended as a demonstration for all people, to awaken them to the presence and power of God within them. "The one who believes in me will also do the works that I do." He assures us (John 14:12). We will love unconditionally, we will heal, and we will manifest abundance for ourselves and others.

As the holiday season of Thanksgiving and Christmas approaches, the Soup Kitchen Ministry of St. John will strive to continue to achieve this state of consciousness, for His examples were clear and easy to follow. On the third and fourth Tuesdays of each month lunches are prepared for all who come. Food is also provided monthly to The Harris Home for Children and to First Stop, a sharing agency for the homeless. Donations of time and help are always welcomed.

Please join the Soup Kitchen as they allow the hand of the Lord to work in and through them, shaping them to be more like Christ.



AME Proud

Health Commission

The purpose of the Health Commission is to promote the health concerns of members of the AME Church. It shall advocate health care as a right and not a privilege. It shall also challenge and work to reform the unjust structure that is prevalent in health delivery systems. It shall encourage each organization in our church to include a health component in its life and work.

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Making the Transition to Medicare

By Paula Eliard

If you are approaching age 65, this article can help you understand what you need to know to prepare for the transition to Medicare. The transition to Medicare can be scary, but it does not have to be. You just have to prepare for it in advance.

Medicare is a health insurance program run by the government to help people over age 65 and people with disabilities. Original Medicare includes all the services provided by the government—usually hospital and medical services—but there are also additional plans available through private health insurance companies.

Many people choose to purchase Medicare plan add-ons to meet all of their health care needs. Because of this, Medicare has been divided into four sections:

1. Medicare Part A covers hospital services such as inpatient, hospice, skilled nursing facility and home health care.
2. Medicare Part B covers medical services such as visits to your doctor, other outpatient treatment and medical supplies.
3. Medicare Part C is the Medicare Advantage plan that allows you to get Medicare Parts A and B (and sometimes Part D) through a Medicare-approved private health insurance company.
4. Medicare Part D covers prescription drugs.

What to do before your 65th birthday

1. Pick an insurance company. Choose a company you trust to give you the coverage you need to add on to your Original Medicare.
2. Decide which type of plan you want. Weigh the pros and cons of each plan to make sure you get the best coverage for you.
3. Apply for Medicare at least three months in advance. The government charges a penalty to everyone who doesn't apply for coverage during their first eligibility period.

What types of plans are available?

1. Medicare Advantage plans are the all-in-one option. Private companies contract with Medicare to provide all the Original Medicare benefits and sometimes additional health care services on top of that. When you need care, you only need to bring your plan ID card.
2. Medigap Plans, or Medicare supplemental plans, fill in the gaps in your Original Medicare coverage. Medigap plans pay for deductibles, copayments and other benefits that Original Medicare doesn't cover. You'll need both your Medicare card and your Medigap ID card to receive care.
3. Prescription drug plans are an important addition to your Medicare plan. Most Medicare Advantage plans include prescription drug coverage, but some may not. If you choose a Medigap plan, you'll need to buy a separate prescription drug plan. You'll need to bring the ID card for that plan when you pick up your prescriptions.

How do I enroll?

If you already receive Social Security, then you'll be automatically enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B. If you will not be automatically enrolled, you can apply at www.medicare.gov, visiting a local Social Security office or calling the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213.

Beneficiaries Eligible for TRICARE and Medicare

If you are entitled to premium-free Medicare Part A, you must have Medicare Part B to keep TRICARE. Once you have both Part A and Part B, you automatically receive TRICARE benefits under TRICARE for Life. Keeping information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) up to date is key in ensuring effective, timely delivery of your TRICARE benefits.

You become eligible for Medicare Part A at age 65 if you or your spouse paid into Social Security for at least 40 quarters (at least ten years of work). Failure to file for Medicare benefits results in loss of TRICARE coverage.

If you already receive benefits from Social Security, the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB), or Office of Personnel Management, you are automatically entitled to Medicare Part A and are enrolled

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Becoming People of Prayer

St John is on a prayer journey that includes a powerful sermon series on prayer as well as weekly bible study sessions that prepare the congregation to become a "people of prayer who pray without ceasing."

Sermon Series

"Prayer Positions" with text from Acts 9-10 began the series. This sermon emphasized the spiritual positions of prayer, humility, honesty, and being open to others.

"Prayer Positions, Part 2 (Closet Work)" was based on scriptures from chapters 5 and 6 of Matthew and Romans 8. The key points focused on controlling the mind by being focused, having purpose, and yielding to God.

"Prayer Intentions" was centered on Matthew 6:5, 9 and Romans 15:17, 26. Prayer intentions noted were request, gratitude and empowerment.

"Prayer Intentions, Part 2" was from the text of Romans 8:15-17, 26 and highlighted the points of knowing who one is, repairing what is broken and releasing oneself to hope.

"When You Begin to Pray" was focused on John 16:20. With prayer, comes pain, but the pain of prayer has purpose. There will be transition (with pain), but expect power from God to make it through.

"Prayer that Restores Faith" was from Luke 18. The message was to "always pray and never give up or lose heart."

"Fighting for Your Heart" was also based on Luke 18. Worshippers were told to fight with the determination of the widow who would not give up until she received her blessing.

These are just snippets from a great sermon series. If you missed one of the messages or just want to hear them again, you may purchase a CD or DVD from the media ministry.

Bible Study

The Bible Study lessons have followed closely to the sermon series. Students received a 7-week prayer Journey of Prayer booklet that contained the weekly lessons, including scripture, prayer, meditations and activities. Subjects covered thus far are:

"Partnering with God" – James 2:26

"Being Present with God" – Matthew 26:41

"Perpetual Prayer" – 1 Thessalonians 5:17

"What Do You Believe? Going Deeper"

Everyone is welcome to be a part of this Journey of Prayer. Even if you have not attended any of the previous sessions or if you have missed some sessions, you are encouraged to join the journey at any time. The group-supported, journal-guided sessions provide opportunities for all to grow their prayer life. Make the commitment today to attend the Wednesday noon or 6 pm Bible Study.

Advent Begins the Christian Liturgical Year



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.

In times past, God did come in the Christ-child in whose honor Christmas is celebrated. 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, the return of the Christ in His full glory and power as judge of all the world, both the living and the dead, is promised.

The Advent wreath is a Christian tradition that symbolizes the four weeks of Advent. It is usually an evergreen wreath with four candles and a fifth, white candle in the center. Beginning with the First Sunday of Advent, the lighting of a candle is accompanied by a Bible reading, a prayer and a song. The fifth candle, the Christ candle, is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. The observance is in family settings and at public church services.

The liturgical color for Advent is purple. It is a color that communicates a feeling of quiet dignity, royalty, and repentance. 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.

The Christ coming brings hope of a new and abundant life to all.

Domestic Violence Awareness Observed

On Sunday, October 26, worshippers wore purple in observance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Printed below are excerpts from a litany that were included in the order of service to bring awareness to persons who are victims of domestic violence.

A Litany of Hope and Healing for
Women and Children Who Are Survivors
of Domestic Violence
By the Faith Relations Committee of Lydia's House



God hear us as we lift up our prayers.

For a world without domestic violence.

We lift our hopes and prayers for peace.

For all who suffer abuse within their homes.

Compassionate One, we pray to You.

For those who give voice to break the silence.

Hear our voices, O God we pray.

For those who have the courage to break the cycle of violence.

Our Fortress and Strength, we pray to You.

Medicare

(Continued from page 11)

in Medicare Part B starting the first day of the month you turn 65. (If your birthday is on the first of the month, Part A and Part B are effective on the first day of the previous month.)

If you aren't receiving Social Security benefits, RRB benefits, or a federal annuity from the Office of Personnel Management, you must sign-up for Part A and Part B. To avoid the Medicare surcharge for late enrollment, you must sign-up for Part B during your Medicare Initial Enrollment Period (seven-month period that begins three months before you turn 65, or four months before you turn 65 if your birthday is on the first of the month). To avoid a break in TRICARE coverage be sure to enroll no later than two months before you turn 65. If you enroll any later, your Part B effective date will be delayed and you will have a break in TRICARE coverage.

However, without Medicare Part B, you will not have TRICARE coverage. So, if you delay your Part B enrollment, you won't be covered by TRICARE for Life and TRICARE won't act as a second payer to your employer sponsored group health plan coverage. To have TRICARE coverage when your employer sponsored group health plan coverage ends, you should sign up for Part B before your group health plan coverage or employment ends, whichever occurs first, to avoid a break in coverage.

For more information, visit www.medicare.gov and/or www.tricare.mil.



Annual Pre-Thanksgiving Bake Sale Planned

The Pastor's Aid Board will host their Annual Bake sale on November 23, 2014 after the 8:00 am and after the 10:50 am services. Contributions of baked goods and monetary donations are welcomed. This is an excellent opportunity to purchase Thanksgiving desserts.

Please contact any member of the Pastor's Aid Board. Thank you in advance for your support. Claire Philadelphia, President



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

Who's using your Wi-Fi?

Have you ever been curious of who is using your Wi-Fi? There are several reasons why you should know this. There can be issues when the connection is slow, caused by too many devices being connected or hackers that could be making their way to invade your network. There could also be legal issues involved if someone is using your Wi-Fi for illegal activities. Whatever the case may be, it is always best to know who is using your Wi-Fi. Let us take a look at a way to know who is using your Wi-Fi.

You will first need to know the default address of your router. You can find this by using Google to search for your particular router specifications. There is a different way to do this if you are familiar with using a command prompt to run the ipconfig command on computers that use the Microsoft Windows operating system. If you are using a MAC, you can find the default address by navigating to the system preferences under your network settings. It will be listed next to router. You will need the address to enter in your browser. Once you have entered the address in your browser, you will be prompted to enter the credentials to login to your router. If you have not changed the default settings of your router, it should be a combination of "admin" and "password" or blank fields.

Once you have logged into your router's console, there will be a section for connected devices, wireless status or attached devices. This will allow you to see all the devices that are connected to your Wi-Fi. If your Wi-Fi is not password protected, you may see unknown devices that have been connecting to your Wi-Fi. The best way to prevent this is to always create a password for your Wi-Fi.

When creating the password, you will have the option of selecting WPA or WEP. You will want to use the WPA option due to the vulnerabilities of using WEP. Taking this simple step can prevent your Wi-Fi from being used by unauthorized devices.

Church School Lesson Overview – December 2014

This month's reviews were written by Willie Sandifer (1st and 3rd Sundays) and Claudette Purifoy-Fears (2nd and 4th Sundays).

December 7, 2014

Lesson Title: Worship Christ's Majesty

Lesson Scripture: Hebrews 1

Print: Hebrews 1:1-9

Devotional Songs: #111 [], #108 [], and #113 []

Key Verse: "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." (Hebrews 1:3)

The fact that Christ is *the radiance of God's glory* connects Jesus with God in a unique way. God's glorious nature is made known through Christ as *the exact representation* of God's invisible being. When Jesus walked the earth, He was a physical representation of the invisible God; thus Jesus pointed the way to God. We can know about the unseen God by knowing Christ.

Christ was not only active in creating the universe He continues to be active in sustaining it. All things have been created through Christ and all things are now held together *by His powerful word*. Jesus is therefore not simply another great religious teacher or prophet. Those prophets spoke for God; Christ was God speaking. Such a special person is clearly able to do special things, two of which are noted in His ability to create and sustain the universe and His power to purge sin.

It is important to stress that His authority is not simply a result of His good works—He did not earn a high place with God by dying on a cross. That honor was already Christ's by His very nature, as the author of Hebrews proceeds to stress. Christ's authority is a function of His eternal birthright—He is greater than the angels not only because He did a greater work than they could do but also because He has inherited a superior *name* from His Father.

December 14, 2014

Lesson Title: Make a Joyful Noise

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 95

Print: Psalm 95:1-7a

Devotional Songs: #115 []; #106 []; and #122 []

Key Verse: "Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation" (Psalm 95:1).

The Book of Psalms is devoted to the theme of

worship and praise. Psalm 95 provides an invitation to worship, a reason to worship and instruction on worship. There is a command to come to the Lord and to give Him praise. Praise is integral to worship. Praise should tell a song of joy, give testimony to the goodness, and encourage others to know Him.

The basic reason for praising God is that He is "a great King above all gods" as noted in verse 3 and He is worthy. He is the Creator, He sustains us, has dominion over all and is in control.

Whenever one comes into God's presence, it must be with thanksgiving and preparation to surrender all. God knows our hearts and will protect us just as a shepherd tends and protects his flock from dangers seen and unseen. Praise should be more than words, but an expression of faith and it should be lived out in faithfulness and trust.

December 21, 2014

Lesson Title: Give Glory to God

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

Print: Luke 2:8-20

Tentative Devotional Songs: #118 []; #116 []; and #111 []

Key Verse: "The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told" (Luke 2:20).

The lesson text is part of a much larger story of Jesus' conception and birth in the first chapter of Luke as well as his second chapter. Luke weaves this story in with his account of John the Baptist's conception and birth. Both births were announced by an angel, accomplished by God's miraculous power, and accompanied by wonders that God performed. Both children were announced to be God's future instruments. But Jesus stands supreme in this pairing. He is God's Son, the promised king, virgin born, the Lord, and the source of the salvation. To Him alone the glory of God belongs.

But as Jesus was born against the backdrop of Roman imperial power, there was another who claimed glory. Caesar ruled much of the world and had ordered it to pay him taxes. Rome's political, military, and economic power was said by some to be the true glory in the world. Of such glory Jesus and His family had none. Shut out from ordinary living quarters for humans, the newborn Jesus lay in a manger, a

(Continued on page 15)



Church School Lesson Overview – December 2014

(Continued from page 14)

feeding trough for animals.

The contrast in this lesson is between the power of the world and the lowliness of the Son of the almighty God. If one knows Jesus, one can never think of life in the same way again. Life can never be about becoming powerful, wealthy, or important. It can only be about seeking and embracing the lowliness of Jesus Christ, giving our lives in service for the sake of others who need to follow Him as well.

December 28, 2014

Lesson Title: Give Glory to God

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 14:22-36

Print: Matthew 14:22-36

Tentative Devotional Songs: #120 ☐; 112; and #121 ☐

Key Verses: "When they climbed into the boat, the wind died down, then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God'" (Matthew 14:32,33).

This lesson tells of an event that occurred after Jesus miraculously fed five thousand from a few loaves of bread and fishes which was reminiscent of manna in the wilderness in the days of Moses and the great exodus. In this lesson, Jesus had dismissed the crowd and commanded the disciples to get in a boat and proceed on a journey to Gennesaret without him. Jesus wanted to be alone in prayer.

The disciples were far from land, it was dark, the fierceness of the waves were unsettling and the disciples were jittery. They noticed a figure walking on the lake toward them and were terrified. The figure, Jesus, told them to not be afraid for, "It is I". The same greeting that was echoed to Moses from the burning bush which means "I am".

Peter was unsure if the figure was really Jesus and challenged Him by stating, "If it is really you, order me to come out on the water to you". Jesus told him to come. Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. He noticed a strong wind, grew afraid and began to sink. He cried out to the Lord to save him, Jesus grabbed him and stated, "What little faith you have! Why did you doubt?" When they got in the boat the wind ceased. The disciples worshipped Jesus exclaiming that He was truly the Son of God.

The heart of Christ's miracle of walking on the water is that Jesus is in direct control and all things are possible in Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus healed the sick in Gennesaret by letting them touch the hem of His garment, they knew of the great things He could accomplish and had faith. One who has learned to trust in God and believe in His Word does not wonder whether God can intervene on his or her behalf. S/he knows that Jesus is worthy of worship.

Church School Book Club

November 2014

Discussion Date: 15 November 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Don't Blame the Devil, Pat G'Orge-Walker, 2010

December 2014

Discussion Date: 20 December 2014
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The First Phone Call from Heaven: A Novel, Mitch Albom, 2014

One morning in the small town of Coldwater, Michigan, the phones start ringing. The voices say they are calling from heaven. Is it the greatest miracle ever? Or some cruel hoax? As news of these strange calls spreads, outsiders flock to Coldwater to be a part of it.

At the same time, a disgraced pilot named Sully Harding returns to Coldwater from prison to discover his hometown gripped by "miracle fever." Even his young son carries a toy phone, hoping to hear from his mother in heaven.

As the calls increase, and proof of an afterlife begins to surface, the town—and the world—transforms. Only Sully, convinced there is nothing beyond this sad life, digs into the phenomenon, determined to disprove it for his child and his own broken heart.

Moving seamlessly between the invention of the telephone in 1876 and a world obsessed with the next level of communication, Mitch Albom takes readers on a breathtaking ride of frenzied hope.

— From the Back Cover



St. John A.M.E.N. Staff
Presents its
**Eighteenth Annual
Taste Tea**

Christmas Joy!

The AMEN Staff will be holding its annual Taste Tea, Sunday, December 14, 2014 after the 10:50 a.m. worship service. Come join in the fellowship and delicious treats!

St. John members and friends are asked to bring their favorite dish and the recipe (to be published in the 2015 A.M.E.N.). Please bring your dish to the fellowship hall prior to either worship service.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please see Mrs. Claire Philadelphia or Dr. Bridget Floyd.



December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:00 p.m. Hospitality Ministry 7:00 p.m. AMEN Staff Meeting	2	3 6:30 p.m. Selah Memorial Service	4	5	6 8:00 a.m. Usher Board 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
7 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship DEADLINE FOR AMEN	8 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	9 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Bd. Mtg. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	10 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	11 6:00 p.m. Steward Board Mtg. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	12	13 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 a.m. AMEN Staff Meeting
14 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Christmas Program 10:50 a.m. Worship TASTE TEA	15	16 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	17 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	18	19 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	20 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:00 a.m. Church School Book Club 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
21 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	22	23 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN	24 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candle Light Service	25 	26	27
28 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	29	30	31 10:00 p.m. Watch Night Service			



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Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder

The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor



Important Dates to Remember

November 19, 2014	Thankful People Thanksgiving Service 6:30 p.m.
November 21-22, 2014	Ninth District Lay Convention, Birmingham, Alabama
November 27, 2014	Happy Thanksgiving
December 3, 2014	Selah Memorial Service 6:30 p.m.
December 14, 2014	Christmas Program 9:45 a.m. 18th Annual Taste Tea, immediately following 10:50 a.m. Service
December 24, 2014	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 6:00 p.m.
December 25, 2014	Christmas Blessings
December 31, 2014	Watchnight Service 10:00 p.m.

*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. Romans 10:9*

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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 19 Issue 12

December 2014



Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D.

Pastor's Message

When There Is No Room in the Inn: I Can't Breathe
Luke 2:7

Usually during the season of Advent, churches are focused on the Nativity, miraculous births, courageous wives/fiancées, wavering husbands/fiancées, praising shepherds, gift bearing wise men, jealous kings, God being with us, and the name of Jesus. We will decorate our sanctuaries in wonderful holiday ornamentation. We will put together programs where children recite speeches and scriptures focused on Christ's birth and where adults will present the same in dramatic form. Our worship services will be filled with music, dance, and sermons grounded in the blessedness of the Word being made flesh. This is what USUALLY happens at Advent.

However, this year a host of churches banded together on the third Sunday of Advent (December 14, 2014) to celebrate *National Black Solidarity Sunday: Black Lives Matter*. Calls to worship, prayers, affirmations, litanies, and sermons were created in these churches to lift up this theme. Parishioners were encouraged to wear all black or paraphernalia with the phrase – "Black Lives Matter."

This celebration comes as the result of the recent rash of police brutality against African American men and women. Two events that sparked the rise of attention and protests were two grand jury verdicts. Michael Brown – unarmed – was shot and killed by a police officer in Ferguson, MO, while his hands were upraised and he was saying, "Don't shoot!" Eric Garner was put in an illegal chokehold by a police officer in Staten Island, NY. As a result, he died repeating the phrase – "I can't breathe." In both cases, the grand juries determined that there was not enough evidence against these officers to take them to trial for wrongdoing.

Over the past few weeks, numerous cases – similar to these two incidents – have been uncovered which show an alarming regularity of police brutality against African American adults and children. Protesters have been marching through the streets of cities large and small. Some have been peaceful, and others have been more aggressive. Yet, they all recite the mantra – "Black Lives Matter."

Yes, St. John has participated as well. A call to worship and an affirmation of Black Life was created by Rev. Sheri Smith Clayborn and Sis. Ashley Humphrey. We dressed in Black and took pictures with our hands raised. We also encouraged economic empowerment by promoting those in our church who own their own business. We registered people to vote. We urged parents to take advantage of our free tutorial program for their children. For we know that we will need more than a march to address these atrocities. True transformation of our society will require a comprehensive plan that replaces the American prison industrial complex with institutions that actually reform criminals; reorders the justice system so that African Americans are not the sole target of police; and restructures our economic system so that all are able to live with dignity.

Even though this has been our focus during Advent, I find that these events parallel the gospel story. According to Matthew's account, the government went on a killing spree of children to wipe out little Jesus. According to Luke's version, there was no room for Jesus and his family in the inn because so many people were in town for the census. In both stories, the government had a system that (directly or indirectly) oppressed those on the margins. When we hear the chants of "hands up – don't shoot," we cannot help but think of the children that Herod's laugh-

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor's Message



(Continued from page 1)

tered in Matthew 2. When we hear chants of "I can't breathe," we are brought to the vivid image of Jesus having no place to be born.

We mourn the losses of those persons who have been killed or abused in this recent string of events. We even mourn those whose names that are not in the headlines. We pray strength for those families and communities, and we pray for our nation. We pray that God would transform us into a society of loving neighbors. We pray that God would help us to see the meaning of Advent!

The power of Advent is found in this idea: nothing can stop the will of God! It was God's will for Jesus to be born and to have life. No search and destroy mission and no overcrowding could stop the birth of Christ. Likewise, no rogue cop, no unjust legal system, no unfair economic practice, and no form of racial discrimination can stop God's plans related to God's African American daughters and sons. Whether it happens in our lifetime or in our children's lifetime — we will be the head and not the tail — above and not beneath — lenders and not borrowers!

When there is no room in the inn, God will provide a manger. Though the government sanctions a killing spree, God will make a way to get to Egypt. Yes, some things and some people may die, but the heart of who we are and our connection to God can never be destroyed. Jesus will be born — not just two thousand years ago — but right here and now! God's promises will be born. God's power will be born. God's word will be born. Racial harmony will be born. Justice for all will be born. Freedom for all will be born. Access to education for all will be born. Economic empowerment for all will be born. They will be born in AFRICAN AMERICANS! They will be born in us!!! For God will be with us! If God be for us, who can be against us?

BLACK LIVES MATTER!!!!

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. — Mathew 1:23

Christmas 2014: A Time for Personal Reflection

By The Reverend Charles Glover

Introduction: As this 2014 Christmas season draws near, many will see this period as a time for being with friends and family, shopping, feasting on great food, and last but not least, aiding the needy and less fortunate. Many celebrations will begin such as "Hanukkah" and "Kwanzaa" leading up to New Year's Day 2015.

In contrast, researchers tell us that for many, Christmas is the most stressful time of the year. More people suffer depression, worry about finances and grieve over the disappointments in their lives during Christmas time than during any other season. If we would take the time to conduct a personal reflection back on the events that have occurred in 2014 within our own personal life, we must be thankful to God for His unchanging grace, His unexplainable goodness, and His enduring mercy. We have seen and experienced the distinction between "Kairos" and "chronos", Greek concepts for God's time, and man's time, respectively. Unfortunately, Christmas in our present day society is viewed as a time for receiving versus giving, often forgetting that a "true gift" cannot be earned or deserved. A "true gift" is given on the merits of the one "giving" the gift and not the one receiving.

Christmas should be a time of spiritual assessment and a reflection on the "birth of Jesus" and what that means to us individually, on a personal basis. As born again believers, we should have the same focus and message the angels had for the shepherds in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago. We should reflect on Luke 2: 10-11; "fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled (Isaiah 9:6); "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".

For some, this message is too simple to solve the complex problems we face today. Challenges such as the recent injustices seen in Ferguson, Missouri and New York City, as well as the countless other economic, political, and social inequalities encountered by the least, the lost, and the disenfranchised people of color within the United States of America. Many have resolved that the world is too dark or that times have become too hard. To the despondent, we offer these encouraging words from Jesus in John 10:10; "The thief comes to steal, kill, and to destroy, I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly". The abundant and blessed life that God has promised to believers is predicated upon having a committed and dedicated relationship with Him.

From a personal perspective, the birth of Jesus personified three words:

Sacrifice: John 3:16 states; "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life". Greatness depends upon a sacrifice. We know very little about personal sacrifice today. A true sacrifice is when you give up something you love or cherish. Christ was born to die as a sacrifice that we may live. God sent forth Christ as a substitute for our sins (Romans 3). We, too, must be a sacrifice if we are going to do a work for the Lord (Romans 12: 1-3). To sincerely and totally follow Christ, we must surrender ourselves to Him and this comes with a cost. The level of surrender and sacrifice determines the depth of the walk with God.

Love: In Deuteronomy 6: 5, God commands us to "love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Leviticus 19:18 admonishes us to "love thy neighbor as thyself, for I am the Lord". In John 15: 12-13, Jesus again commands us to, "love one another as I have loved you; greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends: Ye are my friends, IF ye do whatsoever I command you." When we possess Godly love, we can believe we have whatsoever we say (Mark 11:23). All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). Now is the time you can express love by giving a smile or a hug, send someone you do not normally reach out to a card, or make a call. Give and it shall be given unto you. Whatever we sow, that

(Continued on page 4)

Christmas 2014

By The Reverend Charles Glover

(Continued from page 3)
shall we reap.

Power: Jeremiah 32:17 tells us, "there is nothing too hard for God". There is no sinner God cannot save, there is no prayer that He cannot answer, and there is no problem He cannot solve. God is an "omnipotent God". We live in a power hungry generation. Man will go to extraordinary levels to achieve "perceived power". People will exert control and manipulate others to obtain power. True power comes from God and not people. We need the power that only God can give. God has given the believer "dunamis power" (Acts 1:8; Acts 5:12). This miracle working power enables us to have victory over our circumstances and situations. God has not given us (the believer), the Spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Frederick Douglas stated, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress". God strengthens and empowers us through the revelation of His Holy Word and our life experiences.

Even though over two thousand years have passed since Jesus was born, God came to be with us in Jesus on that first Christmas and He is still with us today. Jesus tells us in Matthew 28:20, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world". He also promised in Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee". He is here among us, and IN us, and still the greatest Christmas gift anyone can receive. I encourage you to be thankful and meditate on the fact that the Lord is our light and our salvation. He is the strength of our lives. He is our Shepherd and our King. We can celebrate Christmas because of the birth of Jesus, God's only begotten Son, whom He gave that we might have eternal life. Merry Christmas! Blessings, Glory, and Honor Be to Our God!

Scriptural references: Authorized King James Version of the Holy Bible.

Women's Ministry Corner

By Laurretta Teague

Mission Statement: The mission of the Women's Ministry is to serve God and others, while replenishing our hearts, minds, and souls.

The Women's Ministry appreciates the church's support for service projects they have sponsored, for the community through the church. The December project consisted of making scarves for the women and children of the Crisis Center. They were well received.

Please mark your calendar(s) for the following events so that the ministry may enjoy your presence in this fellowship.

- Friday, January 23rd will be bowling night for ladies of the church. Come out and enjoy the fun and fellowship.
- A tentative date for a women's breakfast will be February 21, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.

More information for both of these activities will be forthcoming. You are asked to put the dates on your calendar. New members are welcome to join us.

December is Yoke Release Month

From December 7 to December 31, members will write on a sheet of paper what they, as individuals, will not take into 2015.

Then on Watch Night, we will literally burn negatives from the past as the papers are burned. Also, each week during the month of December, Holy communion will be served. We will emphasize the true meaning of Holy Communion to remind us of the great sacrifice for us to have this blessing.

We will end observance of Yoke Release month on January 4, 2015, because it is the first Sunday of the new year. At that time we again take Holy Communion as a symbol of God's promise of relief from bondage and renew our covenant with Almighty God to start fresh.

Prayer Focus Continues in Selah Service

The second annual Selah Memorial Service was led by executive minister, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn. The opening hymn was "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand." Prayer was offered by Steward Guy Ginn, Psalm 30 was read by Steward Nedra McDaniel and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 was read by Sister Rosa Whittaker.



Executive Ministers shares information on grief.

The Reverend Smith Clayborn shared information on grief with the worshippers. She stated that the definition of grief is a strong, sometimes overwhelming, feeling of loss. The five stages of grief that she described are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Sometimes the first four stages are repeated many times before achieving stage five, acceptance of what has happened. To handle grief, especially during the holiday season, she advised that persons not spend time alone, talk to family and friends, and try creating new traditions. Most importantly, remember that one is not alone because

they have their St. John church family.

A musical selection by the church ensemble preceded the meditation from Pastor Patrick Clayborn. The scripture background for the message was Psalm 120. He noted that in this short passage, there was past tense, or a statement on having been delivered at the beginning, and a few verses later a plea for needing more deliverance. He further explained that biblical scholars indicate this shift is due to a break in time between the verses. One definition of Selah is a break, pause or rest. Sometimes a break is required to get prepared for what is coming next. He posed the question "How do you deal with the break?" and answered with one word "prayer."

From the scripture passage, Pastor Clayborn highlighted points in the psalmist's prayer in the background scripture. There was a prayer for restoration to get back on track. The prayer for purpose was that their pain would have purpose. The prayer for revelation was "Help me to see your will in this." The prayer for strength was to bear the seed and reap the harvest. The strength will bring in the laughter in the memory and one will realize the blessing of Psalm 30:0b, "but joy comes in the morning."

The names of members who have departed this life during the year were called for a moment of remembrance and members also called names of persons they wanted to remember. The service concluded with a song of promise and hope, even in grief, "Jesus Promised He'll Take Care of Me" and prayer by Pastor Clayborn.

selah
pause...
and reflect

Remembering and Rejoicing: It's Harvest Time

By Mattie Ezell

The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it...

'He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate bringing forth food from the earth: wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart' - Psalm 104: 14-15



Fifty-Plus members pose with Rev. Sheri and Joya after Harvest Service.

Harvest is an amazing season for all Christians because they recognize that there is a much deeper meaning beyond the visible sights that decorate the churches. Jesus said over two thousand years ago, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." In this the 21st century, Jesus is still depending on His disciples to harvest souls. For the fields are still white and harvest is still waiting.

More than twenty-five years ago, Mrs. Cobb organized the Fifty-Plus Auxiliary. One of the Auxiliary's first responsibilities was to plan and carry out St. John's Annual Harvest Sunday service. Knowing that the Anglo-Saxon word 'harvest' means autumn and that autumn means the reaping and gathering of grain and other grown products, the 50+ Auxiliary chose to celebrate Harvest Sunday service during the last astronomical autumn

month, November.

This November 9, 2014, Harvest Sunday service was designed to help worshipers celebrate all of the good things God has done for them and to remind them of all of their valley experiences so that they acknowledge their dependency on The Lord, thus the theme: "Rejoicing and Remembering."

Harvest service is an awesome opportunity to show how believers can worship together successfully, regardless of age. With this in mind, this Harvest service included St. John's Liturgical Dancers, who danced beautifully to the gospel song, "No Limits" and Ms. Sherrill Amber Humphrey, who did an amazing original dramatic monologue: SAVED! Along with these very talented young adult members, the following Fifty-Plus members participated: the Reverend Meriam Garrett, prayer; Dr. Lee E. Williams, scripture (John 15: 1-8); Mrs. Mattie Brown Ezell, Welcome/ Occasion; Mrs. Charlie Brooks, Litany (The Master Gardener); Mr. Ronald McIntosh, Acknowledgement of Visitors; Mrs. Agnes Gilmore, Offertory Prayer; and the Gospel Choir, Mr. Cleveland Wilson, Director. Col(Retired) James Heyward gave an outstanding tribute to honor veterans.

Pastor Clayborn delivered the inspirational sermon: GET UP! (Luke 22: 39-46). With all of the many issues plaguing people today, just as they did in this sermon with the disciples, they too are asking how do you get up when life has beaten you down and you feel that you have done all you can do? Well, Pastor Clayborn pointed to Job, Jacob, and more importantly, Jesus as examples to show worshipers that it is possible to GET UP. Each of these phenomenal biblical persons or their representative stood toe to toe with God and expressed their honest feelings. He did not take their bitter cup away, but He did give them peace so they could endure and persevere. So even if prayer does not deliver you from your circumstances, it will surely deliver you through them. Therefore, rejoice and remember: God Promised!

Thankful People Enjoy Comedienne

*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven
...a time to laugh...*

Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4

The special guest at St. John on Wednesday, November 19, 2014 was Ms. Chinnita Morris, aka "Chocolate." She is a world class Christian comedian with noted performances on HBO's Def Comedy Jam, BET's Comic View, Bobby Jones' Gospel Hour, and Tyler Perry's first stage play "I Know I've Been Changed." This service was the annual Thankful People service that began last year. Pastor Clayborn and Executive Minister, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn felt that because of all that the church had been through over the year and with the holiday season being a season of grief for some persons, it was time for a season of laughter. Along with the music ministry, they planned the evening.

Chocolate proved that church members needed laughter. Her comedy presentation included poking fun at Pastor Clayborn, men, single women, married women and men, and the black church experience. From the laughter in the sanctuary during the service, it appears everyone enjoyed the presentation. Even though Pastor Clayborn was the target of many of her jokes, he seemed to have had the most fun and his contagious laugh helped to fuel the laughter of others. Many present expressed a desire to have her return next year.

Special thanks to the Music Department and the Hospitality Ministry who helped to plan and provide an atmosphere of worship.





2015: New Year, New You!

How to Mean It When You Say It and Deliver on It This Year.

By Janette R. Smith
Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

I have a personal quote, "*Making change is never as difficult as accepting change.*" It only takes a few days into January to realize you have either already BROKEN your New Year's resolution or you are not as committed to it as you THOUGHT you were. We are all a bit resistant to change because it can be hard and often - scary.

As we prepare to boldly bound into 2015 clutching our New Year's Resolutions in hand, I thought I would offer tools to help set you up to win in the area of personal development this coming year. After all, would not it be nice to mean it when you say it, and deliver on all your goals this year?

Just maybe, though, the problem is not laziness or lack of willpower. According to Harvard Graduate School of Education professors Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, when we fail at a goal we have set for ourselves, it is likely that a type of psychological immune system is covertly at work, defending us from perceived threats. To arrive at lasting change, Kegan (who teaches Adult Development) and Lahey say you must dig deep to identify what may be in opposition to your goal. These hidden competing commitments are rooted in our individual world views and are represented through our 'big assumptions'—that is how we think things operate. Real change can only come as a result of us altering the way we think. "

Kegan and Lahey lay out a process for overcoming these emotional obstacles in their book *Immunity to Change: How to Overcome It and Unlock the Potential in Yourself and Your Organization*. It is a four-column immunity map that helps you understand what feelings are at play and how you are sabotaging your efforts.

Before I share the link to a downloadable version of their immunity map - let me point out, SOME of you are just not going to dig that deep and work toward understanding the resistance that keeps you from getting exactly what you want out of life. NO JUDGEMENT here, but it is ABSOLUTELY imperative to be clear about your intent and resolve to take action! There's a joke that goes: If fifteen frogs are on a log and three decide to jump off in the water, how many frogs are on the log? The truth is fifteen frogs are still on the log. DECIDING to do something and ACTUALLY doing it are two entirely different things. For this reason, I simply want to offer another 'change agent' option to those of you who are not UP for quite an extensive self-excavating journey as the *Immunity to Change* process will provide.

Try a Mini Quest.

I was employing this technique for years, and then heard Eliza Guilbert, author of *Eat, Pray, Love* talk about it on Oprah's *Super Soul Sunday* program. Mini Quests, as she calls them, are goals through experiences you challenge yourself to partake in every day. Today, my mini quest was to make each person I came in contact feel loved and cherished. I did not quite succeed. Truth be told, I ended up working much longer than I was supposed to and missed a deadline on something because of the overtime—so the worry and frustration did start leaking out as the night wore on. I do not think anyone felt devalued or disrespected, but I did not leave everyone swimming in a lake of skittles and soft bunnies as I had hoped. My transparent share is to encourage you in knowing that change is a process and usually does NOT happen instantaneously nor overnight. (Though I did go "cold turkey" on eating sugar at the beginning of December. Catch me in January to see how that journey goes.)

The great thing about Mini Quests is that they expire at the end of the day and you get to set out on a new one the very next morning. This is a goal-setting exercise that challenges you to live more fully and presently, and focus on things outside of yourself. It helps you find things around you for which you are grateful and helps you practice setting and meeting goals.

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2015: New Year, New You!

By Janette R. Smith

Once you graduate from those, you will find something will open up inside you. It is your authentic self-emerging, embracing life in new and interesting ways. If you are a 'stuck in the rut' kind of person—THIS EXERCISE IS DEFINITELY for you! Daily positive challenges get you going and growing again. Imagine how drastically different you can be in the span of even one week if you set and meet Mini Quest goals every day.

Day one- look for three beautiful things around you. (You will be forced to look for positivity.) Day two- Give everyone you meet a smile. Day three- Try a new food. Day four- Take a dance break... etc. This new approach to goal-setting and New Year's Resolutions could create a rejuvenating energy within you, add the spice of spontaneity along with a shift toward heightened thinking and connectivity with yourself and those around you.

If you are ready to take on the goal setting challenge—I would love to hear back from you about how things went. Good or bad, keep it real...but keep it moving, you have to really try. James 2:17 states "Faith without works is dead." Translation: there is no hocus-pocus in life, your faith, beliefs and good intentions must be followed up with action.

For those who are serious about unlocking your *Immunity to Change* - go to JBeEmpowered.Com to download the free immunity map and instructions that walk you through the process. You can learn more and REALLY go deep by purchasing their book.

No matter what you decide to do moving into 2015, remember to start from an authentic desire to live fully and freely. Choose a goal or goals for the right reason. Choose goals that serve you and will help you become the highest expression of yourself. Do not forget to celebrate progress as well as achievement and let us celebrate with you. Send your thoughts, comments and testimonials in. Until next time - #BeEmpowered

*Leslie Helmuth, Harvard Extension blog editor

Soup Kitchen Corner



Sharing the Gift of God's Love

"Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors.'"

— Luke 2:13-14

Every faith tradition has stories about the exchange of gifts. Perhaps the greatest story begins, "For God so loved the world..." John 3:16 The love of the Creator for its creation is infinite. Our Christmas gifts are a representation of our affection for one another. Behind the wrapping and substance of every gift is the intention of sharing God's love.

With deep love for those less fortunate, the Saint John Soup Kitchen, gives to all, hot meals and nutritious food twice monthly. This is one service of giving from our congregation and church leadership not only during the Holiday season, but year round. Just as Jesus came as a demonstration of God's love for the world and to teach us our ability to be that love, we give with loving hearts.

We are grateful for all the love we have experienced and for all that we have to share. During this joyous holiday season, we wish this gift of love to each and every one.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

You are invited to attend the annual Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at 6 pm on December 24th. Invite friends and family to be a part of this birthday celebration.

Trustee Corner

2014-2015 Trustees

The following persons were elected to serve as Trustees for this conference year.

Bridget Floyd
Karl Gullatte
Erica Harbin
Carl Lewis
Randy Love
Thalia Love Brown
Jesse Johnson
Pearlean Myhand
Mary Rankin
Lula Rochelle
Eva Smith
Maeola Snell Peoples
Glenn Pippen
Claudnette Purfoy Fears
Mary Rankin
Terry Speight
Darwin Washington
Eddie Whitehead
Bill Williams
Justin York

Congratulations Trustees!

Belk Days Offers Alternative Source of Income

The St. John Finance Committee and the Official Board have identified several projects to generate alternative sources of income. The alternative sources are used to create funds for building expansion outside of the normal member's tithes and offering.

One of the projects was the Belk Charity Sale where non-profit organizations sell tickets for a special shopping event. With the ticket, shoppers receive a refund for the cost of the ticket with their first purchase on this special shopping day which offers many sales items.

Thanks to Hodges Washington for coordinating this project, to Sisters Abbiegail Hugine and Juanita Washington for volunteering during Belk Days, and to all who purchased/sold tickets.



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

Protecting Your Identity

As we are now in the holiday season, many people will be shopping for gifts online or in a store. No matter how you choose to shop, there is always the risk that someone could access your private information. Your private information could include your security number, driver's license number or debit/credit card numbers. This article looks at some ways to protect your identity from being stolen.

Often, you will find emails in your inbox referring to clicking links that appear to be from a valid source, such as your bank or even a friend. When you are not sure if the email is safe, do not hesitate to call your bank or friend to verify the email. A large number of viruses are passed through suspicious links. Once the link is clicked, you may be asked to enter information such as your name and address. This could be the beginning of your personal information being sought. Again, before doing so, please validate the email by contacting the sender.

Another way to protect your identity is to never give your social security number to an unknown source. Sometimes you may receive a phone call from someone needing to verify information by asking for your social security number. Once you have given your social security number to an unknown source, you have just taken a risk of your identity being stolen. Never give your social security number to an unknown source.

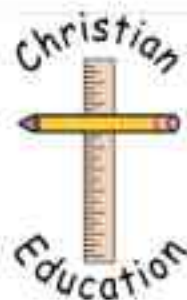
The most widely used method of stealing identity is through debit/credit cards. Review bank/credit card statements regularly, preferably once a week. Review charges and the location where the charge occurred. If you notice something that is not right about an ATM machine or a card terminal, do not use it. Be sure there are not any additional devices attached to the card terminal. If concerned that your personal information has been compromised, contact one of the major credit bureaus to file a 90-day fraud alert.

Please take precaution regarding your identity, not only during the holiday season, but at all times.

charity
sale

Church School Lesson Overview – January 2015

This month's reviews were written by Willie Sandifer.



January 4, 2015

Lesson Title: A Model for Prayer

Lesson Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

Print: Same

Devotional Songs: #272 [], #323 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.'" (Luke 11:2)

Rich insights into the way to pray effectively are given in this lesson.

Jesus taught the disciples a model for prayer and perseverance in prayer. The Model Prayer is readily available for reading in the scriptures. The following are salient points from the text:

1. Jesus prayed in public and in private.
2. Through prayer, we can talk directly with God and expect to personally hear from Him.
3. The Model Prayer is a complete prayer in itself.
4. Praise opens the Model Prayer.
5. Where we pray does not matter.
6. Content is important! God wants us to ask for His provisions, but He is not moved by repetition for the sake of repetition.
7. We must be consummate and continuous learners.

Prayer is the way believers communicate and form a personal relationship with God. The closeness of their relationship with God is directly proportional to the time they spend praying to Him.

January 11, 2015

Lesson Title: Jesus Prays for the Disciples

Lesson Scripture: John 17:1-26

Print: John 17:6-21

Devotional Songs: #345 [], #549 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21).

This lesson helps to understand that upon accepting Christ as the Savior, one enters into a war between good and evil too. As forewarned by Jesus, believers should expect hatred and persecution from the world because they belong to Him.

To keep one's Christian faith and to stay faithful in spite of adversities, Christians should remember that Jesus did not leave the defenseless. They have the Holy Spirit, an indwelling Counselor, who came to dwell within them.

Jesus taught to expect comfort that derives from unity with the Trinity and to see prayer and sanctification that comes from the Word as critical parts of Christian unity. Additionally, successful Christian living requires total submission to God's will.

January 18, 2015

Lesson Title: Jesus Intercedes for Us

Lesson Scripture: Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Print: Same

Tentative Devotional Songs: #221 [], #387 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

The book of Hebrews presents Jesus as more than a prophet or teacher. His deity, as the Son of God, is the perspective from which Jesus is presented. He has finished His earthly ministry satisfactorily and reclaimed His position to rightfully sit at the right hand of God. As the ultimate sacrificial lamb, Jesus redeemed mankind from eternal damnation by way of His lived human experiences, by blood shed during His crucifixion, and by His resurrection.

We have the knowledge that even more loving assurances come from His having loved humankind enough to sacrifice His life on a cross and die like a common criminal. Jesus, the High Priest, continuously intercedes on behalf of believers from His seat at the right hand of God.

January 25, 2015

Lesson Title: We Pray for One Another

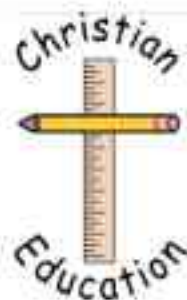
Lesson Scripture: James 5

Print: James 5:13-18

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525 [], 307; and #243 []

Key Verses: "Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

(Continued on page 12)



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 11)

The lesson text offered prayer as a basic element to Christian living. Both individual and group prayers were considered important by James, who is the author of the book and believed to have been Jesus' brother. Special attention and instructions were given by Him with regard to both individual and group prayer. James' discussion of prayer echoes Jesus' teaching about prayer.

To show the varying applicability of prayer and the need to keep praying, James wrote about people in common human conditions like sickness, affliction, and merry times. According to James, Prayer is the perfect cure for these experiences.

Church School is held each Sunday at 9:45 am. All are welcome to attend!

St. John Welcomes Members

St. John welcomes the following persons who joined the first quarter of this conference year.

Gemani Abrams
 Samuel Brewster
 Shameeka Brewster
 Samuel Brewster, Jr.
 Stephen Brewster
 Rev. Horace Fitchard, Jr.
 Lovei Grayson
 Natalie Kelly
 Jameika Little
 Patricia Little
 Barry Ricks
 Fellicia Turney
 Kimberly Weathers
 Priscilla Whitlock

Welcome!

Church School Book Club

December 2014

Discussion Date: 20 December 2014
 10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The First Phone Call from Heaven: A Novel,
 Mitch Albom, 2014

January 2015

Discussion Date: 17 January 2015
 10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Perfect Marriage, Kimbrela Lawson Roby,
 2013

Denise and Derrek Shaw are the perfect American couple. Happily married for fifteen years, they have a wonderful daughter, Mackenzie, successful careers, and a beautiful home in a posh Chicago suburb. They are attractive, respected . . . and hiding a shocking secret: a dangerous addiction to drugs.

It started innocently enough. Denise occasionally used prescription drugs to help her deal with the long hours and demanding nature of her job. Derrek, also under pressure at work, began using cocaine socially with some of his colleagues.

They can quit whenever they want to. At least, that's what Denise would like to believe . . .

As her job becomes more stressful, Denise can no longer get through the day without a fix. Derrek realizes his harmless habit has become anything but, and desperately wants to get clean. However, his attempts are derailed when there is a sudden family tragedy. Once soul mates, now this husband and wife are quickly losing the immense love, which had been the cornerstone of their marriage. With her parents spiraling out of control, Mackenzie makes an unexpected move to take matters into her own hands. Is her sacrifice too late or is there still hope? Is there a final chance to save the Shaw family?

— Amazon

January 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
4 COMMUNION 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship DEADLINE FOR AMEN	5 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	6 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Bd. Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	7 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	8 6:00 p.m. Steward Board Mtg. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	9 6:00 p.m. AMEN Staff Meeting	10 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:00 a.m. Ortical Board Meeting
11 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	12	13 6:00 p.m. Sons of Allen Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	14 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	15	16 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	17 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:00 a.m. Church School Book Club 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal 12:00 p.m. Y.P. Meeting
18 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	19 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	20 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Board Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	21 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	22	23 Women's Ministry Bowling Night	24 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Women's Ministry 10:30 a.m. VMS
25 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	26	27 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Church School Board Meeting	28 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	29	30	31 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry



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The Right Reverend James L. Davis, Servant Bishop
Mrs. Arelis B. Davis, Episcopal Supervisor
The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

December 24, 2014	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 6:00 p.m.
December 25, 2014	Christmas Blessings
December 31, 2014	Watch Night Service, 10:00 p.m.

*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. Romans 10:9*