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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 21 Issue 1

January 2016

Pastor's Message

Lean Forward: Deepening Our Faith

Hebrews 12:1-3

It's 2016!!!! God kept us through the tests and trials of 2015. God blessed us all year long with grace, mercy, and favor. Even though this is merely an article in a monthly newsletter, I think it's fitting to pause and praise God for the miracle of life and the miracle of seeing brand new opportunities before us as we begin this new year. Therefore, let's praise God for a new year and a new season! HALLELUJAH!!!! To God be the glory for the great things God is doing! There are some who had a glorious time in 2015 and are still riding that wave. Let us praise God for a successful year, and let's keep on praising God for what's to come!

However, some of us went through some rough patches last year and almost lost it all. Guess what? We're still here! Let's give the Lord praise!!!! I realize some lost people or things last year that were precious. The loss was real, and the hurt was severe. Let us still praise God in honor of that person or thing, for the good that person or thing brought to our lives, and for the fact that the loss didn't destroy us! As well, I suggest that we praise God in advance for the healing that will come this year from the losses of last year! The wounds we received last year don't have to define this upcoming year. So, whatever wounds we endured last year, let us turn them over to God. Cast your cares upon Him because He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7). I have faith that God will keep the promise that by His stripes, we are healed (Isaiah 53:5).

Yet, there are still others of us who had an ordinary 2015 - just so so. The bottom of life didn't fall out, but the heavens didn't open up either. Let's still give God thanks for God's power to keep us through the commonplace seasons of life. Though some of us may fear that 2016 will be more of the same, be advised: just because 2015 seemed noneventful, routine, or predictable, doesn't mean that 2016 will be the same. Let's be mindful that all things work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to God's purpose (Romans 8:28). Let's then raise our expectations and believe God for miracles, mighty works, and breakthroughs!

Having faith in God is not just for those who have come through the monotony of life; it's for all of us. As a matter of fact, some of us have begun this year with question marks. A loved one got deathly ill; unexpected financial issues emerged; a relationship took a sour turn; or a loss of stability in employment reared its ugly head. I can hear the words of the master, "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22).

Our theme for 2016 is Lean Forward: Deepening Our Faith. The biblical focus is Hebrews 12:1-3. The writer has an audience who tires of their fight with the world. This tiredness manifests in their falling away from their Christian responsibilities. One scholar says that the audience of Hebrews suffers from "faith fatigue."¹ The purpose of this epistle is to deepen their faith for the struggles they face.² In Hebrews 11, the writer deals with what faith is and how it was exemplified by the matriarchs and patriarchs of the Old Testament. As chapter 12 begins, the writer

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¹Thomas Long, "What Cloud? What Witness?: A Preacher's Exegesis of Hebrews 12:1-2," *Word & World* 28, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 350-353.

²*ibid.*



Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D.

Pastor's Message

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names the aforementioned group a cloud of witnesses and declares that this cloud surrounds his readers. The writer is letting them know that they aren't the only ones who have endured struggles and hardships. There are others who can identify with their pains. The cloud of witnesses surrounds them - providing a place for their faith to be deepened and cultivated. Their testimonies say to the reader that there is no situation that can block the development of their faith.

Likewise, as we make first steps into 2016 and "faith fatigue" begins to emerge, we can be assured that there are no limitations, no enemies, no pitfalls, no mistakes, no schemes, no issues, no emergencies, no losses, no shame, no regret, no hurt, no oversight, no ill intended act, or no unintended mess up that can keep us from deepening our faith. We, too, are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses in addition to those in Hebrews 11: Richard Allen, Frederick Douglass, Jarena Lee, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer, Fred Shuttlesworth, C. T. Vivian, Howard Thurman, and so many more. Their stories tell us that we can make it! Our faith can be deepened in times like this. Nothing can hold us back, except us!

Just as the writer told the first audience of Hebrews, I tell us - "Let us run this race!" In track, every detail makes the difference between winning and losing, especially the runner's mechanics. The best posture for running is not where the runner's body is straight up. That puts undue stress on the body and slows him or her down. The better posture is to **LEAN FORWARD**. This moves the center of gravity for the runner forward and helps the runner gain momentum with ease. In a photo finish when it seems like there is a draw, the officials look at the runners' lean to see who wins. The one who leans forward the furthest is the one who reaches the finish line first and thus is declared the winner.

This is our year to **LEAN FORWARD!**

We are going to do so by following the advice of Hebrews 12 - taking off the weights and sins that can undermine our race! Weights are good for training but not for the race. In the race, they become impediments. They can help us prepare but cannot help us execute. Weights are those things that keep us from reaching our goals or that slow us down from accomplishing them in time. Sin, on the other hand, keeps us out of the race or puts us in the wrong race! Sin blocks relationship with God - with the coach. If a runner has a bad relationship with the coach, he or she won't get put in the race. It's time to lay all of those things aside. This is why St. John has just completed a 10 day fast from Jan. 5-15. We spent 30 days in prayer to end last year, and God led us to fast as we began this year. God wants us to purge ourselves of what is holding us back. In order to do so, we must cleanse and declutter our lives. We must remove the weights and the sins that keep us from our God given purpose.

When we do, we are freed! We are free to move our center of gravity forward, to move our thoughts forward, to move our caring forward, to move our mission forward, to move our service forward, to move our giving forward, to move our relationships forward, to move our self-esteem forward, to move our families forward, to move our marriages forward, to move our churches forward, to move our communities forward, to move our dreams forward. Those weights and sins of 2015 no longer define our 2016 race!

What defines our 2016 race is how we lean forward. The writer of Hebrews suggest that we run with patience the race set before us and look unto Jesus in the process.

We lean forward by leaning toward Jesus!

Let us run. Let's make progress. Let's do at least one activity this year that goes toward our dreams and God's calling on our lives. Let's do so with endurance - with a mindset that it may not

(Continued on page 3)

Christmas Program Was Straight Outta Bethlehem

By Lydia Owens



This production is on track for a Grammy Award nomination in all categories. The story is based around the events leading up to the Christ child's birth and takes place in none other than the greatest city in the bible, Bethlehem. It was evident in the narrator's voice, that she was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the newborn King. Her enthusiasm and knowledge set the tone for what is thought to be this year's BEST PICTURE.

The opening act, *Straight Outta Bethlehem*, rocked the house and showcased the talents of one of Kristina Jefferson. The next act to hit the stage featured the song "Without Him / Walk in the Light" and proved to be a hit and should earn her nomination for Best Song among the Grammy Nominating Committee. The next two songs posed solemn questions to the mother of Jesus that were fitting for the occasion: "Mary Did You Know" and "Who Could Imagine a King" are among two of the songs that pose questions that are still

being asked today.

Next on the scene, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," is said to be written after the composer, Phillips Brooks, visited Bethlehem in 1865. It was the sight of Bethlehem itself that may have given him the impulse to write this hymn. The soloist's, Sharon Hicks, performance should earn her a nomination in the Best Performance Category.

I can only imagine being in this little boy's shoes as he played his best for the baby Jesus. In his search for God's acceptance, "The Little Drummer Boy" (arranged by Christina Sanders) is a story to which most people can relate. The song assures them that God is not interested in their presents as much as their presence. After intermission and offering, the Christmas Choir and the Youth Choir performed "Emmanuel," "Happy Birthday Jesus" and "Peace and Favor."

No Christmas Musical would be complete without the exuberant celebration song, "Joy to the World." This hymn was reportedly written in 1719 based on Psalm 98: Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

Stay tuned to the 2016 Grammy Awards next month to witness the many awards that will be given to the Cast and Crew of Saint John AME Church for this show-stopping production of "Straight Outta Bethlehem"!

Congratulations to all of the contributors and The Best is Yet to Come.

Cast of Performers (In order of Appearance):

Sherrill Humphrey-Luxoye
Kristina Jefferson
Shay Williams
Janette Smith
LaCondria Bryant
Deidre Walton
Reginald Pearson
Christina Sanders
Mariah Gullatte

St. John Children's Choir
Sharon Hicks
Jamela Bradford
Ashley Humphrey
Kaitlyn McClung
Jennifer Patterson
Jason Gilmore
VIP Choir

Christmas Program Was Straight Outta Bethlehem

By Lydia Owens



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Centered on "Jesus the Light of the World"

By Paula Eliard



St. John AME Family and Friends congregated at 8 pm on Christmas Eve for the Annual Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. The worship service was led by the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn. Members of the Naomi Council of the Stewardess Board participated in the service. Sister Powers gave the welcome, Sisters Charlsie Brooks and Eva Smith presented the Advent reading, prayer and lighting of the Christ Candle. Music for the service included a spectacular performance of "Oh Holy Night" by Sister Sharon Hicks and two selections by the St John Praise Team.



Pastor Clayborn brought the message entitled "His Shoulder Still Works" taken from Isaiah 9:6. He spoke on how God is trying to get believers to operate out of their strengths, and that He has compassion for them! God wants an exclusive relationship with His people. He loves them so much that He places the burden on His shoulders!

Holy Communion was served and the service concluded with everyone lighting their candles and singing "Jesus the Light of the World."



Watch Night Service Celebrated the New Year

By Nedra McDaniel



On December 31, 2015 there was a celebration of the 2015 year, burning of yokes from the past, and victory declaration for the future in 2016. The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn was the worship leader.

Ministry during the service included praise and worship through the music that was led by the St. John Praise Ensemble and the Dance Ministry. The opening medley of songs included "Let the Glory of the Lord Rise Among Us," "Yes, Yes, Lord," and "You are Alpha and Omega." The Dance Ministry accompanied each of these songs. Prayer was offered by the Reverend Meriam Garrett and scripture was read from Hebrews 11:1-6 by Sherrill Luwoye.

Following a special New Year's video, the yokes were burned. The burning of the yokes was a ceremony of burning the papers that contained the things members did not plan to carry into 2016. A special song and dance ministry to the song "Benediction" followed.

Preceding the sermon, the Praise Ensemble ministered in song a selection that was written by Pastor Clayborn, "Thank You for Keeping Me."



The sermon was entitled "Lean Forward." Pastor Clayborn began the message with background of the suffering of believers at the time Hebrews was written. He stated that many of them suffered because of their public confession of faith in Jesus Christ and they were worn out because of their battles against the world. He compared their situation to believers today who may be tired. To "lean forward" from this state, he indicated that they have to "deepen their understanding of Jesus Christ." He also indicated that the theme for 2016 at St. John is deepening faith. He used the example of runners, as did the writer of Hebrews, to illustrate how congregants can "Lean Forward" and deepen their faith with these three points.

1. Lean forward by fasting. Weights are good for training but not for the performance. Declutter and remove the weight and the sin that sets one apart from God.
2. Lean forward by going forward. Do something. Do at least one thing. Do your part and let God take care of the rest.
3. Lean forward by focusing on Him without distractions. Eliminate those things/people who take your focus off of God.

The message and the service concluded on a high note by claiming victory. Worshippers gathered at the altar for prayer at midnight and departing declaring victory.



Pastor's Message

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happen overnight but it will happen. Let's do so with a spirit of anticipation - that God's blessing will come in God's timing. Let's run the race that is set before us - not the one set before another. We will never win running someone else's race. Even if we get a prize, it's a hollow victory at best. Let's be true to the call God placed in us.

Let us run looking to Jesus! Jesus had great faith. He had the faith to walk on water, calm raging seas, heal the sick, raise the dead, shine a light on injustice, and fight for the oppressed. Not only did he have great faith, but he suggests that it's available to us. He told his disciples to have faith in God. If they would just operate in faith, they could tell a mountain to be removed!

Let's lean toward Jesus. That's what deepening faith is - deepening our walk with Him! Let's lean toward His Word. Let's lean toward Him in prayer - in giving to others - in serving our church - in following the call He's placed on our lives. When we do, something wonderful happens. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path" (Proverbs 3:5-6). When we lean forward to Jesus, He guides us through the race. The more we lean by making progress, the more He directs. The more we lean in endurance, the more He blesses with strength. The more we lean in being genuine, the more He allows us to see in ourselves. The more we lean in learning, the more He bestows wisdom. The more we lean in giving, the more He enlarges our capacity to serve. The more we lean in seeking Him, the more we see His will for our lives. The more we lean, the more we're able to move forward in God's purpose for us.

This is our year! This is our time! It's 2016 - the year we deepen our faith!

Let's lean forward!

Happy New Year!!!!

Church School Class Takes "Extravagant Generosity" Seriously

By Barbara Johnson

"The practice of generosity describes the Christian's unselfish willingness to give in order to make a positive difference for the purposes of Christ. Extravagant Generosity describes practices of sharing and giving that exceed all expectations and extend to unexpected measures. It describes lavish sharing, sacrifice, and giving in service to God and neighbor. Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations thrive because of the extraordinary sharing, willing sacrifice, and joyous giving of their members out of love for God and neighbor."¹

It was a normal Sunday morning in the Adult Church School Class when students questioned whether they were putting into action all that they were learning regarding being a generous giver. It was time to put words into action; they needed to do more. The call had already gone out requesting donations for funding Thanksgiving food boxes for St. John's church-wide community service project. The class decided then, to begin donating to a benevolence fund for Thanksgiving and for Christmas. The second offering would be above what students normally gave in their class offering. Everyone agreed, for the next couple of Sundays they would make a sacrifice and give an extra offering. Before Thanksgiving, Mr. Gilmore, who served as the lead for the project, announced that they had collected a total of \$586.00.

The 30 plus members of the Adult Church School Class agreed to purchase two food boxes for Thanksgiving and two boxes for Christmas. A suggestion was made to use the remainder of the funds to purchase items for The Salvation Army Christmas Angel Tree for Nursing Home Angels. Ten Nursing Home Angels, eight female angels and two male angels, were blessed through the Nursing Home Angel Tree. They received their wishes because of the extravagant generosity of the adult church

(Continued on page 14)

¹ Schnase, Robert (2007). Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.

St. John A. M. E. Church 2016 Events

Dates are subject to change as this is a working calendar

January

- 1 New Year's Day (office closed)
- 8 Acquire the Dream Workshop (iTHRIVE/Koinonia)
- 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (office closed)
- 22 Church School Bowling (Redstone Lanes- 8pm)
- 24 Quarterly Reports Due
- 29 Church-wide Winter Gala, Springhill Suites Downtown Huntsville
- 31 10am- Family & Friends Sunday- Invite family and friends to worship with us!

February Black History Month

- 1 Second Quarterly Conference (8pm)
- 9 Shrove Tuesday- Pancake Breakfast (5:30pm-7:00pm)
- 10 Ash Wednesday Worship Services- the Lenten Season begins- Imposition of Ashes at 12noon/8pm
- 14 Founder's Day Worship Service (10am)
- Black History Program- "A Night at the Museum" (3pm)
- 20 NorthWest Board of Examiners (Birmingham)
- 25-27 Dance and Music Workshop

March

- 5 Koinonia Faith Cafe
- 13 Day Light Savings Begins
- 20 Palm Sunday
- 21-23 Holy Week Revival (8pm nightly)
- 24 Maundy Thursday Worship Service (8pm)
- 25 Good Friday *7 Last Words, St. Philip AME Church, Atlanta, GA
- Koinonia Trip to Atlanta
- 27 RESURRECTION SUNDAY
- Worship Services - 8am & 10:50 am/ 9am- Easter Program
- 28 Easter Monday (church office closed)

April

- Focus: Expanding Your Horizons
- 6 Life Skills Workshop/Using Multiple Intelligences Workshop
- 10 WMS Sunday (10:50 am)
- 13 Life Skills Workshop/Using Multiple Intelligences Workshop
- 19 Life Skills Workshop/Using Multiple Intelligences Workshop
- 20-23 9th Episcopal District Mid-Winter Meeting, DPCP
- 22 Episcopal Exit Celebration
- 23 Koinonia Game Night
- 26 Lifeskills Workshop/Using Multiple Intelligences Workshop

May

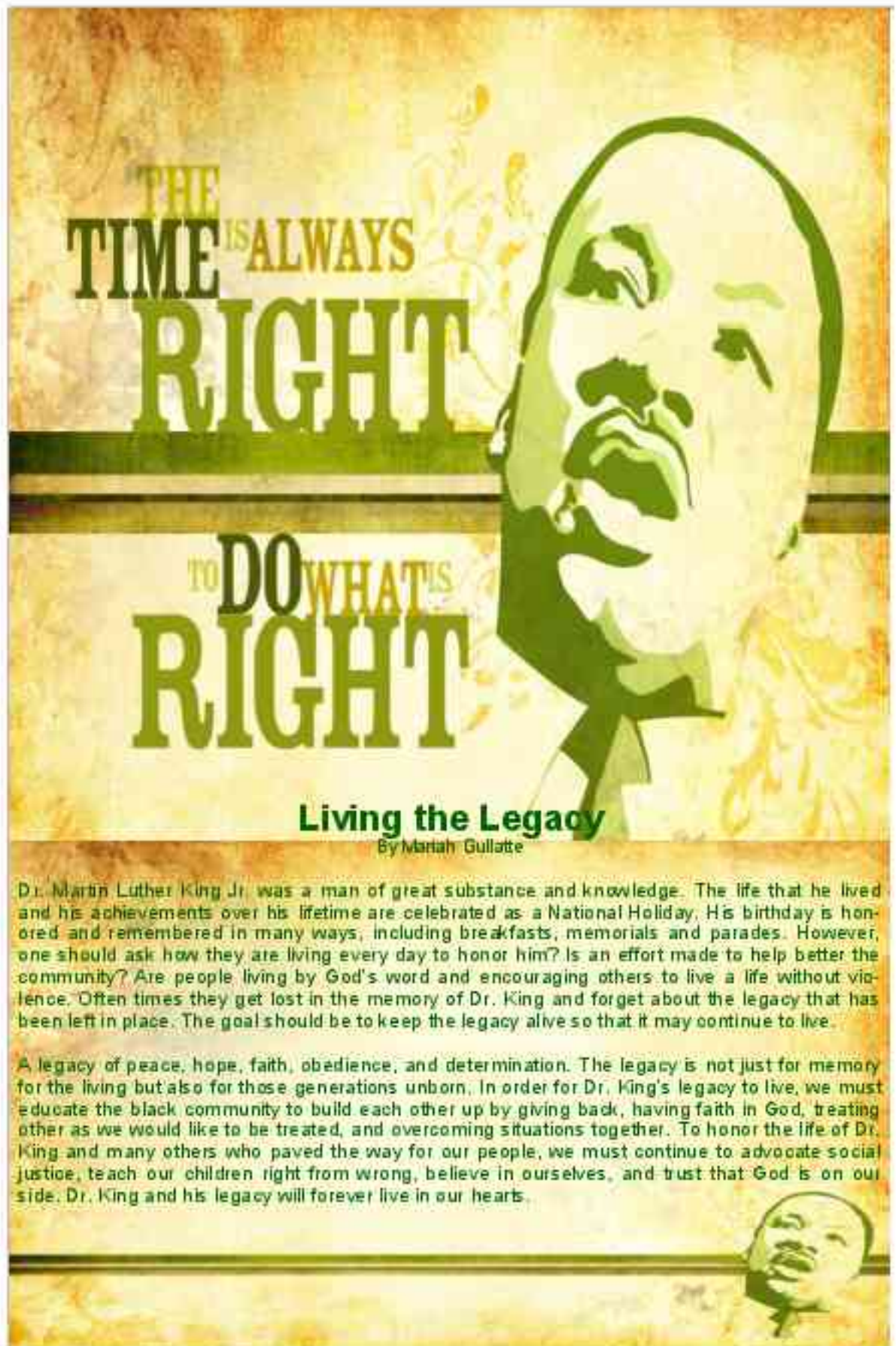
- Women's Month [Women's Day]
- 4 Third Quarterly Conference (8pm)
- 8 Mothers' Day
- 11 Pentecost Sunday Church School (12noon & 8 pm)
- 15 Pentecost Sunday (8 am & 10 am worship services; 11 am witnessing)
- 20 Game Night (Church School) - Bring your favorite game (8pm-8:30pm)
- 20-21 9th Episcopal District Kingdom Seekers Conference (NTG weekend) - DPCP
- 29 5th Sunday - Family & Friends Sunday
- 30 Memorial Day (office closed)

St. John A. M. E. Church 2016 Events

Dates are subject to change as this is a working calendar

(Continued from page 8)

- June Men's Month [Men's Day]
 8-10 Ministry Arts Camp for Children and Youth
 15 SBHB Sunday School Convention (9am-3pm)
 12 Graduate & Retiree Recognition Sunday
 12-18 VBS
 19 Father's Day
- July
 4 Independence Day (office closed)
 6-13 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference - AME Church, (PA)
 22-25 Christian Education Congress, Troy University
 29 Church School Back to School Celebration (8pm-8:30 pm)
 31 5th Sunday- Family & Friends Sunday
- August
 4 Fourth Quarterly Conference (8pm)
 20-21 iTHRIVE/Koinonia Freedom Weekend
 20 SBHB Harvest Home
 Koinonia "Who Done It" Mystery Dinner
 21 iTHRIVE Sunday
- September
 5 Labor Day (office closed)
 6 WMS Annual Convention
 7-10 7th Session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference
 23 Koinonia Game Night
- October [Free to Worship]
 15 Liz Hurley Race- Team sponsored by the Koinonia Ministry (all are welcome to join)
 16 Pink Sunday
 22 Harvest Festival and Health Fair
 28 Movie ...a Classic (2pm-4pm) Church School
 30 5th Sunday- Family & Friends Sunday
- November
 6 Daylight Savings Ends
 11 Veteran's Day
 16 Thankful People Service
 19 SBHB District Planning Meeting
 20 Pastor's Aid Bake Sale
 24 Thanksgiving Day (office closed 23rd-25th)
- December
 3 Holiday Shopping Trip/Dave and Busters (Opry Mills- Nashville, TN)
 4 AMEN Taste Tea (immediately following 10:50am service)
 11 Christmas Program
 16 Game Night(Koinonias)
 25 Christmas Day (10am worship service) (church office closed 23rd & 26th)
 31 New Year's Eve- Watch Night Worship Service, 10 pm
 (church office closed 30th & January 2nd)
- January 2017
 1 New Year's Day (10am service only)



**THE TIME IS ALWAYS
RIGHT
TO DO WHAT'S
RIGHT**

Living the Legacy
By Mariah Gullatte

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a man of great substance and knowledge. The life that he lived and his achievements over his lifetime are celebrated as a National Holiday. His birthday is honored and remembered in many ways, including breakfasts, memorials and parades. However, one should ask how they are living every day to honor him? Is an effort made to help better the community? Are people living by God's word and encouraging others to live a life without violence. Often times they get lost in the memory of Dr. King and forget about the legacy that has been left in place. The goal should be to keep the legacy alive so that it may continue to live.

A legacy of peace, hope, faith, obedience, and determination. The legacy is not just for memory for the living but also for those generations unborn. In order for Dr. King's legacy to live, we must educate the black community to build each other up by giving back, having faith in God, treating other as we would like to be treated, and overcoming situations together. To honor the life of Dr. King and many others who paved the way for our people, we must continue to advocate social justice, teach our children right from wrong, believe in ourselves, and trust that God is on our side. Dr. King and his legacy will forever live in our hearts.

Give Me the Way (a tribute to Martin Luther King)

By Sherrill Luwaye

The South is my home
With Cotton and Sugar Cane for miles
Though trouble scatters the ground, give me the way
From splinters gained from sea sick under
From manacles of wrist
And fetters of ankles
Give me the way
I am alive though fallen bannerols for the wind above me
Though linen and fire dawdle near by
I am alive with shining slumber
Go from me tails of fixed mintage borrowed back into bondage
With no more menial for me or master for abhor
Give me the way and one eagle's wings and I will fly
Give me the way with enough dream for tomorrow's tomorrow
With no more bitterness for morning or mourning for night
But valor and no weary for my feet
Give me rays from the Son and all the wings of God's sky
With glee for sunrise and peace for midnight
Give me hopeful reverie for the world
And should I fall from the balcony of my slumber let my dream shout from above
We are not dead!
The bones of our bodies are not coffins!
Our flesh is not meaningless ground we have been lowered into
Our color is our song
And our song is beautiful
The south is my home and I will not be swept off my front porch



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams



As mentioned in previous technology tips, carrying cash is becoming obsolete in this tech savvy world. Nowadays, consumers are using the mobile wallet technology and a new means of a credit/debit card that uses the chip card technology. This technology has been used in other countries for quite some time and is now starting to be used heavily in the United States. When traveling in Europe, be prepared to be required to use a chip card at almost all merchants.

The chip card is a credit or debit card that is embedded with a microchip. The chip creates a one-time unique code when the card is used at a chip enabled register. By using the chip card, no account numbers or expiration dates are transmitted between the customer and the merchant. Once the unique code has been generated, it is near impossible to be replicated. This helps to prevent the possibility of counterfeit activities. The chip cards provide more security and ease of use versus a generic debit or credit card. Using the chip card does not track personal or purchase history or location information. There are numerous cases where debit/credit card have been stolen or used without authorization.

If the stores that you may shop in accept the chip card, you will be asked to insert the end of the card that contains the chip into the terminal instead of swiping. If the terminals are not chip enabled, you can still swipe your card the same as always. Although not all stores have adopted the chip card technology, the cash register terminals with chip technology are becoming a standard. After all, it is wise to be cautious when using credit/debit cards for purchasing. By having a credit/debit card with the chip card technology, an extra layer of security is provided.

Soup Kitchen



A Standing Invitation

By Charlsie Brooks

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with me."
Revelation 3:20

St. John's Monthly Soup Kitchen stands and invites everyone in on the threshold of a fresh New Year. We look back at the year just past, where we were blessed to serve over 2,000 meals, and look forward to the year unfolding before us.

As we stand, we hear a knocking at the door. It is our Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord and we open wide the door. He enters and we are filled anew with the glory and joy of His presence—the newness that will carry us through this New Year.

We extend to you to enter and stand with us as we provide to those many seekers: men, women and young people at the crossroads of their lives. Some deep in sorrow and some overwhelmed by fear and doubt.

Our Lord has given us new eyes in the light of this New Year to cast our gaze on all those who come. Our hearts are moved. And in Him we willingly serve them on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. We willingly do all that He would have us do.

Please join us together in the unfolding year, as we receive the wonderful joys of service with every helping cup of soup or bagged lunch that we serve. Help us as we try to also guide the lost and lonely into the bright light of our Savior's love. We will be there and invite you to help us answer the Lord's knock on the door of the hearts and lives of those who come.

Again, we are ready! We invite you to stand shoulder-to-shoulder, faith-to-faith to minister to those whose faith may be floundering and who may be at the lowest ebb of their lives.

Happy New Year and Thank You.

Church School Lesson Overview – February 2016

The lesson reviews for February were written by Brother Kenneth Parham.

February 7, 2016

Lesson Title: Passover

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 12:1-14; Numbers 28:16-25; Mark 14:12-20

Print: Exodus 12:1-14

Devotional Songs: #530, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance" (Exodus 12:14).

In this lesson, God gave the Israelites step by step instructions on what to do in preparation for His passing through Egypt and unleashing the deadliest of the ten plagues that would indeed lead to the Pharaoh setting the Israelites free. The plague would kill the first born males (man and animal) living in Egypt. God's instructions centered on the selection of a year-old unblemished lamb to be slaughtered, the blood smeared on the two door posts and on the lintel of the houses, the whole lamb was to be grilled over a fire and eaten with leavened bread and bitter herbs. God instructed that the Israelites would eat the meal clothed, with sandals on their feet, a staff in their hands and to eat the meal hurriedly. God instructed that any uneaten meat was to be burnt before sunrise. God indicated that by observing these instructions, He would pass by the homes of the Israelites and not kill the first born.

Moses commanded the Israelites to remember and celebrate God's workings as a perpetual ordinance. The Jewish historians have called this celebration, the Passover. Indeed God passed over the Israelites in His dealings with the Egyptians when delivering the Israelites from captivity.

February 14, 2016

Lesson Title: Feast of Weeks

Lesson Scripture: Leviticus 23:15-22; Numbers 28:26-31; Acts 2:1-36

Print: Leviticus 23:15-22

Devotional Songs: #415, #258, and #243

Key Verse: "You shall count until the day after the seventh Sabbath, fifty days; then you

shall present an offering of new grain to the Lord" (Leviticus 23:18).

Based on research, it is noted that the Feast of Weeks was in celebration of the first fruits of the wheat harvest that the Jews were commanded to present as an offering of new grain to the Lord. Noted in this lesson, the offering was to be two loaves of bread measuring two-tenths of an ephah, made with fine flour and baked with leaven. Along with the first fruit offerings, the Jews were also to offer seven first-year lambs that were without blemish along with one young bull and two rams. Another important requirement of this feast was that, when the Jews harvested their fields, they were required to leave the corners of the field untouched and not gather any gleanings from the harvest.

Religious scholars agree that there is significance noted in the fifty days that God commanded the Jews to wait before celebrating the first Feast of Weeks. This first celebration was held fifty days after the first Passover, the time noted for the Jews leaving Egypt, until the first wheat harvest. God was laying the foundation for the celebration of a great Feast of Weeks in which Jesus would be crucified as the "Passover Lamb" and rise from the grave as a living symbolism of the first fruit. Following Jesus' resurrection, He spent the next forty days teaching His disciples before ascending to heaven. Fifty days after His resurrection, Jesus sent the promised Holy Spirit to dwell with the disciples and empower them for ministry. The promised Holy Spirit arrived on the Day of Pentecost, which is another name for the Feast of Weeks.

And finally, the significance of leaving the corners of the fields untouched and not to gather any gleanings from the harvest was explained as God showing his infinite mercy to His people and likewise, they should show mercy to the poor (verse 22).

February 21, 2016

Lesson Title: Day of Atonement

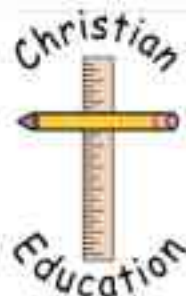
Lesson Scripture: Leviticus 16; 23:26-32; Numbers 29:7-11; Hebrews 7:26-28; 9:24; 10:4-18

Print: Leviticus 16:11-19

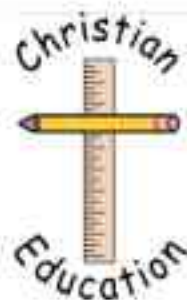
Devotional Songs: #405; #77; and #243

Key Verses: "Thus he shall make atonement

(Continued on page 14)



Church School Lesson Overview – February 2016



(Continued from page 13)

for the sanctuary, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins; and so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which remain with them in the midst of their uncleannesses" (Leviticus 16:16).

The Day of Atonement is noted as being the holiest of the celebration that the Jews observe annually. During the time of Moses, the most high priest was to enter the place of the mercy seat (dwelling place of God's presence) and was to offer a sin offering for himself and his household, as well as a sin offering for the children of Israel. The celebration centered around the priest washing his body prior to donning special sacramental clothing in order to enter the sacred ground and slaughtering both a bull and a goat for the blood which is to be sprinkled onto the front of the mercy seat for the atonement of sins.

Later in this chapter of Leviticus (verses 20-22), it was noted that a live goat was also offered as a scapegoat for the sins of the children of Israel. The goat was brought to the altar and the high priest was to place both hands onto the horns of the goat and confess all of the sins of the children of Israel. After this, the goat was to be led away and set free in the desert. Believers can reflect back and acknowledge God's plan for salvation to use Jesus as the scapegoat for the sins of humanity.

February 28, 2016

Lesson Title: The Feast of Booths

Lesson Scripture: Leviticus 23:33-43; Numbers 29:12-40; Deuteronomy 16:13-17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-29; Revelation 14:1-5

Print: Leviticus 23:33-43

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525; #251; and #243

Key Verse: "You shall live in booths for seven days; all that are citizens in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I make the people of Israel live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 23:42-43).

The lesson commentary indicates that this time of celebration, Feast of Booths, was the last of the feasts that God planned and commanded that the Israelites observe. Upon re-

flecting on this lesson, one sees that God was not only concerned with strict guidance in observing Holy occasions but He was also concerned with allowing the children of Israel to have and to take an opportunity to reflect, fellowship and celebrate on His goodness.

In this lesson, God gave the children of Israel seven days to observe the Feast of Booths. He gave four simple instructions to obey during the festive period; they are: (1) that the Israelites were not to do any work related to their individual occupations, (2) that on the first day of the festival, the children of Israel were to gather the fruit of majestic trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees and willow branches, (3) the children of Israel and their households lived in booths for the seven days (a humbling reminder of how God provided shelter and food during the forty years journey to the promised land) and, (4) they celebrated God's goodness for the eight days, as the eighth day was also a day of rest.

**Church School meets
each Sunday at 9:45 a.m.**

There are classes for all ages.

Church School Class Takes "Extravagant Generosity" Seriously

By Barbara Johnson

(Continued from page 7)

school class. Their wishes included requests for pants, shirts, scarves, toiletries, pajamas, nightgowns, sweaters, and sweat suits.

The Adult Church School Class saw a need and through their love for God and their neighbor, made the decision to do more, give more, and sacrifice more, so that others could feel the love of God and that they could fulfill the commandment to SERVE.

"You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity." (2 Corinthians 9:11)



Understanding Cholesterol and Its Risks

(Taken from GlaxoSmithKline Research)
Submitted by Martha Smith

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance produced by the liver. It is also an animal sterol found in foods from animal products. High cholesterol puts your health at risk. It can cause heart disease and heart attacks. Heart disease is the number one killer in the United States.

High cholesterol does not cause symptoms and, therefore, many people do not know that their cholesterol is high. High cholesterol can happen at any age. It affects both men and women. The body needs some cholesterol to make hormones, vitamin D, etc. When the body has too much cholesterol, it can build-up in the walls of blood vessels called arteries. When the arteries become narrow as a result of this builds up, they become narrow and slow or block blood flow to the heart. Blood brings needed oxygen to the heart.

Understanding Total Cholesterol
LDL (bad) cholesterol blocks arteries.

HDL (good) cholesterol prevents cholesterol from building up in the arteries.

Triglycerides – fats carried through the blood stream

Total cholesterol is normally less than 200, with the LDL normally being less than 100 and HDL normal being 60 or above. Triglycerides are normally less than 150.

Controlling Cholesterol Risks

Cholesterol risk factors that a person cannot control are age and family history. Cholesterol levels tend to rise with age. Genes play a part in how much the body produces and, as a result, high cholesterol seems to run in families.

Cholesterol risk factors that can be controlled are weight, activity and eating habits. Excess weight tends to elevate LDL (bad) cholesterol levels. If needed, lose weight to lower cholesterol. Physical activity helps to lower the LDL and raise the HDL levels.

Foods also affect the cholesterol level. Plan for at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day. Eat foods that are high in fiber and low in fat. Other risk factors include smoking, and hypertension. If prescribed, take medication to lower cholesterol.



Church School Book Club

January 2016

Discussion Date: 18 January 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Choir Director 2: Runaway Bride, Carl Weber, 2015

February 2016

Discussion Date: 20 February 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Husband's Secret, Liane Moriarty, 2015

At the heart of *The Husband's Secret* is a letter that is not meant to be read...

My darling Cecilia,
If you're reading this, then I've died...

Imagine your husband wrote you a letter, to be opened after his death. Imagine, too, that the letter contains his deepest, darkest secret—something with the potential to destroy not only the life you have built together, but the lives of others as well. And then imagine that you stumble across that letter while your husband is still very much alive.

Cecilia Fitzpatrick has achieved it all—she is an incredibly successful businesswoman, a pillar of her small community, a devoted wife and mother. Her life is as orderly and spotless as her home. But that letter is about to change everything—and not just for her. There are other women who barely know Cecilia—or each other—but they, too, are about to feel the earth-shattering repercussions of her husband's secret. -- Amazon

Moving Soon?

Be sure to inform the church office of address, telephone number and e-mail changes. Because the St. John AMEN is mailed at a bulk rate, it is not forwarded to new addresses. The postal service returns the newsletter to the church at a rate of about \$1.50 per newsletter (about four times more than it cost to send the newsletter at the bulk rate). Notifying the office in advance of moves will help to reduce this expense.

Thank you. The St. John AMEN Staff.





2016: The Year of Purposeful Living

By Janette R. Smith

Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach



As we start a new year, I am reminded of a quote by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose life and legacy is celebrated this month. Perhaps you have heard it or seen it shared online, "Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase." That sentiment is a crucial key to manifesting dreams and waking out purpose in 2016.

No matter what dream you are working on, you will not get any closer to it by 'checking out' or giving up. Even when motivation is waning, or resources seem low—keep showing up! You will also be more motivated to keep showing up if you develop a practice of celebrating your small wins. Acknowledging small wins builds your confidence, connections, knowledge and moves you closer to your goal. Yes! Baby steps count!

We can no longer afford to take a lackadaisical approach to finding and operating in our purpose. There is a hurting world with hurting people waiting for us to step fully into the assignment for our lives in this season. Perhaps you feel God is done with you; you have completed a job, retired, or moved on from one vocation. Perhaps you have raised the kids and are now an empty-nester. As long as you are here breathing air, purpose remains in you.

Purposeful living is grounded in intention. Do you pray and ask God what His aim is for you now? What keeps calling out to you? What dreams have you left untouched? Have you settled for living off of the success of the works God did through you 10, 15, 20 years ago? Do you not think He desires to work through you in THIS season? God is a God of purpose and planning. To everything there is a season. What season are you in?

These are the questions to ask yourself this first month of 2016 followed by, "What's NEXT?" You will know the answer to that when you investigate what will be discussed in February's article — your "BIG FAT WHY!"

As always, I pray that God will bless you to live an empowered life, one of joy and meaning. Become all that you are meant to be every day so that not only are you built up, but that you may help shape and change the world for His glory.

#BeEmpowered

February 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 2nd Quarterly Conference, 6 pm	2 Prayer Call	3 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	4 6:00 p.m. Steward Board Mtg.	5	6 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
7 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship Communion AMEN DEADLINE	8 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Bd. Mtg. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	9 Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. VP Chdr Rehearsal Stewardess Board Mtg. Shrove Tuesday 5:00-7:00 p.m.	10 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Asht Wednesday Service	11 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	12	13 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting
14 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship FOUNDER'S DAY 3:00 p.m. Black History Program	15 PRESIDENTS' DAY	16 Prayer Call 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Bd. Mtg. VP Chdr 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
21 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	22	23 Prayer Call 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN	24 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	25 Dance and Music Workshop	26 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	27 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Women's Ministry 10:30 a.m. WMS Meeting
28 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	29	Weekly Prayer Time each Tuesday at Noon Conference Call Credentials US Toll Number <u>(530) 881-1212</u> Meeting ID: 876-863-940 Listen to the playback any time. Playback Number <u>(530) 881-1219</u> Meeting Id 876-863-940				



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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

January 29, 2016 Winter Gala, Springhill Suites, 7:00 p.m.

February 10, 2016 Ash Wednesday Service, 6:00 p.m.

February 14, 2016 Founder's Day, 10:00 a.m.,
The Reverend Dr. James Miller, Guest Preacher



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



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 21 Issue 2

February 2016

Pastor's Message

Black History Still Matters

Joshua 4:1-9



Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D.

In my sophomore year of high school, I enrolled in world history. The text book was made up of different units. Each unit covered the history of a continent. All of the units had several chapters...except one. The unit on Africa only had one chapter! Think about all of the countries within and all of the rich history of Africa, and this textbook - which was published in the late 1980s - only had one chapter to cover the birthplace of the African diaspora. One of my classmates and I were excited to study the history of Africa and couldn't wait to get to that point in the course. When we found that there was only one chapter, we were very disappointed. Our teacher - a white male - apologized to the class for the book's dearth of material and promised to bring in supplemental resources to make our study of Africa worthwhile. I'm glad to say that he fulfilled his promise.

That story from my childhood has great significance as I think about the reason why this country celebrates Black History Month. Our history has been excluded, minimized, trivialized, mocked, parodied, distorted and abused since the first forced arrival of Africans onto this land. Even as recently as two years ago - according to a trusted source - certain school systems in Mississippi moved to exclude slavery from their American History books! Instead, they wanted the text to briefly mention involuntary servitude!

This country's celebration of Black History Month is an acknowledgement of the worth and need for Black History to be included in the totality of American History. To be clear, this country did not come up with the concept of Black history month! Carter G. Woodson founded "Negro History Week" in 1926 around the birthdates of President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. In 1976, Kent State University began to celebrate Black History Month. African American history was first recognized by African Americans for African Americans. Later, the country embraced this celebration in 1976. President Gerald Ford admitted that Black History had been overlooked and undervalued in this country. In no way did Carter G. Woodson, Kent State, or President Ford ever suggest that Black History was better than other histories. Neither of them decried the study of other histories. They only highlighted Black History because of how it had been mistreated.

This is why it is so necessary to uplift the phrase: "Black Lives Matter." Just as Negro History Week and Black History Month were not readily embraced, the movement around Black Lives Matter has met with opposition. Of course, the voices of hatred and fear found in racism and classism continue to show their woeful ignorance as they attack the Black Lives Matter campaign. As unfortunate as that is, that negativity is not surprising. However, what is more alarming is the counter movement to Black Lives Matter. It's the "All Lives Matter" movement. It seems to be a response based on a discomfort with Black Lives Matter. This campaign is under the mistaken notion that Black Lives Matter is suggesting that Black lives matter more than others. Just as Black History is no more important than any other history, Black lives are no more

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Pastor's Message

(Continued from page 1)

important than other lives. Just as Black History has been mistreated more than other histories in this country, Black lives have been mistreated disproportionately more than other lives in this country. The Black Lives Matter movement is only suggesting that Black lives are more in danger in our country than other lives. Recently, two Unitarian Universalist congregations (one in New Jersey and the other in Nevada) posted Black Lives Matter signage on their grounds. In both, the signs were either stolen or vandalized more than once. The vandals spray painted over the signs with either "white lives matter" or "all lives matter."¹ The response of those churches is simply magnificent. They have both resolved to continue putting up the signs. They refuse to be deterred by the acts of fear.

Surprisingly, this All Lives Matter campaign is embraced by a number of African Americans. I have witnessed some proudly say "All Lives Matter" in opposition to "Black Lives Matter." Those persons seemed to be under the same impression that by declaring Black Lives Matter they were somehow imposing a claim of superiority over others of a different hue. In their hurry to chasten who they believe to be ill-intended African Americans and to make comfortable who they fear are horrified whites, they, too, have missed the heart of the Black Lives Matter message. To think that one's declaration of self-love is only attainable through the hatred of another confines that person to an inescapable prison: to provide love for others, one must hate oneself. Every Christian needs to be cognizant of this demonic plot and realize that it's contrary to the message of Jesus. The Master said that we must love our neighbor AS ourselves! If we are not loving ourselves, we are unable to love others. If we dare to love others without loving ourselves, we set the groundwork for slavery. Jesus tells us that loving self and loving others is not contradictory.

In the same way, All Lives Matter and Black Lives Matter are not contradictory phrases. In order for all lives to matter, Black lives must matter. Each life has to matter for all lives to matter. As well, to highlight one particular life or a group of lives does not negate the idea that all lives matter. What is sad is that this simple logic must be explained in our advanced society. I am clear that it needs to be explained because there are those who interpret the Black Lives Matter campaign as a public cry to murder police officers at will.

If this sentiment is at the heart of our country (or at the hearts of many of those in our country), then it makes sense that the highlighting of Black History would meet certain difficulties. Just as we must love ourselves to love others, we must appreciate our history in order to appreciate the history of others. For all history to matter, Black history must matter. Guess what? It still does!!!

Black Lives Still Matter!!!

Black History Still Matters!!!

¹ See <http://mynews4.com/news/local/black-lives-matter-sign-stolen-from-reno-church-again>; http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2016/02/nj_church_that_had_black_lives_matter_struck_again.html.



Bishop Richard Allen: Reflections on a Rich and Historic Legacy

By Bridget J. Floyd

February is a significant month for the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church as it is the month in which founder Richard Allen was born. The AME Church celebrates Founder's Day on the second Sunday in February. This year marks the 200th anniversary of the founding of the AME Church in 1816. The AME Church has the distinction of being the first African American church started in the United States. It currently has more than 2.5 Million members. History denotes the importance of Bishop Allen and the AME Church in American history, extending beyond the significance to the denomination.

Richard Allen was born February 14, 1760 in Philadelphia, PA. (Founder's Day this year was celebrated on the actual anniversary of Allen's birth.) In his twenties he purchased his freedom. He worshipped at St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church and is known for waking out of that church, along with Absalom Jones and other African Americans, after church officers attempted to remove the persons of color as they prayed. This began a movement that resulted in social activism, economic independence, education, religious growth, and caring for others (during a yellow fever epidemic). Bethel Church (later known as "Mother Bethel") was built on the site of the blacksmith shop that Allen purchased and served as a humble setting in which they could worship after leaving St. George's Church.

On February 2, 2016, the year that marks the 200th anniversary of the founding of the AME Church, a commemorative stamp in the "Black Heritage" series was offered for sale. The Richard Allen stamp was made possible by the signatures of AME's and friends/supporters who recognized the importance of a stamp commemorating Bishop Allen. Many St. John members submitted signatures.

Currently there are six (6) St. John members who have attained licentiate status. They are pursuing various tracks of licensure per the AME Discipline. They were asked to give their perspectives on Richard Allen, the AME Church, and to indicate how their calling/aspirations have been impacted.

Sister Ashley Humphrey, who is pursuing the itinerant track, indicated that she was impacted by Richard Allen before joining the AME Church. She noted that the "social activism stood out" along with helping others and dealing with economic challenges. She noted that the "legacy of social justice for not just us, but for everybody" stood out to her. Sister Humphrey indicated that after becoming an AME she is learning as part of the AME Church that "the call is beyond the walls of the AME Church. Its reputation preceded it ... it is a light to all denominations". In terms of her calling, Sister Humphrey indicated that different denominations have different calls and that "I believe I've been called to social justice which is a part of the AME Church."

Sister Sherrill Amber Humphrey Luwoye is pursuing the evangelist track. She compared Richard Allen to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in that "his dream is our reality. They dreamed for the community as a whole, not for themselves". She noted that "this inspired me to my call", and that selflessness is not typical in today's society. Regarding the impact of AME Church history, Sister Luwoye stated that she is new to the AME church (approximately five years) but that she is impressed that the church grew at a time "when we weren't allowed to have ownership" and that the church "blends the history and spirituality...tells the story of how we are progressing as a people." She indicated that in addition to the importance of not being "confined to the balcony", the AME church "also allowed women to be able to be who God called them to be... the AME Church is leading in that area". Sister Luwoye reported that she feels "God led me to the AME Church to

(Continued on page 4)

Bishop Richard Allen: Reflections on a Rich and Historic Legacy

By Bridget J. Floyd

(Continued from page 3)

accept my call. I don't think I would have been able to do this in another denomination." She declared, "I am AME!! I'm happy to be a part of what God is doing".

Sister Jennifer Patterson, Ph.D. is pursuing the itinerant ordination track. She indicated that Richard Allen was "a person who was called by God himself, he had a special conviction in his heart, particularly in the way he wanted to worship. He trusted that God would make a way". She noted that the history of the AME Church has been associated with "commitment to social justice from the beginning - freeing slaves, the underground railroad, Brown AME in Selma, and Emanuel AME in Charleston; the combination of social and spiritual issues." In terms of her calling, Dr. Patterson indicated that "I'm committed to and encouraged that they got through and they trusted God and I'm leaning and trusting on the same God. I'm here to do whatever He would lead me to do."

Sister Lillie Rivers is pursuing the exhorter track. She noted that Allen was "a man with a great inner strength...had a servant's heart. He used his time, talent and treasure to insure his people had a sense of belonging. His bravery [and] commitment to justice was a calling from God". She noted that the blacksmith shop was an example that one can "take what God gives you...with God's help you can be successful. We take freedom to worship for granted but it was not true in his time. It takes inner peace to stay under control when people come at you. As Christians we have to fight it with prayer and intelligence". Sister Rivers indicated that she embraced the AME history and that she was impressed with the structure. She reported that she learned "everything should be done in an orderly fashion". She noted she was taught as a child to be in God's service ... this has made a difference in my whole life...He expected me to act like His child". She noted that while she has been involved in other denominations in her adult life, she has returned to the AME structure. She noted the church has affected her life and calling and "my calling is from God". She added that Sunday school and Bible Study have given her a strong foundation and that her desire is to give her best as she responds to God's call.

Sister Janette Smith is pursuing the evangelist track. She indicated that she feels connected to Richard Allen "in the spirit of empowerment". She noted that his work to "empower people in all areas of life (beyond the church walls) is where I connect as a minister of the gospel and evangelist. His heartbeat was to see people equipped in every practical way". Sister Smith referred to Allen's association with Reverend Absalom Jones, with the "Free African Society to offer social, financial guidance, and medical care helped our people elevate their thinking, expand their knowledge and hopes for a higher standard of living." She stated, "I hope that God will use me in that way so I can impact people's lives and help them". She noted that her prayer is "that God will also use me to help people establish a heightened level of self-determination and personal empowerment to fully live in the purpose God intended."

Brother Justin York is pursuing the itinerant track. He indicated that he was impacted by Richard Allen's perseverance and determination to move forward with the calling God gave him despite the numerous challenges faced. He noted the AME church has "a rich heritage" which impacts him because he has "been AME all my life". He indicated that although he will be thirty (30) years of age this year, he is "still learning new things about the AME church." He noted he is particularly impressed by the operations/organization of the church, and that the beginning of this occurred "when they had little to work with, they put it together and it's still standing". Brother York indicated that his calling has been impacted and inspired by these factors.

May God bless these individuals who have answered God's call and are also inspired by Founder Bishop Richard Allen and the distinguished history of the AME church.

5th Sunday Friends and Family Day

By Nedra McDaniel

This year every 5th Sunday is designated "Friends and Family Day" at St. John. The first 5th Sunday in 2016 set the tone for the year. St. John was overflowing with members, friends and family and the presence of the Holy Spirit was evident through the praise, prayers, music and the preached word. There were two special components to the service that made this such a special day.



Team Clayborn delivers message.

St. John is blessed to have the dynamic leadership of "Team Clayborn" as they each use their many spiritual gifts (including preaching, teaching, counseling, guiding, organizing, singing) to shepherd the St. John family and community. On this special 5th Sunday, "Team Clayborn" brought the Word using a form of tag/team preaching that only Pastor Clayborn and the Reverend Sheri can do. Although some members had heard the dynamic duo preach together at revivals in Huntsville, this was the first time they had done so at St. John. The message was entitled "Launching Your Faith" with biblical text from Luke 5:4. They noted that God is sometimes calling people to go back, with Jesus. The catch is still there. Key points included focus on one's own water, let down their nets and link with partners (calling for help when needed). Worshippers were encouraged to lay down their lives (which it is just the beginning) and accept God's calls to higher service. The expectation has been set for this preaching experience to be repeated (hint: every 5th Sunday).

In One Accord brought special music during this service. This group is directed by St. John's lead musician, Roberto Burton.

In addition to these two special components of the service, the St. John Praise Team and the St. John Dance Ministry participated in the worship service.



In One Accord, under the direction of Roberto Burton.

Mum is Not the Word

By Ashley Humphrey



Have you ever heard the story of Elizabeth Freeman also known as Mum Bett? If you have, good, I commend you on your historic prowess. If not, that is quite alright I will now share her story. Mum Bett was born a slave on a farm in New York state in circa 1744. At a young age she was given to her master's daughter as a wedding gift and this is how Mrs. Freeman came to live in Massachusetts.

Hannah Ashley, Elizabeth's new mistress was very strict and known to hit her slaves with heavy iron objects. In fact Mrs. Freeman is documented telling the story of Mrs. Ashley raising a heated shovel to hit another slave and Mrs. Freeman stood in between them so that she was hit and not the young slave girl. She then refused to cover up her wound as it healed, leaving it open to all who saw it evidence of the treatment she received in the Ashley Household.

Mrs. Freeman was also married during this time and gave birth to a daughter whom she named Betsy or Betty (this point differs among historians). Her husband fought in the Revolutionary War and never returned. In 1780 Elizabeth Freeman heard the recently ratified Massachusetts Constitution being read in a public square in which she heard the following phrase:

All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness. — Massachusetts Constitution, Article 1.

Upon hearing this statement Mrs. Freeman sought the counsel of Theodore Sedgwick, a young lawyer, from Sheffield, Massachusetts who had abolitionist notions. She convinced Mr. Sedgwick to take her case and sue her owners, the Ashleys, for her freedom. There was also another slave called Brom who joined in the case with Mrs. Freeman against the Ashleys.

In 1781 the case was heard in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Mr. Sedgwick argued that the Constitution provided that all men are created equal and born free. He went on to say that with this premise the conclusion must be that slavery should be illegal. With the jury ruling in favor of Mrs. Freeman and Brom, it made them the first African American slaves to file suit and win their freedom. The court also issued damages and ordered that the Ashleys give back pay. It was at this time that Mum Bett changed her name to Elizabeth Freeman. This case Brom and Bett vs. Ashley set a precedent for the state of Massachusetts in that it was effectively used to abolish slavery in said state.

Mr. Ashley asked for Mrs. Freeman to come back and work for them with wages, however she chose to work for her lawyer Mr. Sedgwick until his children were grown. After that she bought a house and moved to Stockbridge, Massachusetts. She passed away in 1829 and was buried in the Sedgwick family plot.

It is my prayer and hope that this story is as encouraging and inspiring to you as it was to me. We come from such a "great cloud of witnesses" to the fruits of perseverance in the African American community. It is also my hope and prayer that we are not just encouraged and inspired but that we be moved to action. That is what Mrs. Freeman did. She did not dream about freedom she took steps to attain it as well.

"Celebrating the Rekindled Vision: Walking in Victory by Faith"

The Ninth Episcopal District is preparing to CELEBRATE! This celebration is for the people. We want to say to you, we value your specific gifts and talents; whether it is in teaching, dancing, singing, cleaning, serving, leading, giving, organizing, speaking, writing, encouraging, or any area of your gifting. Our great God has done big things through us. And while some gifts might appear flashier or more important than others, they're all essential. The truth is, all gifts come from God. We are proud of how you have worked in unity to advance the Kingdom of God over the eight (8) glorious years with our Servant Bishop James L. Davis and Episcopal Supervisor Mother Arelis B. Davis. We want to thank you for being obedient to God's call on your lives and doing the work God has called you to do.

It's Time to Celebrate!

In preparation for celebrating Team Ninth Episcopal District, we encourage you to visit the Ninth District website (ninthamec.org) for more information.

The Plan

On April 22, 2016, the Ninth Episcopal District will host a magnificent celebratory event. We will honor clergy and lay in what we have chosen to call The Ninth Episcopal District "GOLDEN AWARDS GALA." Our theme for this festive occasion is, *"Celebrating the Rekindled Vision: Walking in Victory by Faith."*

For the first time since they have been with us, we want to pay tribute to our tireless Servant Leaders, Bishop James L. Davis and Mother Arelis B. Davis. They represent the kind of forward thinking for which the African Methodist Episcopal Church is known historically.

Hold the date: April 22, 2016!

Distinguished Preacher, Teacher, Pastor to Speak at St. John

A leadership seminar for all members of the Official Board and all persons interested in serving in a leadership position will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 3, at St. John. The presenter will be the Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr. On Friday night, the Reverend Browning will preach at a special worship service at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend.



The Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr. is the Senior Pastor of Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church of Fort Washington, Maryland. He is married to the Reverend Dr. Jo Ann Browning, Co-Pastor of Ebenezer A.M.E.

Church: Pastor Browning was called to preach in 1979, while he was a member at St. Paul A.M.E. Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

He was appointed Pastor of Ebenezer A.M.E. Church in 1983 with a membership of 17 and a budget of \$12,000. Under his leadership for the last 30 years, the church membership has grown to exceed more than 8,000 members and a budget of \$8 million, ministering to the spiritual, educational, political, social, economic, health and recreational needs of the community. Under his helm, the Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning has led Ebenezer A.M.E. Church family in donating nearly \$2 million in scholarships to high school graduates and returning college students.

The Reverend Dr. Browning, Jr. serves on several boards and has preached across the United States and in several countries in Africa.

For all of his accomplishments, what he is today, and what he ever hopes to be, the Reverend Browning gives HIS LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST ALL THE HONOR, THE GLORY AND THE PRAISE!

Voter ID Implementation Information

Submitted by Barbara Johnson

During the 2011 regular legislative session the Legislature approved House Bill 19. Governor Robert Bentley signed the bill and it was subsequently assigned Act Number 2011-673.

Beginning with the June 3, 2014 primary election, Act 2011-673 requires an Alabama voter to have a specific type of photo identification at the polls in order to vote. If a voter does not have one of the approved forms of photo ID as stated in the law, then he or she may receive a free Alabama photo voter ID from various locations including the Secretary of State's Office, local county board of registrars' offices, and a mobile location to be determined by the Secretary of State's Office.

Valid ID at the Polls.....

A voter can use any of the following forms of photo ID at the polls starting June 3, 2014:

- Valid Driver's License
- Valid Non-driver ID
- Valid Alabama Photo Voter ID
- Valid State Issued ID (Alabama or any other state)
- Valid Federal Issued ID
- Valid US Passport
- Valid Employee ID from Federal Government, State of Alabama, County Government, Municipality, Board, Authority, or other entity of this state
- Valid student or employee ID from a college or university in the State of Alabama (including postgraduate technical or professional schools)
- Valid Military ID
- Valid Tribal ID

If a voter possesses any of these forms of ID, he/she is not eligible to receive a free Alabama photo voter ID card. The voter must bring one of these photo IDs to the polls on Election Day or place a copy of the ID in absentee ballot materials.

A voter who is required to present valid photo identification but who does not do so will be allowed to vote a provisional ballot as provided for by law.

In addition, a voter who does not have a valid photo ID in his or her possession at the polls shall be permitted to vote if the individual is positively identified by two election officials as a voter on the poll list who is eligible to vote and the election officials sign a sworn affidavit so stating.

For more information, download the [Alabama Photo Voter ID Guide](http://www.alabamavoterid.com/downloads/AlabamaPhotoVoterIDGuide.pdf) (<http://www.alabamavoterid.com/downloads/AlabamaPhotoVoterIDGuide.pdf>).

Questions about the voter identification requirements may be directed to the Elections Division by email or by phone (334-242-7210, in the Montgomery area; or statewide at 1-800-274-8683 or 1-800-274-8683 FREE).



Feeding Faith in the Lenten Season

By Nedra McDaniel



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

The contemporary church observes the Lenten season with the following observances:

Penitence: Lent is a time of self-denial. This means that we must repent of our sins and the damage that they do, and deny ourselves of those items that separate us from a closer walk with God.

Teaching: As a means of growth in the knowledge of the faith, this period is used as a time of intense teaching and catechizing, as a continuation of the early Christian preparation of new converts for the Easter baptism.

Outreach: This is a time when the cross and its significance to the individual and the faith is lifted up with special witness being given to its redemptive message.

This year the focus at St. John is to refrain from negative talking and listening. The scripture is John 15. Members are asked to read this scripture and ask "What things do I need to stop saying and listening to so that His word can abide in me and I abide in Him?"

The Lenten Season began with Ash Wednesday service on February 10 where the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn served as worship leader. This service included worship through the arts of music (the St. John Praise Team) and dance (the St. John Dance Ministry). The message delivered by Pastor Clayborn was entitled "Feeding Faith" with text from Mark 5: 21-43 (with emphasis on verses 35-36). The sermon title and message continued the theme for this year at St. John, "Lean For-

(Continued on page 10)

Soup Kitchen



He Desires Mercy,
Not Sacrifice

By Charlie Brooks

"But go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy-not sacrifice' for I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Matthew 9:13

Making sacrifices in life is something many of us often misunderstand, overlook, or discount as something not worth treasuring. Making sacrifices God's way is not easy because there is nothing in life we can do without His mercy. Mercy makes our sacrifices useless. Without His mercy, we gain nothing.

When we gain nothing, we gain everything for God wants us to show mercy toward others. Consider gaining His gaze while volunteering at St. John's monthly "Soup Kitchen". Your presence, donation of time, food, and prayers are always welcomed. God knows and sees everything we do.

Making sacrifices on human ability is detectable to our Lord. God is after our hearts and not our works. No matter how many good deeds we can do, it does not earn us a ticket to heaven. The Lord Our God wants to remind us of the importance of making sacrifices, but without His mercy, we gain nothing.

"Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord; and our heart is restless until it rest in Thee"

-St. Augustine.

Weekly Prayer Time

Tuesday at Noon



Conference Call Credentials:
US Toll Number (530) 881-1212
Meeting ID: 876-863-940

Listen to the playback any time.
Playback Number (530) 881-1219
Meeting Id 876-863-940

"...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"

- Ephesians 6:18

In Memory of Brian Baldwin



St. John mourns the death of life-long member Brian Jerome Baldwin. He made his transition from labor to reward on October 29, 2015. Brian was the husband of Latosha Tajalle Baldwin and the son of Jerry and Gwendolyn Baldwin.

Brian was reared in St. John and participated in activities throughout his childhood and youth. He served in the junior usher board, was an acolyte and treasurer of the YPD. Brian was active in the Boy Scouts and earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Brian was faithful in attendance and is missed at St. John. Brother Baldwin had a strong friendship bond with the youth who grew up in St. John with him.

The St. John family continues to support his wife Latosha and his parents Jerry and Gwen as they mourn the loss of their husband and son.

Feeding Faith in the Lenten Season

By Nedra McDaniel

(Continued from page 9)

ward." Pastor Clayborn also tied the message to the church focus for Lent when he started his message by stating "Negativity drains and starves faith." He noted that the actions of the woman with the issue of blood showed that she had belief, action and a testimony. To feed faith, one must ignore the negativity and look at what God is trying to do in their lives. The key points from the message are that to feed faith one must keep in step with God, control their inner circle, touch the issue and speak to the issue. In concluding he stated that "When we feed faith, it grows, develops, matures, gets stronger and has more power."

After the message there was altar prayer followed by the imposition of ashes on the foreheads of worshipers. This dynamic spirit-filled service set the stage for a Lenten season of faith growth at St. John.

Several Online Giving Options are Available

PayPal™, Givelify and Pop Money are three options that are available to donate electronically to St. John.



You may use the PayPal Mobile App or desktop version of PayPal™ to make donations. By entering stjohnameh@aol.com in the "TO:" field. If the PayPal™ account is linked to your bank account, specify "Family and Friends" as the type of donation. This results in no fees being charged for the donation.



A recent addition to the online giving options is Givelify Mobile Giving. Install this App on your smart phone and select St. John's AME Church as the organization to which you desire to donate. For faster access for future contributions, mark St. John as your "Home Church."

Both PayPal™ and Givelify can be accessed from the St. John website, stjohnameh-hsv.org.

Most banking institutions offer the PopMoney options to customers who use their online banking feature. PopMoney transfers funds directly from one bank/bank account to another. In the PopMoney setup, specify you are sending funds to stjohnameh@aol.com. This is an excellent way to contribute if your tithe/offering is the same each month because this can be set up as a recurring transaction.

Talk to treasurer, Nedra McDaniel, if you have questions. Online giving is easy!

Moving Soon?

Be sure to inform the church office of address, telephone number and e-mail changes. Because the St. John AMEN is mailed at a bulk rate, it is not forwarded to new addresses. The postal service returns the newsletter to the church at a rate of about \$1.50 per newsletter (about four times more than it cost to send the newsletter at the bulk rate). Notifying the office in advance of moves will help to reduce this expense.



Thank you. The St. John AMEN Staff.

Church School Lesson Overview – March 2016

The lesson reviews for February were written by Brother Willie J. Sandifer, Church School Superintendent.



March 6, 2016

Lesson Title: Powerful Faith

Lesson Scripture: Mark 9:14-29

Print: Mark 9:14-29

Devotional Songs: #415, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "Straight way the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

It took a while for Jesus' disciples to fully understand who Jesus was; but the entire time the disciples were being mentored by the One for whom Israel had been waiting for centuries. Peter, James, and John were given one of the greatest privileges while they were with Jesus at the transfiguration.

This lesson takes a look at Mark 9 and gives a clearer picture of what it means to have a powerful faith. The text came at a time of several themes: the first theme was the authority that Jesus had over unclean spirits. The second theme was the disciples' failure, which led Him to challenge their lack of faith and hardened hearts, to lean on Jesus' strength in difficult times. The third theme was the faith that the outcast and needy possessed.

Believers today can grow in their faith and confidence in the Lord by identifying and claiming certain promises from the Scripture. They can reflect on God's working in their favor in the past. They can also ask a friend to pray for an increase in their faith.

March 13, 2016

Lesson Title: Simple Faith

Lesson Scripture: Mark 10:17-31

Print: Mark 10:17-31

Devotional Songs: #364, #258, and #243

Key Verse: "Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." (Mark 10:21).

As Jesus walked along the road one day in Judea, a man came running up beside Him, knelt before Him, and asked, "What shall I do

that I may inherit eternal life?" He was concerned about eternal life but had a misguided view on how it could be attained. Jesus named six of the Ten Commandments and the man confidently affirmed that he had kept those since his youth.

As Jesus continued to probe the man's heart, He said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me". Jesus spoke these words to help the man see that his wealth was His biggest barrier to eternal life. The man was more committed to his riches than to God.

March 20, 2016

Lesson Title: Struggling Faith

Lesson Scripture: Mark 14:26-31, 66-72

Print: Mark 14:26-31, 66-72

Devotional Songs: #205; #77; and #243

Key Verses: "Jesus saith unto [Peter], Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." (Mark 14:30).

The chief priests and scribes had had all they could take and were now making it their mission to figure out a way to arrest Jesus and put Him to death. The leaders knew that if they did something to Him while the crowds were gathering in Jerusalem for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, they might incite a riot; so they decided to wait until Passover was over.

This lesson examines Peter's crisis of faith that was then overcome with guilt and shame and he wept bitterly.

With the Passover meal completed, Jesus and His disciples journeyed to the Mount of Olives. While they were traveling, Jesus revealed some disturbing news about future events. Peter's reply showed his bold nature. Jesus exposed Peter's true weakness of character by disclosing that Peter would in fact deny the Lord three times. Refusing to acknowledge the truth of Jesus' prophecy, Peter passionately restated his previous claim of commitment.

As Jesus' trial was coming to an end, Peter was nearby, warming himself by a fire. An at-

(Continued on page 12)

Church School Lesson Overview – March 2016

(Continued from page 11)

tendant noticed Peter and stated to him that he was a follower of Jesus Christ. Peter immediately denied the accusation. As the rooster crowed, Peter withdrew to another location. A second attendant spotted Peter and announced publicly that he was a follower of Jesus Christ. Peter immediately denied the allegation.

The multitude then identified Peter as a follower of Jesus Christ based on his Galilean dialect. Peter denied ever having a relationship with Jesus. When Peter heard the rooster a second time, Peter immediately remembered the Lord's prophetic words, quickly departed from the multitude, and wept tears of guilt and remorse.

March 27, 2016

Lesson Title: Resurrection Faith

Lesson Scripture: Mark 16:1-8

Print: Mark 16:1-8

Tentative Devotional Songs: #424; #251; and #243

Key Verse: "[The angel] saith unto them, be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:6).

This lesson looks at the Easter account to strengthen Christian's confidence that Jesus is alive and to show why His resurrection was necessary for their salvation.

Three women who were followers of Jesus Christ made a sunrise walk to the tomb where Jesus had been buried to anoint Him with burial spices. As the women traveled, they wondered how the large stone at the entrance of the tomb would be moved away so they could enter. When the women arrived at the tomb, their concern was relieved. The stone had already been moved.

The women immediately entered the tomb and were greeted by a young man who was adorned with a white garment. The young man assured the women that they did not need to be alarmed. The young man told them that "He has risen!" He directed their attention to the place where Jesus' body had been placed. He then directed the women to leave the tomb and share the news that they had heard with Jesus' disciples and that Jesus would meet them in Galilee, just as He had previously told

them. Although they were still consumed with amazement, the women did not waste any time leaving the tomb.

Church School meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

There are classes for all ages.

Church School Book Club

February 2016

Discussion Date: February 20, 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Husband's Secret, Liane Moriarty, 2015

March 2016

Discussion Date: March 19, 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

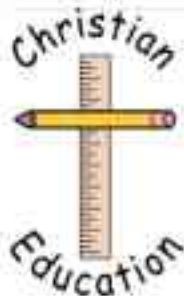
Last Temptation, Stimpson, 2010

Sensible single mother Patricia "Peaches" Miller is not about to follow in her mama's footsteps and become dependent on a man. But when she does not see eye to eye with the man she wants to marry, she knows that returning to a life of girls' nights out, retail therapy, and chocolate peanut clusters just will not do for her. Then Raphael, her son's father, steps back into the picture and clearly his attraction to Peaches is stronger than ever. There is just one problem. Raphael has already pledged his heart to another woman.

Peaches has been praying for a perfect family for a long time. Deep down she knows this cannot be God's idea of an answer—but can you blame a girl for hoping? Now, as she battles with temptation, and with her faith, she is not sure which will win. . . . — Amazon

CPR Workshop

The Caregivers, Prayer and Respite (CPR) Ministry is holding a workshop on Saturday, March 5, 2016, from 9:00 am to noon at the church. The guest speaker will be Mrs. Lydia Weeks, Director of the Alabama Care Program, Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG).





Leadership Enrichment

Join Us!

March 3
Thursday
6:30 p.m.

Church Leadership
Ministerial Staff & Licensates

March 4
Friday
10:00 a.m.
Ministerial Staff

March 4
Friday
6:30 p.m.
Worship Service
OPEN TO ALL



DR. GRAINGER BROWNING, JR.
PASTOR, EBENEZER A.M.E. CHURCH
FORT WASHINGTON, MD



SBHB District Founder's Day Food Drive

January 24 - February 28, 2016



FOCUS on the CANs

**Bring in any unexpired
canned goods or
non-perishable food items.
Donations can be dropped
off at your local church.**



not the CAN'Ts

All donations are welcome. Proceeds will benefit the
Ninth Episcopal District Food Bank.

For additional information contact Rev. Chris Walker

The Can Drive has been extended through February 28th!

Rev. Oliver Allen, Presiding Elder SBHB District

Rev. Chris Walker, Ninth District Social Action Coordinator

Servant Bishop James L. Davis, Presiding Prelate

straight to the *Heart*HEART DISEASE IS THE #1 KILLER OF WOMEN
IT SMOKE, CHOLESTEROL, & HIGH BLOOD PRESSUREHEART DISEASE
1 IN 3 DEATHS
2.6 MILLION DEATHS
RISK FACTORSAN ESTIMATED 43 MILLION WOMEN
IN THE U.S. ARE AT RISK OF HEART DISEASE

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Understanding Women and Heart Disease

Submitted by Roselyne Alines

Women Heart Disease

Heart disease is the number one killer of women. Learn how to protect yourself or someone you love.

Start healthy habits now.

Research indicates that women who lead a healthy lifestyle before the age of 50 have a better chance of avoiding heart disease and the conditions that increase the risk of it, such as diabetes and hypertension.



Don't smoke.

Cigarette smoking can increase your risk of cardiovascular disease by two to four times.

Brush your teeth.

The bacteria that grow in your mouth and cause gum disease may double your risk for a heart attack. Regular brushing and flossing can refresh your breath and improve your health.

Choose your birth control wisely.

Birth control pills can increase your risk of a heart attack and blood clots. Some types of the pill have been shown to increase the risk of blood clots by up to 50 percent over other formulas, especially in women who have a high BMI or those who smoke.



Relax.

Prolonged exposure to the stress hormone cortisol can damage your arterial linings, making it harder for your heart to do its job.



Your heart works hard. Every day it beats approximately 100,000 times and pumps around 2,000 gallons of blood. That's enough to fill about four bathtubs.



Your heart produces plenty of energy. The pumping action of your heart creates enough energy in one day to drive a truck 25 miles.



A broken heart is a real condition where high levels of stress from painful life events can cause actual chest pain, a disruption of the heart rhythm and weakness.



Women have a 75 percent greater chance of having a heart attack on a Monday than any other day of the week, particularly women under the age of 50.

Get your checkup.

Some factors that increase your risk for heart disease—including high cholesterol—have no symptoms. Get regular checkups that include a blood cholesterol test. Everyone should have their cholesterol checked annually starting at age 20.



Drink responsibly.

Drinking alcohol in moderation—particularly wine—can reduce your risk of dying from heart disease by 25 percent. For women, moderation means just one drink per day.



Have sex, but be safe.

Research suggests that people who have sex at least twice a week are less likely to develop heart disease.⁴ But proceed with caution and a condom. A recent study found a link between human papillomavirus (HPV)—a sexually transmitted infection—and heart disease.⁵

Skip the soda.

Studies have shown that women who drink two or more sugar-sweetened beverages, such as soda, per day have a higher risk of heart disease.⁶

Stay active.

Your heart needs regular workouts in order to keep it healthy, even if you have a healthy BMI. As little as 30 minutes of moderate activity per day can reduce your risk for heart disease.⁷Visit scripps.org/womenheart for more information.



Living Abundantly: Creating Healthy Boundaries

By Janette R. Smith

Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

Do you find it hard to tell people, 'no'? On the other hand are you always throwing up blocks? What does it mean to have and operate within healthy personal boundaries? Personal boundaries allow us to be in the driver's seat of our own lives. Personal boundaries are the imaginary lines we draw around ourselves to:

- Maintain balance.
- Protect bodies, minds, emotions, and time.
- Protect from the behavior or demands of others.

They provide the framework to keep us from being used or manipulated by others, and they allow us to confidently express who we are and what we want in life. Without healthy boundaries or with very weak boundaries, you simply cannot have healthy relationships.

Unhealthy boundaries manifest in various forms. In some cases you give up a part of yourself to be available or accommodating, or you become so entangled with another person and their needs (co-dependent behavior) that you lose your own identity. This undermines your integrity and leads to a loss of self-respect — and the respect of those around you.

At the root of the personal boundary issues is fear. (Is that not the root of most issues?)

It is the fear we will not be loved or that we are not good enough or deserving enough just as we are. When we respond to life from this point of emotional weakness, we are letting go of our integrity in order to salvage the crumbs of love and acceptance.

When you establish personal boundaries, you do not have to accept crumbs because you will attract people who are emotionally healthy themselves — people who respect your boundaries. People with weak personal boundaries tend to attract controlling, disrespectful, or needy people into their lives. They simply train others to take advantage of them because they so willingly allow themselves to be used.

Barrie Davenport of *Live Love Bloom* coaching shares the following signs that indicate you have not set personal boundaries:

- Saying no when you mean yes or yes when you mean no.
- Feeling guilty when you do say no.
- Acting against your integrity or values in order to please.
- Not speaking up when you have something to say.
- Adopting another person's beliefs or ideas so you are accepted.
- Not calling out someone who mistreats you.
- Accepting physical touch or sex that you do not want.
- Allowing yourself to be interrupted or distracted to accommodate another person's immediate wants or needs.
- Giving too much just to be perceived as useful.
- Becoming overly involved in someone's problems or difficulties.
- Allowing people to say things to you or in front of you that make you uncomfortable.
- Not defining and communicating your emotional needs in your closest relationships.

Take time to investigate your life and ask yourself "WHY?" Why do I do the things I do? Do I allow fear to drive my decisions? Are others more in control of my life? If so, do not beat yourself up. Understand that you were in many ways meeting a need to be significant, loved, appreciated and valued by those around you. Make a decision to see and value yourself as HE sees you. God created you to live life abundantly, and glorify Him with the works of your hands. He does NOT desire you to idolize the thoughts and opinions of others that you now allow them to manipulate and control you. Begin to spend time in God's Word and on His promises. It is only through intimacy with God that we grow confident in who He made us to be.

Next month I will share ten (10) steps to setting healthy boundaries. #BeEmpowered

March 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Noon Prayer Call Presidential Presence Primary Go Vote!	2	3 Leadership Enrichment The Rev. Dr. Grainger Browning, Guest Preacher/Presenter See the flyer on page 13 for the schedule.	4	5 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry CPR Workshop 9:00 a.m.—Noon SS Hereford Fellowship Hall
6 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship Communion AMEN DEADLINE	7 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Bd. Mtg. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	8 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. VP Choir Rehearsal Stewardess Board Mtg.	9 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	10 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	11	12 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting
13 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINING	14	15 Noon Prayer Call 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN 6:00 p.m. Trustee Bd. Mtg. VP 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
20 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship PALM SUNDAY	21 Holy Week Revival 8:30 p.m. nightly	22 Noon Prayer Call 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN	23	24 Maundy Thursday Service	25 Good Friday Service St. Philip A.M.E. Decatur, GA Church Office Closed	26 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Women's Ministry
27 8:00 a.m. Church School 9:00 a.m. Easter Program 10:30 a.m. Worship RESURRECTION SUNDAY	28 Church Office Closed	29 Noon Prayer Call	30 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	31		



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

March 3, 2016 Leadership Enrichment, The Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, 6:30 pm

March 4, 2016 Friday Night Worship, The Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, 6:30 pm

March 5, 2016 CPR Workshop, 9:00 am — 12:00 pm, Mrs. Lynda Weeks, Director of Alabama Cares Program, Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG), Guest Speaker

~~~~~ HOLY WEEK ~~~~~

March 21-23, 2016 Revival, 6:30 p.m., The Reverend Bankole Akinbinu, Revivalist

March 24, 2016 Maundy Thursday Service, 6:30 p.m.

March 25, 2016 Good Friday Service, Saint Philip AME Church, Atlanta, Georgia

*March 27, 2016 Resurrection Sunday
 Sunrise Service, 6:00 a.m.
 Easter Program, 9:00 a.m.
 Easter Morning Service, 10:50 a.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 21 Issue 3

March 2016



Holy Week Revival

Monday-Wednesday, March 21-23, 2016

6:30 p.m., nightly

The Reverend Bankole Akinbinu, Revivalist
Pastor of Baptist Grove Church, Raleigh, North Carolina

Manudy Thursday

Thursday, March 24, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday Services

Saint Philip AME Church, Atlanta, Georgia

March 25, 2016 at Noon

(Live streaming at <http://www.saintphilip.org/>)



Resurrection Day, March 27, 2016

Sunrise Service at 6:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast after Sunrise Service

Easter Program at 9:30 a.m.

Easter Worship at 10:50 a.m.

A Bicentennial Celebration of Richard Allen Founding the AME Church

By Bridget J. Floyd



Dr. James F. Miller

Sunday, February 14, 2016, marked the anniversary of the birth of Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. This is the time designated to celebrate the founding of the AME Church and this year marked the two hundredth anniversary of that historical event. St. John again had a special worship service to mark the occasion.

There was a combined worship service, held at 10 a.m. The guest preacher for the morning was the Reverend Dr. James F. Miller, senior pastor of DuPage AME Church in Lisle, Illinois. He was accompanied by his wife, the Reverend Lana Parks Miller. The order of worship had additional components such as the welcome and occasion and "heritage moments" with St. John ministerial staff and members leading the congregation in worship. St. John's pastor, Dr. Patrick Clayborn, introduced the preacher for the morning. The Gospel Choir, directed by Mr. Cleveland Wilson, provided inspirational worship through song/music, accompanied by gifted musicians.

The "heritage moments" highlighted the Bishop Richard Allen Commemorative Stamp which was available for sale and unveiled on February 2, 2016 at Mother Bethel AME Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Monica Dillihunt provided biographical information regarding Bishop Allen and the history of the AME church. Sister Roselyne Akines highlighted the AME Connection, specifically giving the history of the expansion of the AME Church into West Africa, the fourteenth district. She included her first-hand experience of growing up in that district and noting the social justice and educational components of the Church – e.g. building schools in Africa. The final heritage moment was worship through dance, "Dry Bones", with narration by Sister Sherrill Humphrey Luwoye and liturgical dance by the St. John dance ministry.

The Reverend Dr. Miller preached on the topic "The Offer is Still on the Table" from the text Malachi 3:7-10. He began by sharing an early experience in which a delayed job acceptance resulted in his concern about a missed opportunity; however, the job offer was "still on the table". In the time of Malachi, the prophet, people were not faithful although they were prosperous; hence the prompt/guide "...return to me..." The prophet's response was "Will a man rob God...I will pour you out a blessing..." The preacher noted that "we have left God in other ways", for example, prayer life, focus on electronics and technology. He noted that one response to the prompt "return" to God would be through "enthusiastic worship" and by helping those who are less fortunate.

Dr. Miller emphasized that God made the promise to the people, then and now, even though the people went away from God; God did

(Continued on page 3)



Liturgical Dancers



Dr. Monica Dillihunt



Mr. Wilson directs the Gospel Choir.

Leaders Inspired to Make a Difference

By Nedra McDaniel



Dr. Browning addresses leaders.

Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr. is the Co-pastor of Ebenezer AME Church, Fort Washington, Maryland. He and his wife, the Reverend Doctor JoAnn Browning, pastor a congregation of over 8,000 members. The church is one of the premier churches in African Methodism and embodies the five (5) practices of a fruitful congregation that are practiced at St. John. On Thursday, March 3, Dr. Browning shared leadership nuggets with St. John's leaders.

The presentation to the leaders and those persons interested in being leaders was entitled "Dare to Make a Difference." Dr. Browning centered his teaching on Exodus 3. He used the experience of the Israelites in Egypt and Moses' call to leadership to inspire those present to look at where they are, look at what God expects from them as leaders, and then to move toward making a difference

through their leadership. He provided many points to encourage leaders to do more.

Dr. Browning explained that the Egyptians did not want the Israelites to know who Joseph was. They wanted them to lose sight of who God was. When this happens, things get worse. He paralleled this to what it would be like if persons forget the role Alabama played in the past in civil rights. It is important to know this role because this helps leaders to become inspired.

The Reverend Dr. Browning used Moses as an example of how leaders are chosen by God. He emphasized that God has chosen them to be leaders and that He has been grooming them for "such a time as this." Some things that are part of the grooming process can only be done by God. Moses was getting comfortable in a place of status, but one day he took the side of the Hebrew and put the comfortable legacy in jeopardy. Dr. Browning said that because of this Moses "found out where he was and where he was supposed to be." As a result, Moses went to the wilderness. Dr. Browning indicated, "You learn more in the wilderness than in the Promised Land. This is the dark night of the soul. God will lead you through the valley of the shadow of death. Your test will be your testimony."

Using Exodus 3:1, Dr. Browning stated, "sometimes your breakthrough has to come when you do it differently." This was in reference to the words in the scripture that said Moses went "far into the wilderness," implying he went farther than he normally did. Likewise, he said, God calls leaders by name and separates them because they are different. Like with Moses, He sets believers "on fire" when He calls and consecrates them.

In concluding, he used the Gregorian calendar (this is a leap year and this is the month of March) to show how leaders should be inspired to "make a difference." In this leap year, he told the leaders that they are going to leap over things that should have killed them (kept them from being the leaders they were called to be). Instead of being "killed" they are going to be blessed. He stated that persons may feel uncomfortable. (This is expected since the individual does not have what it takes to be a leader, but God does.) Even so, Dr. Browning commanded the leaders to "march forward" and to leave greater than they came because "your rod in the wilderness has more power than the sector in the place God told you to leave."

Throughout his teaching/ministering, Dr. Browning spoke prophetic words for healing and direction as he ministered to those in attendance through the laying on of hands and prayer as he felt moved to call persons forward. He concluded with a call to the altar for prayer. Indeed the leadership of St. John received a word to empower them to leave different than they came and to make a difference through their leadership.

The Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr. Preached for "Flow Worship Service"

By Bridget Floyd



Dr. Browning delivers Friday night message.

The Reverend Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr. provided Bible-based guidance to the leaders of St John AME, Huntsville, on Thursday, March 3, 2016. This was followed by a worship service on Friday night, March 4th at 8:30 p.m. The Flow Worship Service began with prayer, led by Sister Janette Smith. Worship through song was offered by the St. John Praise Team. The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn welcomed visitors and the Liturgical Dance Ministry provided worship through dance. The Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn, introduced the preacher for the night. After the hymn "Blessed Assurance", the message was brought by the Reverend Browning, senior pastor of Ebenezer AME Church, Fort Washington, Maryland.

The message was entitled "Yes He Can" from the text Mark 2:5. The Reverend Browning reminded those present of the political mantra, "Yes We Can" from the 2008 presidential campaign of now - president Barack Obama. But he focused on the certainty and the authority of Jesus' teaching and healing, in the text, and how unique this was at that time. He noted that obstacles cannot block the "Yes He Can" mentality; that is, "He will make a way out of no way". From the text, he highlighted the determination of the persons who brought the paralyzed man to Jesus for healing – overcoming distance, the crowd of people, and finding a way to ultimately lower the man through the roof.

The Reverend Browning noted "prayer will give you the break through". He reminded attendees that the faith and prayers of others have brought them through their "paralyzed times"; for example, the death of a loved one, loss of a job/ financial difficulty, etc. The preacher for the night gave a personal example of "favor" in a travel dilemma, noting that "God will make a way even if it is not deserved". In closing, the Reverend Browning emphasized that "God can heal sick bodies, can restore and renew". He ended by exclaiming, "Yes He Can!!"

In addition to giving an inspirational message, Pastor Browning allowed the anointing to flow through him as he prayed for the pastor, executive minister, and family. The preacher for the night, reached out to attendees to offer what was labeled "The Blessing". People responded to his call and others sought out the blessing that was offered by the preacher. There was also a blessing of the St John family embracing the Clayborn family – there was indeed a "flow" of love and support. People were open to receiving and giving a blessing. There was a sweet spirit in the place.



Dr. Browning offers prayers.



Dr. Browning offers prayers.

Reflections on the 58th Grammy Awards

By Roberto Burton
(Lead Musician for St. John AME Church)



Members of "Committed" at the Grammy Awards

The 58th Grammy Awards were held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, California. The ceremony recognized the best recordings, compositions and artists of the eligibility year, which was from October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015. The "pre-telecast" ceremony, officially known as the Premiere Ceremony, in which the majority of awards were presented, was held at the nearby Microsoft Theater.

My involvement with the 58th Grammy awards was with a group that I have been managing for over eight (8) years. *Committed* is an R&B pop singing group, comprised of five educated, young men, Robert Pressley, Theron Thomas, Maurice Staple, Dennis Baptiste, Geston Pierre, who won Season 2 of the NBC hit musical competition *The Sing-Off*. The singing group released their self-titled debut album *Committed* on Epic Records which since has peaked at #3 on the *Billboard Top Heatseekers* chart, a Top 30 position on the

(Continued on page 10)

Women's History Month's Inspiring Woman: Ursula Burns

By Kendra Blard



Ursula Burns serves as Chairman and CEO of Xerox. She is the first African American woman to serve as the head of a Fortune 500 company. She is also the first woman to succeed another woman as head of

a Fortune 500 company.

Ursula Burns was reared by a single mother in New York City, New York. Her mother was a Panamanian immigrant who worked many jobs to take care of her family. Burns attended Cathedral High School and excelled in reading, writing, and math. She received a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from New York University Polytechnic School of Engineering. Ursula received a master's of science degree a year later in Mechanical Engineering from Columbia University.

In 1980, Burns received a summer internship with Xerox. She attended graduate school and worked hard during her internship. Once she completed her degree, Ursula Burns was offered a permanent position with the company. She worked her way from a college intern to CEO in the course of 29 years. Ursula Burns is a testament to hard work not going unnoticed.

Ursula Burns is very involved in the community. She serves on numerous professional and community boards. She is a founding board director of Change the Equation, which places emphasis on improving the U.S.'s education system in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Ursula Burns is a phenomenal woman. She has dedicated her life toward being a lifelong learner and giving back to the community through non-profit organizations and educational advancement programs. Burns leads by example and loves to collaborate with others. She has made a career out of loving what she does. She once said, "Find something that you love to do, and find a place that you really like to do it in. I found something I loved to do. Your work has to be compelling. You spend a lot of time doing it."



Habitat for Humanity

2016 SPRING BUILD SCHEDULE

2409 Garden Park
Huntsville, Alabama 35810

DATES	DAYS	TASKS
Mar. 1, 3, 5	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Deliver walls to site and erect Straighten, brace and sheath walls Mark wall top plates for trusses
Mar. 8, 10, 12	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Roof by subcontractor, (we will do interior work on days sub are not working and when they have the roof decked.)
Mar. 15, 17, 19	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Install hurricane clips, install house wrap, install windows and ext. doors, install fascia, roof bracing and dead wood
Mar. 22, 24, 26	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Start vinyl siding, plumbing & electrical rough-in by Others)
Mar. 29, 31, Apr. 2	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Caulk openings, install wall insulation, continue vinyl siding
Apr. 5, 7, 9	Tue., Thur., Sat.	(Sheetrock by others) Continue vinyl siding
Apr. 12, 14, 16	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Paint interior walls, clean floor, paint base board, doors and trim
Apr. 19, 21, 23	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Install vinyl floor tile, sheet vinyl
Apr. 26, 28, 30	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Install interior doors, baseboard, window trim, cabinets
May 3, 5, 7	Tue., Thur., Sat.	(Plumbing & electrical fixtures by others) Install door hardware, door stops, closet shelving, window blinds
May 10, 12, 14	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Landscape, touch up paint, clean & wax floors, work punch list
May 17, 19, 21	Tue., Thur., Sat.	Catch-up

Volunteers will work from 8:00 to 1:00 each day without a lunch break.

In Memory Of
Mr. Waylon Tyrae Sims

By Rufus Gilmore, III



There is an Old Danish proverb which states "What you are is God's gift to you; what you do with yourself is your gift to God".

LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered, and that my life is fleeing away. - Psalm 39:4

I am here on earth for just a little while. - Psalm 119:19

Waylon, a native of Mt. Vernon, Alabama and a resident of Huntsville, Alabama transitioned into eternal rest on Saturday, January 16, 2016 at Huntsville Hospital. Waylon was born February 1, 1962 to Mrs. Willard Sims and was a Beacon of Light to all who knew him in every capacity.

Waylon was baptized as an infant at Little Zion AME Church. Always active and devoted, he participated in many church conferences and Christian Education activities. Waylon attended Citronelle High School and excelled in many areas. Honor's Band was one of his favorite activities and being selected a Presidential Scholar, earning a trip to Washington D.C.

Upon moving to Huntsville, Alabama, Waylon joined St. John A.M.E. Church under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Homer L. McCall. Shortly after Waylon joined St. John, members of the Male Chorus approached him and asked him to become a member of the choir. Waylon's love for music and becoming a member of the Male Chorus was a natural fit. His love for music goes back to his high school days where he played the saxophone and he was a member of the Tuskegee University Crimson Pipers Marching Band.

Waylon was a faithful member of the Male Chorus. Waylon enjoyed the time spent in preparing the music for performance and the singing of praises to God in worship. On campus he would always inquire about the status of the Male Chorus and what songs were practiced if he missed a rehearsal.

Waylon always looked forward to our time of fellowship. The Male Chorus would regularly meet at the various homes of our members for

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A Bicentennial Celebration of Richard Allen Founding the AME Church

By Bridget J. Floyd

(Continued from page 2)

not leave them. He indicated that many people in the Bible strayed but returned to God; that is, found that "the offer was still on the table". He cited numerous biblical examples and emphasized coming/returning as you are, not waiting, because "you will find the offer is still on the table". He exclaimed, "Come back to Him!!"

Pastor Clayborn led the congregation in singing "Love Lifted Me" and extended the invitation to Christian discipleship, emphasizing "come back... God is right there". He followed this with prayer and the speaker led the Doxology and offered the benediction.

This special and historic day was celebrated by the St. John family and visitors. This was the actual birthdate of Bishop Allen. We are thankful for the rich heritage of the historic AME Church.



AME Proud

50th Quadrennial
Session of the
General Conference
of the AME Church
July 8-13, 2016

What is the General Conference?

The General Conference is the supreme body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is composed of the Bishops, as ex-officio presidents, according to the rank of election, and an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates, elected by each of the Annual Conferences and the Lay Electoral Colleges of the Annual Conferences. Other ex-officio members are: the General Officers, College Presidents, Deans/Presidents of Theological Seminaries; Chaplains in the Regular Armed Forces of the U.S.A. The General Conference meets quadrennially (every four years), but may have extra sessions in certain emergencies.

9TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT OF
THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Celebrating the Rekindled Vision:
"WALKING IN VICTORY BY FAITH"

"Featuring the Golden Awards Gala"
CELEBRATORY EVENT HONORING CLERGY AND LAY



JAMES L. DAVIS, SERVANT BISHOP
ARELLIS B. DAVIS, WMS SUPERVISOR

"Golden Awards Gala"
FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2016

6:00 - 7:30PM - PRE-GALA RECEPTION
7:30PM - GALA CELEBRATION

DANIEL PAYNE COMMUNITY PLAZA
1500 DANIEL PAYNE DRIVE
BIRMINGHAM, AL

ATTIRE: *Formal Black Tie Affair*

9TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
MID-WINTER CONFERENCE
(TEACHING, PREACHING, BUSINESS AND MINISTRY REPORTS)

APRIL 21 - 23, 2016

DANIEL PAYNE COMMUNITY PLAZA
1500 DANIEL PAYNE DRIVE
BIRMINGHAM, AL

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT 205-306-6400

St. John members are encouraged to support this event. Transportation will be provided to the Golden Awards Gala. Contact any Steward regarding expressions of love to the Bishop and Mother Davis.

"It Is Not Fair"

By Paulette Bargon

"It's not fair, sis got a bigger scoop of ice cream!" From the time we were very young until the present, we are constantly comparing ourselves to others. We usually do not do it on purpose but sub-consciously. We may not admit it. He is more handsome, she is smaller, we have the same job description but he gets paid more, her car is better than mine. We might say to ourselves, my home is bigger, I am the best president that ministry ever had, or I am the most talented singer in the choir.

When we think we do not measure up to others, envy and jealousy take root. "My pot luck casserole was fine until she brought hers." When comparison is in our favor, pride and arrogance can trap us. "He would be able to pray better if he read the bible as much as I do."

Sometimes we delight in the misfortune of others. That is the ugliest comparison of all. "Yah, you heard about her son who got in all that trouble. You know the one she is so proud of." There is no win in comparison; it brings envy, jealousy, pride and arrogance. It leads us to make unwise decisions. It strains our friendship with gossip and strife. It can also infect our spiritual lives and divide the church.

Remember, if you are so busy being jealous (envying) of someone else's blessings you may miss the perfect blessing God has planned for you. And when comparison makes you feel less favorable than others remember God has always called you His masterpiece.

Now there is a solution to overcoming the problem of comparison. It is Gratitude! Thanking God works, no matter what side of comparison you are on. Gratitude can shift your focus on all the blessings you have. Thanking God puts you in the humble position to use those gifts well.

No matter what, there will always be someone with more or less than you. There will be someone to envy and someone to envy you. Don't keep pace, keep peace. Choose to be grateful for what God has given you. He does not ask you to change what you have. He asks you to use what He has given you.

Decide today to stop playing the game of comparison; it is a game we cannot win. We must

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Soup Kitchen

By Charlsie Brooks

EASTER BLESSINGS

'He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet He never said a word. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shears, He did not open His mouth.' Isaiah 53:7

Dear Man of Sorrows,
as we follow You on your journey to the Cross,
we are overcome by awe and humility
at the unfathomable love you have for us.
Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha—Your love
is revealed all over,
we confess in humility that we have nothing to
offer

to pay for a love so great,
no gift or equivalent worthy of Your love
you were willing to be crucified so that the to-
ken of this deed
would force people through all centuries
to kneel at the foot of the cross
and be broken at this realization of your love.
May this Easter time bring love in our hearts
that reaches deeper than sentiment,
a love that seeks to know Your will and do it.
Grant that the remembrance of Your cross will
inspire us anew
to accept the challenge of sin,
and to triumph in Your name.
In the name of our crucified Savior,

Amen

Weekly Prayer Time

Tuesdays at Noon

Conference Call Credentials:
US Toll Number (530) 881-1212
Meeting ID: 876-863-940

Listen to the playback any time.
Playback Number (530) 881-1219
Meeting Id 876-863-940

"...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"
- Ephesians 6:18



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

Whether it be at home, at work or traveling in the car, people find a need to connect to the Internet. They often use a smartphone or tablet to do so. Nowadays, they can use a smartwatch to connect to the Internet or send text messages.

A first glance, comparing the features of a smartwatch to a smartphone may be confusing. A huge benefit is having the ability to receive notifications on the smartwatch. Messages can be viewed directly from the smartwatch versus having to pull out the smart phone, unlock it, and view messages. This feature of the smartwatch saves time and provides a simple means to view messages.

Often, people find themselves in meetings where they have to constantly check their phone, which can be a sign of rudeness in a meeting. The smartwatch allows one to handle answering calls in a different way. Calls can be declined or accepted directly from a smartwatch. By accepting the phone call, one can activate the phone's speaker and microphone for conversation. This can be a big help when driving, working around the house, or simply busy where one cannot reach their phone.

The battery life is an issue with a smartphone. By using a smartwatch, one can lengthen the battery life of their smartphone by reducing the amount of time the smartphone screen is active for small tasks such as messaging and answering calls. Because the smartwatch can connect to the Internet, it can make traveling through airport security easier because passengers can have their boarding pass visible on their smartwatch. This allows them to keep their smartphone stowed during the security process.

The Apple Watch, HTC One, Samsung Gear, Pebble Time and the LG Gizmo Gadget are great smartwatches. Of course there are several others, but the watches listed are some of the most commonly used.

After all, people are always looking for ways to provide simplicity in their daily routines. With its many benefits and features, a smartwatch can be a great tool to provide simplicity.

Reflections on the 58th Grammy Awards

By Roberto Burton
(Lead Musician for St. John AME Church)

(Continued from page 5)

Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart, and an impressive debut on the *US Billboard 200* chart. Their album garnered them a 2012 NAACP Image Award nomination for *Outstanding New Artist of the Year*.

In August of 2014, Committed recorded their second album called "Home for Christmas." Three songs, "The Chipmunk Song," "Nativity Medley," and "Do You Hear What I Hear," were submitted for consideration for the 58th Grammy's. As a producer, I assisted in over 51% of the production and recording of this project. On December 7, 2015 at 7:17 am, I found out that the song, "Do You Hear What I Hear," arranged by Armand Hutton of Nashville, Tennessee was nominated for category 62, Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Capella, Field 21.

The group traveled to Los Angeles on February 12, 2016. The group's agenda allowed for time to perform at several venues in the Los Angeles area. They performed at Kansas Avenue Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church in Riverside, California, Mt. Rubidoux SDA Church and The Soiree in North Hollywood.

Monday was The Reveal Ceremony. At the Reveal Ceremony at the Staples Center downtown Los Angeles, Committed learned that our Sing-off friends, Pentatonix, won their 2nd Grammy for category 62, Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Capella, Field 21. At that point I had to ask all the members in Committed if they were ok. They were emotionally involved, but they did not win. About two (2) minutes later, they all said, "Ok, let's eat." That told me they were over the loss and were already planning for next year.

The Grammy experience is something I will treasure for the rest of my life because now, no matter what happens, myself, Armand Hutton and Committed are "Grammy Nominated."

Be blessed and, be a blessing to someone else.

Caregiver's Prayer and Respite (CPR) Ministry Holds Spring Workshop

Submitted by Barbara Johnson

Looking for resources as a caregiver just got easier. St. John's Caregiver's Prayer and Respite Ministry held its spring workshop on Saturday, March 5th. This was the third workshop and another is scheduled for the Fall.



Workshop Presenters

The presenters for this workshop were all representatives of TARC OG, Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments. The TARC OG office is located in Huntsville at 5075 Research Drive. Topics covered ranged from services provided to the community through TARC OG, and fraud protection for seniors. St. John's own Mrs. Donna Gullatte, presented an excellent session on stress relief for caregivers.

What is TARC OG?

Established in 1968, TARC OG aims to identify and address common regional issues, opportunities, and challenges of northeast Alabama's municipalities and counties. The services are in three program areas; Aging, Economic Development, and Planning. For our purposes, our focus was mainly on Aging.

Session One

What's In it for Me? Area Agency on Aging

Mrs. Lydia Weeks, Director of Alabama Cares Program shared the following services for seniors which are available through TARC OG.

Transportation - TARC OG helps to fund senior transport in each of the region's five counties.

In-home services - Services include housekeeping assistance, personal and telephone visits, home-delivered meals, and respite care.

Nutrition - meals are provided for the elderly at 33 nutrition centers in the region. The AAA also provides home-delivered meals to the home-bound elderly.

Legal - TARC OG has an attorney on staff to provide people over 60 with legal services which include advocacy, counseling, and assistance with simple wills, and powers of attorney.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman - TARC OG's Ombudsman investigates and helps to resolve complaints for residents of long-term care facilities.

Medication Assistance - Through Senior Rx, staff is available to assist low-income area seniors apply for free medications directly from the pharmaceutical companies.

Alabama Cares - There are a growing number of caregivers who are struggling to keep family members living at home, but who need assistance to do so. Alabama Cares provides limited respite care, counseling, and help building wheelchair ramps where needed.

These are just a few of the services which are provided through TARC OG. For additional information, please contact:

Mrs. Lydia Weeks, Director, Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Alabama Cares, TARC OG.....256-716-2455.....Lydia.weeks@tar cog us

Session Two

How to Protect Yourself against Medicare FraudSenior Medicare Patrol (SMP)

SMP's work at the grassroots level with people directly affected by Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse.

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Caregiver's Prayer and Respite (CPR) Ministry Holds Spring Workshop

Submitted by Barbara Johnson

(Continued from page 11)

Mrs. Kathy Jodoin, State Health Insurance Coordinator, shared the following tips to help seniors as well as others avoid becoming a victim of medical fraud.

- Do not give out your Medicare # over the phone
- Medicare will NEVER call for your Medicare #
- The number on your Medicare Card is your or your spouse's social security number and should be protected at all times.
- Review your medical billing statements for services or supplies that were not provided.
- Review your statements for unsolicited supplies to beneficiaries.
- Be cautious regarding the prescribing or providing of excessive or unnecessary tests and services.
- Be cautious of persons requesting Medicare numbers at an educational presentation or in an unsolicited phone call.
- Detect potential problems/fraud by:
 - keeping records of doctors' visits, tests received, equipment received.
 - reading those Medicare Summary Notices (MSNs) for accuracy.
 - asking questions of your provider or Medicare plan

For help in detecting and/or reporting an incident of Medicare fraud, or for a Medicare question, contact Mrs. Kathy Jodoin, State Health Insurance Coordinator,

TARCOG Areas Agency on Aging.....256-716-2462.....Kathy.jodoin@tarcoq.us

Session Three

Stress Management for Caregivers

Mrs. Donna Gullatte, Urban Regional Extension Agent, Alabama Cooperative Extension System engaged the audience in several activities to recognize and reduce stress. To reduce stress in our lives, we first have to acknowledge it and recognize the symptoms, then identify strategies to minimize the effects of stress and ultimately manage it effectively.

Symptoms of Stress

Fatigue, irritability, over eating, illnesses, impatience, excessive worry, sleeplessness

Strategies to Minimize Stress

Avoidance.....avoid unnecessary stress
Alter the situation
Adapt to the stressor (adjust your attitude)
Accept the things you cannot change
Adopt a healthy lifestyle

Ways to Manage Stress

Listen to music	Talk to a friend	Play an instrument
Take a walk	Breathe	Get more sleep
Try to laugh about it	Take a hot shower/bath	Exercise
Meditate	Try Yoga	Pray

For additional resources to help manage stress, contact
Mrs. Donna Gullatte, Urban Regional Extension Agent
Alabama Cooperative Extension System...256-541-3580
Donnagullatte.ext@aoes.edu



Just Say "No": Setting Personal Boundaries

By Janette R. Smith

Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

Last month I wrote on setting personal boundaries. Personal boundaries are the imaginary lines we draw around ourselves to maintain balance; protect our bodies, minds, emotions, and time; and protect us from the behavior or demands of others. They provide the framework to keep us from being used or manipulated by others, and they allow us to confidently express who we are, what we want in life, and stay on the path God has for us.

I shared the challenges many face when it comes to setting healthy boundaries and promised that this month I would share the "how." For persons who are normally accommodating and compliant, setting and implementing boundaries may feel threatening and unnatural at first. But as you begin to stand up for yourself and your boundaries, you will feel increasingly empowered and confident.

1. **Mind Shift** Begin with the mind shift that having personal boundaries is OK. It does not mean you are selfish or unloving. It is both completely acceptable and absolutely necessary for healthy relationships. Understand that self-worth comes from defining life as you want it to be.

2. **Define** Think about how you have been allowing others to take advantage of you and how you might be accepting situations that are really unacceptable to you. Make a list of things that people may no longer do or say to you. Decide how you need physical and emotional space. Define values, belief system, and outlook on life so you have a clear picture of who you are and how you want to live.

3. **Communicate** Sit down with the people involved in crossing your personal boundaries and kindly communicate your mind shift. Let them know you have spent some time thinking about what is important and acceptable to you and what is not. Let them know how they have crossed your boundaries in the past, and ask them to respect and support your new boundaries.

4. **Expect** Expect that this conversation will feel uncomfortable and difficult, especially if you are a pleaser. There may be some defensiveness and push-back from those involved. That is OK. They will get used to your new boundaries over time. Be aware that some people in your life may fall away as a result of your outlook and demand for respect. But these are not people you want in your life anyway. You will find you attract new, supportive, and healthy-minded people in your life. Whatever you do, do not compromise your values, integrity, and self-respect simply to keep someone in your life. Your soul cannot sustain that.

5. **Reinforce** It may take some time to train yourself and others around your new boundaries. Continue to reinforce them so that you are taken seriously and respected. Practice saying no when you are asked to do something you do not want to do. Create a plan for times when someone crosses your boundaries. Let them know what they are doing. Ask them to stop immediately. Walk away from any push-back or negative comments without acquiescing or getting angry. Over time, you and the other person will realize you are serious.

6. **Reward** Be sure to acknowledge and reward those who are supporting and respecting your personal boundaries. Thank them and let them know the positive impact it has had on your life. This will motivate them to continue their behavior.

7. **Reciprocate** Remember that respecting boundaries goes two ways. Examine your own behavior and words to see where you might be crossing another person's boundaries. Work to change those behaviors so that you are reflecting the respect and support you want for yourself.

8. **Stay Flexible** There is a difference between healthy boundaries and rigid boundaries. You do not want to be a controlling or dictatorial person. The goal is a healthy relationship with those close to you, balanced by a sense of understanding, mutual support, and give-and-take. There may be occasions when you choose to bend your boundaries or allow someone to cross the line.

(Continued on page 14)

"It Is Not Fair"

By Paulette Bargon

(Continued from page 9)

not dwell on the failure of faith but celebrate the success of faith. Lean forward and think positive.

No matter what happens, always be thankful, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. 1Thessalonians 5:18

Reference: The Comparison Trap by Sandra Stanley

Celebrating Mrs. Lois Clayborn



The St John family extends prayers for Pastor Patrick Clayborn, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, Mr. John Clayborn, and family. May the love of your church family and the comfort of the Father keep you during this season.

We celebrate with you the life of Mrs. Lois Clayborn. Thank God for the lives she touched and the love she spread to all who crossed her path.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'they will rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.'"

- Revelation 14:3

In Memory Of Mr. Waylon Tyrae Sims

By Rufus Gilmore

(Continued from page 7)

fellowship and fun. This was a time for family and friends to come together to bond in our relationship as brothers. Waylon's smile was an intricate part of his total persona. I cannot ever remember seeing him without that loving smile.

Waylon was a dedicated member of the Sons of Allen and participated in many of their projects.

Waylon Sims will be missed by the Male Chorus, Sons of Allen, and the St. John family.

Just Say "No": Setting Personal Boundaries

(Continued from page 13)

When someone is hurt or sad, needs extra support, asks for an exception with respect and kindness — these are times to show flexibility and love. As you gain confidence around your boundaries, you will know when and how to bend them.

9. Be Patient: If you have had weak personal boundaries for years, this change does not happen overnight. Disengaging from the emotions and beliefs that led to weak boundaries requires practice, and sometimes it requires the support of a counselor. Begin to recognize and challenge the limiting beliefs that undermine your practice of setting boundaries. Try to require that boundaries are respected even when you feel unsure or uncomfortable.

10. Believe Believe in yourself and your value as a unique individual who is worthy of love and respect. Trust instincts and feelings about what you do and do not want in life. No one knows better than you who you are and what you desire. Practice self-confidence and self-love until it feels natural. Setting and requiring boundaries is a great way to practice this.

When you define and implement personal boundaries, fear diminishes significantly. You will feel more empowered and self-confident because you are communicating your self-worth to those around you. The more you practice holding fast to your boundaries, the more love, respect, and support you will find in your life.

I hope you have found this helpful. Share your comments and suggestions at janette@janettesmith.com #BeEmpowered

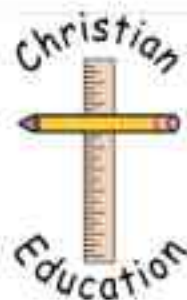
Easter Program Rehearsals

Saturday, March 19
Children's Choir Rehearsal at 10 am
Easter Program Rehearsal at 11 am

Saturday, March 26
Easter Program Rehearsal at 10 am
Easter Egg Hunt immediately following rehearsal



Church School Lesson Overview – April 2016



The lesson reviews for April were written by Brother Willie J. Sandifer, Church School Superintendent.

April 3, 2016

Lesson Title: Renewed Health

Lesson Scripture: Luke 7:1-10

Print: Luke 7:1-10

Devotional Songs: #283, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith'" (Luke 7:9).

Jesus was returning to Capernaum after having finished what is called the Sermon on the Mount. The centurion was very compassionate toward his servant as shown by his reaching out to elders of the Jewish community and Jesus. He requested that Jesus come and heal his servant.

Up to this point, Jesus' ministry consisted of only Jews. As mediators between the two cultures, the Jewish elders approached Jesus to have access to Jesus' healing power. This healing power possibly was talked about among Roman government officials after the Roman official's son was healed earlier in Jesus' ministry. The elders were successful in appealing to Jesus to grant the request of the centurion. The elders were careful to vouch for the centurion's credibility as a friendly Gentile.

April 10, 2016

Lesson Title: A Reversal of Shame

Lesson Scripture: Luke 7:36-50

Print: Luke 7:36-50

Devotional Songs: #364, #258, and #243

Key Verse: "I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." (Luke 7:47).

Because the woman in this lesson was known to be a sinner, her path would not have crossed with Simon's. The woman was not an invited guest in Simon's house. She came to the dinner party because she knew Jesus was invited and she obviously believed He would not reject either her presence or her desire to touch Jesus as she worshipped Him.

Simon used this occasion as an opportunity to closely watch Jesus in a social setting to evaluate His behavior and gauge His worthiness to be a prophet and to find more things to use to discredit His ministry.

Jesus did not rebuke or lecture Simon. He used a parable which allowed Simon to see his own sin. The equalizer in the parable is sin. Through the use of indebtedness the parable placed Simon on the same level as the woman as both of them were sinners, indebted, and in need of forgiveness.

April 17, 2016

Lesson Title: A Sound Mind

Lesson Scripture: Luke 8:26-39

Print: Luke 8:26-36

Devotional Songs: #412; #77; and #243

Key Verses: "People came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind" (Luke 8:35).

The things in this lesson unfold as Jesus was getting the disciples ready to go on a healing and preaching mission all by themselves. Jesus let the disciples observe Him demonstrate power and authority over nature when He calmed a storm, demonstrated power over diseases, and demonstrated power over death. Among those things, Jesus also showed that He had power over the spirit world. He healed the man in this lesson from demon possession and restored him to a sound mind.

The disciples, who were amazed by Jesus' power and authority, had asked the question "who is this" before. The man answered their question by telling them that he "fell down before Jesus and shouted at the top of his voice, what have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God"

April 24, 2016

Lesson Title: A Family Reunion

Lesson Scripture: Luke 15:11-32

Print: Luke 15:11-24

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525; #251; and #243

Key Verse: "This son of mine was dead and is

(Continued on page 16)

Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 15)

alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate" (Luke 15:24).

Jesus used three parables: 1) The Parable of the Lost Sheep, 2) The Parable of the Lost Coin, and 3) The Parable of the Prodigal Son, which is highlighted in this lesson.

In the latter the younger son rebelled and asked for his share of his father's estate. His father complied. The son squandered his inheritance by living extravagantly. The son's humiliation forced him to reflect on the consequences of his rebellion and subsequent living as well as how he had dishonored God and his father.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law criticized Jesus for welcoming sinners and eating with them. Each of the parables highlighted Jesus' purpose, which He declared was not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Church School Book Club

March Discussion Date: March 19, 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Last Temptation, Stimpson, 2010

April Discussion Date: April 18, 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Some Love, Some Pain, Sometime, J. California Cooper, 1996

In *Some Love, Some Pain, Sometime*, Cooper's characteristic themes of romance, heartbreak, struggle and faith resonate. We meet Darlin, a self-proclaimed femme fatale who uses her wiles to try to find a husband; MLee, whose life seems to be coming to an end at the age of forty until she decides to set out and see if she can make a new life for herself; Kissy and Buddy, both trying and failing to find them until they finally meet each other; and Aberdeen, whose daughter Uniqua shows her how to educate herself and move up in the world.

These characters and others offer inspiration, laughter, instruction and pure enjoyment in what is one of J. California Cooper's finest story collections. – Amazon



Texting Teen News!

By Mariah L. Gullatte

Texting Teen News: YPD

Well I guess you're wondering...what happened to the little people, or not so little if you ask me! The youth at St. John have been busy, in and outside of the church! At St. John, children and young adults are involved: serving, leading, and building. You can find us in the choir and pulpit. We are the next generation of the AME church. It is good to know that children are never too young to serve.

During the month of February, the YPD held a meeting to fellowship and to welcome the new YPD Director, Jason Gilmore! 2016 will be a busy year; filled with service and growth!

Also, the Missionary Society Area Meeting was held in Guntersville, Alabama. The YPD met with Area Director Rebecca Buggs to discuss the upcoming events of the YPD. Dates and events are to be announced at the YPD Meeting.

As young people participate in a variety of clubs, groups, and organizations, it is important to remember the purpose for why we volunteer our service, time, and talent. Young people have the power to do great things- no age limit attached. It is of high importance that people of all ages remember that message.

And until next time...TTYL (Talk To You Later)!

St. John Contributed to Food Pantry



During the month of February, St. John members donated generously to the Food Pantry at Daniel Payne Community Plaza. This Food Pantry is a Ninth District project and will provide food to those in need throughout the state of Alabama. Thank you, St. John, for your contributions.

More information will be provided on this ministry at a later time.



April 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
3 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Communion AMEN DEADLINE	4 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	5 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Mtg. Steward Board Mtg.	6 Initial sermon 6:00 p.m.	7 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	8	9 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting
10 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	11 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	12 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Thurs. Bd. Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	13 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	14 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	15 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	16 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
17 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	18	19 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. BOY'S KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	Ninth District Mid-Winter Meeting Daniel Payne Community Plaza			23 Golden Awards Gala 6:00 pm
24 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	25 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	26 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. BOY'S KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	27 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	28 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	29	30 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry



St. John AME Church
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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

~~~~~ HOLY WEEK ~~~~~

March 21-23, 2016 Revival, 6:30 p.m., The Reverend Bankole Akinbinu, Revivalist

March 24, 2016 Maundy Thursday Service, 6:30 p.m.

*March 25, 2016 Good Friday Service, Saint Philip AME Church,
 Atlanta, Georgia*

*March 27, 2016 Resurrection Sunday
 Sunrise Service, 6:00 a.m.
 Easter Program, 9:30 a.m.
 Easter Morning Service, 10:50 a.m.*

April 9, 2016 South Birmingham-Huntsville-Bessemer District Conference

*April 20-23, 2016 Ninth District Mid-Winter Meeting, Daniel Payne Community Plaza
 Golden Awards Gala April 22 at 6 pm*

*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 21 Issue 4

April 2016



He is
RISEN
Matt 28:6
I know MY
Redeemer
LIVES
Job 19:25

Inside this Issue

At the Cross Easter Program

St. John celebrated Easter with a special Easter Program at 9:30 on Easter Morning

Pages 2-3

Holy Week Revival

The Reverend Barkole Akinbini was the Revivalist for the Annual Holy Week Revival

Pages 4-5

Habitat Build Continues

See the build schedule and a picture of the house on page 6.

Golden Awards Gala

Do not miss this special awards and appreciation service. See page 7 for more details.

Mundy Thursday and Good Friday Observed

Read about these special services on page 9.

May Church School Lesson Reviews

Prepare for Church School with lesson reviews on pages 15-16

May Calendar of Events Page 17

At the Cross on Easter Sunday Morning

By Lydia Owens



The Easter program opened with an Easter Prayer by Little Miss Jessica Harbin. The opening song was from the Children's Choir "You are Good," with soloist Channing Wilson. Kaitlyn McClung inspired those present with an original poem entitled "The Covenant."



A special effects video introduced the play "He is Risen." The narrators, Josiah Gullatte and Morgan Owens, set the scene as the crowd anxiously awaited Jesus. This would be the final time Jesus walked the dusty road toward Jerusalem. His years of preaching

and teaching would now culminate. As the crowd cheered, Jesus shed tears; not for himself, but for

those He loved. The crowd shouted: "Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the King of Israel. Hosanna! Hosanna!"

Sharon Hicks calmed the crowd with a solo "For God So Loved the World!" and Kathryn Buckham-White fearlessly ministered in dance to "In the Name of the Lord!"

As Jesus and the merchants entered the temple, He was upset by what He saw: The selling of doves and cheating in the temple of God. The doves were being offered to the crowd at a cheap price and they were selling fast. Jesus quickly ordered the merchants out. Seeing Jerusalem like this, all He could do was weep. As the merchants exited, the Chief Priests and the Pharisees became more determined to get rid of Jesus and His teachings.

We were reminded of God's love for us by the dynamic duo - Isaiah and Caylon Mayes - John 3:16. Afterwards the Children's Choir sang "Jesus Loves Me."

As Peter and John were making arrangements to celebrate the Last Supper, Judas was meeting with the Chief Priests agreeing to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. Mark 14:22-25 was recited by Kennedy Crutcher. After the Last Supper and prayer the Children's Choir sang a hymn "Near the Cross," led by Zaria York. After which Jesus and His disciples left the Garden of Gethsemane alone. Jesus prayed and His disci-



At the Cross on Easter Sunday Morning

By Lydia Owens



man and release Barabbas! (Luke 23:18). "But they shouted out, 'Crucify Him!' 'Crucify Him!'" (Luke 23:21). He was spat on and beaten. He was led away and people followed Him, including His mother Mary and Mary Magdalene. With all that was going on, Jesus turned and said "Weep not for Me, but for your families. (Luke 23:28)"

The Children's Choir sang "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord" and Kristina Jefferson ministered in mime to "Better" by Jessica Reedy.

(Continued from page 2)

ples fell asleep. From that moment on Jesus knew He would be alone. Afterwards Brother Reginald Pearson sang "I Thank God for the Blood."

Once Jesus was arrested and led out of the garden, His disciples were nowhere in sight..... Peter dropped his head and wept. Jesus was handed over to Pilate who



found no fault in Him. He was then sent to Herod who questioned Him; however, Jesus said nothing. He was sent back to Pilate who seemed to release Him, BUT the crowd began to cry out "Away with this

The Easter Program ended with the Grand Finale; the Youth / Young Adult ministered in dance to Matthew 28. All of the participants did an outstanding job! Those present seemed to enjoy every minute of the program. A special shout out to Little Miss Joya Clayborn, who managed to keep her composure as she gracefully, exited the stage with her arms folded without assistance from P2.

The Reverend Akinbinu Preached for the Holy Week Revival

By Bridget Floyd



St John AME held its Holy Week Revival with the return of the Reverend Bankole Akinbinu, pastor of Baptist Grove Church, Raleigh, North Carolina. Each time this gifted preacher has come to St John he has inspired the congregants with sermons which truly seemed to be God-inspired. His biographical in-

formation highlighted his embrace of Philippians 1:6, "He that hath begun a good work in you is faithful to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ". The Reverend Akinbinu earned the master of divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey. He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at Duke University Divinity School.

The nightly revival services were held Monday, March 21st through Wednesday, March 23rd at 6:30 p.m. The revival theme was "Lean Forward!" Executive Minister Sheri Smith Clayborn led the worship service each night. Music was provided by St. John's Mass Choir on Monday night; Hope Community Church Praise Team on Tuesday night; and In One Accord (IOA) on Wednesday night. On Tuesday and Wednesday nights prayer was led by Elder Willie Diggs of Beacon Hill Worship Center, Madison, Alabama. The St. John Praise Team offered selections each night.

On Monday night the Reverend Akinbinu preached on the topic "Growing in Your Perspective of What is Possible", from the text Joshua 17:14-18. He began by proposing that there are self-imposed limitations

which are based on "natural limitations", however "what God has for you goes beyond natural boundaries". He proceeded to list examples of expansions made possible by the power given by God through the Holy Spirit. In the text, the tribes of Joseph complained/negotiated for a larger portion of land in that their size/number was too great for the limited land given. The evangelist noted that it was made plain to them that their vision was limited; that is, they did not consider the forest areas that, with considerable work, would indeed give them the expansion for which they lobbied. He urged those present to not be limited by what others tell them they cannot do. Rather, they are to "trust God to give you strength to look, search, think *beyond boundaries* ... God's vision includes uncharted territory". Doing so may result in some adversity and leaving one's comfort zone (for example, in the text having to clear the forest so that the land might be inhabited). He noted that in the text Joshua indicated that rather than having a "hand out", the people must work for the land. The Reverend Akinbinu cautioned that as in the text, one must not expect a hand out from the God who can and will provide manna, make a way out of no way – it will be necessary to not wait for "a heavenly hand out". He indicated that "to whom much is given, much is required". Additionally he encouraged that when facing opposition or discouragement, to remember that *"Even if the opposition is big, my God is bigger...God can...Think beyond what you can see...If God can raise Jesus, He can help you cross over the boundaries!"*

This inspiring and encouraging message was well-received by those present. It resulted in several coming forward in response to the call from the evangelist and one who chose to step out to become a part of St. John/accept the call to discipleship.

The Reverend Akinbinu preached on the topic "Faith to Bring the Burdened to Jesus" from the text Mark 2:1 – 12. He used this familiar text to focus on the faith and unselfishness of the men who brought the paralyzed

(Continued on page 3)

The Reverend Akinbinu Preached for the Holy Week Revival

By Bridget Floyd



(Continued from page 4)

man to Jesus. He highlighted that Jesus taught with authority and as such their unselfish faith was activated so that they strove to make their way to Jesus in spite of the crowd. He indicated that prayers should be about others and one should not become self-absorbed. The preacher explored other reasons for being on a mat besides paralysis; for example, depression, feeling unfulfilled, stress, addiction, shame, abuse, and family discord. He emphasized that "the Church is about community and must have unselfish faith. He indicated that "There is no mat that the Messiah cannot deliver you from". He also indicated that being "in the house" or in the church does not guarantee faith; noting that in the text, the Scribes had problems with Jesus' authority (i.e. "only God can forgive sins"). He indicated that "we can be in the same house as Jesus but not believe". The men in the text believed but realized that they had to take the man to Jesus. He questioned the congregants, "Are you willing to go beyond belief... exert the energy to bring someone before Jesus?" He noted that the men took an unconventional path and asked those present would they also take an unconventional path to bring/accept those who may not fit the traditional mold of believers/church membership. He even speculated that variation from the church's traditional order of worship might present problems for some. He asked, "Are you willing to take the roof off so that some people might be saved?" [Referring to the men making a hole in the roof and lowering the paralytic into the room where



Jesus was located] He closed by emphasizing that "Salvation is more important than preserving the status quo. If you have the faith, God's got the power!!!"

On Wednesday night, the Reverend Akinbinu preached from II Samuel 6: 12-23 on the topic of "Unrestrained Praise". He began by posing the query of whether anyone has felt restrained by an unwritten code of conduct. He noted "there are all kinds of ways to worship God – quiet communion, giving of time and talent, singing songs, serving sacrificially", to name a few. He indicated that "the worship that causes the most offense is mentioned in the Bible the most". He cited several scriptural examples. He described this in terms of "It is about making some noise, some demonstration". He cited examples of African American slaves engaged in a circle of worship called the "ring shout" which remained a form of worship in the South. He indicated that with social and economic progress there was "more refinement and less free worship". He went on to say, "If you don't have it [The Holy Spirit], you don't get it".

The Reverend Akinbinu noted that in the text, David began to praise; that is, dancing and praising God by "twirling around in circles before the Lord". He indicated that Michal, daughter of Saul, wife of David, criticized him in his free praise (noting that she was the "president of the 'it don't take all that' committee". While her view was that David's behavior was not be-

(Continued on page 10)



Habitat for Humanity

2016 SPRING BUILD SCHEDULE

2409 Garden Park
Huntsville, Alabama 35810



<u>DATES</u>	<u>DAYS</u>	<u>TASKS</u>
Apr. 12, 14, 16	Tue, Thur., Sat.	Paint interior walls, clean floor, paint base board, doors and trim
Apr. 19, 21, 23	Tue, Thur., Sat.	Install vinyl floor tile, sheet vinyl
Apr. 26, 28, 30	Tue, Thur., Sat.	Install interior doors, baseboard, window trim, cabinets
May 3, 5, 7	Tue, Thur., Sat.	(Plumbing & electrical fixtures by others) Install door hardware, door stops, closet shelving, window blinds
May 10, 12, 14	Tue, Thur., Sat.	Landscape, touch up paint, clean & wax floors, work punch list
May 17, 19, 21	Tue, Thur., Sat.	Catch-up

Volunteers will work from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm each day without a lunch break. St. John members are urged to participate in this annual service project as often as their schedule allows.

9TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT OF
THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Celebrating the Rekindled Vision:

"WALKING IN VICTORY BY FAITH"

"Featuring the Golden Awards Gala"

CELEBRATORY EVENT HONORING CLERGY AND LAY



JAMES L. DAVIS, SERVANT BISHOP
ARELIS B. DAVIS, WMS SUPERVISOR

"Golden Awards Gala"

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2016

6:00 - 7:30PM - PRE-GALA RECEPTION
7:30PM - GALA CELEBRATION

DANIEL PAYNE COMMUNITY PLAZA
1500 DANIEL PAYNE DRIVE
BIRMINGHAM, AL

ATTIRE: *Formal Black Tie Affair*

9TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

TEACHING, PREACHING, BUSINESS AND MINISTRY REPORTS!

APRIL 21 - 23, 2016

DANIEL PAYNE COMMUNITY PLAZA
1500 DANIEL PAYNE DRIVE
BIRMINGHAM, AL

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT 205-326-4400

St. John members are encouraged to support this event. Contact the church office for more information.

Call on Jesus Not the Psychic Network

By Paulette Bargon

Someone asked me if I had been to a psychic. I laughed and answered with a resounding NO! I do not believe in psychics. They seemed offended and answered that I should try it out and I might be surprised at what they tell me about myself. So after thinking about it for two (2) seconds, this was my reply.

Feel stuck? Is something troubling you but you just cannot think of a solution? Do you need direction? Is something weighing heavy on your mind? Are you upset because you just cannot find that perfect mate? We can expect that in some point in our lives we will hit some turbulence. Storms in our lives can make us feel off course and unsure of our direction. We wonder, "How am I going to make it through this?"

There is one simple solution, get on your knees and talk to Jesus. He is the real connection. If you just listen, He will give you hope and direction. He will help you with things that are weighing heavy on your mind. He will help your stress level go down. He can heal your pain and sickness. Do you have a problem at work, call on Jesus! He will have an answer for you. The answer may not be what you want to hear, but if you listen and obey you will succeed. Jesus knows your future before you even thought to ask someone else about it. He knows exactly where we are, where we are headed and how fierce the storm is.

Jeremiah 1:5 says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart". There are verses in the Bible that condemn spirits, mediums, and psychics: Leviticus 19:31, Leviticus 20:6 and Acts 16:16-19 are a few. Take time to read them.

Even if you think it is harmless fun, remember the devil is a liar; nothing from darkness is good. Do not let him ease his way into your life. Forget about that psychic. Go to Jesus instead. Psychics cost you a dollar a minute. Jesus has already paid the price for you.

*Direction comes when we seek God's will first.
- Proverbs 3:6*



Soup Kitchen

By Charlene Binkley

Called to Serve

"Even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28)

Jesus taught the circle of disciples that the most important person in the kingdom of God would be the one who serves others. He put leadership as a priority for those who loved Him. A true leader has the heart of a servant. Believers should follow the example Jesus set for them and serve.

There is an old story of a bed-ridden boy who spent his days in the slums of a big city. Like a caged animal, he was confined by the four walls of his small room with just one window. No sunlight ever came through the window. Both parents worked during the day and his only companion was gloomy silence without a glimmer of sunlight.

But God! His inventive friend noticed that on a cloudless day, the sun shone on the wall opposite the tiny room for an hour or two. He took a cracked mirror and every sunny day, as long as the ray of sunshine shone on the wall, he stood in it with his mirror, and reflected the sunlight onto his friend's bed. He brought sunshine and joy into a young life robbed of all warmth.

The soup kitchen ministry invites readers to join them on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month to assist in St. John's Soup Kitchen Ministry. Help to shine the light to others.

*Keep me from thinking I am better than others, dear
Lord, so that I
may play an important role in your kingdom. Give me a
servant's heart. Amen*

Maundy Thursday – Foot Washing Day at St. John

By Paula Ellard



Maundy Thursday, also known as "Holy Thursday," is the Thursday before Good Friday (the Friday before Easter). Maundy Thursday is the name given to the day on which Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples, known as the Last Supper. These two important events are the motivation of Maundy Thursday. First,

Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with His disciples and thereby instituted the Lord's Supper, also called Communion. Second, Jesus washed the disciples' feet as an act of humility and service, thereby setting an example that believers should love and serve one another in humility. Some churches observe a foot-washing ceremony on Maundy Thursday to commemorate Jesus' washing the feet of the disciples. Doing a foot-washing in remembrance of how Christ humbled Himself and washed the feet of the disciples is a powerful reminder of how believers are to live a Christian life. Observing Maundy Thursday is a way that truly honors



what happened at the Last Supper.

On Thursday, March

24th at 6:30pm, St John AME celebrated Maundy Thursday with a simple, yet powerful service led by the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn. The congregation sang hymns, had scripture reading, enjoyed a beautiful performance by the Dance Ministry, and a remarkable solo by Sister Janette Smith. The Foot Washing ceremony was performed by the ministers and stewards. This service provided a blessed observance and reminder of what Holy Week is all about.

St. John Worships at Saint Philip on Good Friday

By Nedra McDaniel



St. John observed Good Friday on March 25 at Saint Philip AME Church in Atlanta where the Reverend William D. Watley, Ph.D. is the senior pastor. This annual service of the "Seven Last Words" is a service of song and preaching. The sermons use texts from the seven last words (sayings) of Jesus on the cross. Pastor Clay-

born has been invited to preach during this service since 2012.

The first sermon was from the word "Father Forgive Them; For They Know Not What They Do," with the host pastor, the Reverend Dr. Watley, preaching. Dr. Cynthia Hale, the senior pastor of Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, Georgia, preached the second word, "Today You Shall Be with Me in Paradise."

Pastor Clayborn preached the third word, "Woman, Behold Your Son! Son, Behold Your Mother!" His title was "When Hope Dies" with text from John 19:26. He emphasized that hope must be anchored in the Word of God and that this is done by introducing hope to faith. He connected the experience of Mary at the foot of the cross with his mother (who transitioned to heaven just two weeks before this service) in posing

(Continued on page 10)

The Reverend Akinbinu Preached for the Holy Week Revival

By Bridget Floyd

(Continued from page 3)

coming of a king. David emphasized that she was (and others were) not his audience, but rather God was his audience of worship. The preacher for the night suggested that congregants contemplate what the Lord thinks about their praise. He warned, "Don't quench the Holy Spirit" in an effort to not offend anybody.

In the text, David contemplated that God "chose me when nobody else knew me" and reminded his wife of the times when God had given him victory over Goliath, escape from Saul, etc. David kept sight of being "chosen" by God. The preacher encouraged those at St. John to realize what God has done and to praise God. He emphasized the significance of Holy Week and the culmination of the same, with Jesus overcoming death through the power of God: *"Early Sunday morning, He got up with all power in His hand"*. He ended by stating that *"I'll give Him all glory, the honor and praise!!"*

He then invited persons who wanted to modify their worship to a more demonstrative/outwardly crying out and dancing about, to come to the front and be guided by those who had already reached this enhanced level of worship. The pairings began to demonstrate their praise and worship.

In One Accord (IOA) in a most melodious fashion, softly, and then reached a crescendo, as they sang "Holy Spirit fall down on me". The Presence was felt. Pastor Clayborn gave the benediction on this final night of Holy Week Revival.

St. John Worships at Saint Philip on Good Friday

By Nedra McDaniel

(Continued from page 9)

the question, "What do you do when your hope dies?" His answer was "Stay with your hope and do not miss the living." He spoke of how his family focused on life, and not death, when the doctors said his mother did not have much longer to live. He noted that Hope still works when dying, hope will leave you in good hands and hope cannot be broken.

The fourth word, "My God, My God Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?" was preached by the Reverend Mashod Evans, Sr., senior pastor of St. John AME Church in Birmingham, Alabama. The text was Matthew 27:45 and his sermon was entitled "Things that Go Thump in the Night." The fifth word was "I Thirst." This sermon was preached by the Reverend Eric Lee, senior pastor of Springfield Baptist Church in Conyers, Georgia. The sermon was entitled "Let Me Clear My Throat" and the text was John 19:28-29. "It Is Finished" from John 19:30 was the sixth word. This sermon was preached by the Reverend Charles Maxell, senior pastor of The Breakthrough Fellowship of Smyrna, Georgia. The seventh, and final word, was "Father Into Thy Hands I Commend My Spirit." The preacher was Dr. Kerwin Lee, senior pastor of Berean Christian Church in Stone Mountain, Georgia. This message was entitled "Why Did Jesus Put It in God's Hand?" and the text was Luke 23:46.

Some St. John members traveled to Atlanta for this great service while others watched the streaming of the service over the internet.

This service of remembrance of Jesus' suffering on the cross to pay the ultimate sacrifice for all sinners was a refreshing reminder of Christ's love for His people and how grateful they should be for the price that He paid. Although the same "words" are preached year after year, there is always a new perspective, a new challenge and a new hope for believers who walk in the path that was laid by Jesus. This service set the tone for a glorious celebration on Resurrection Sunday.

Health Corner

TEENS and SEXLet's Talk

Submitted by Rosemary Wells, R.N.

God created human beings as male and female,
both in His own image. (Genesis 1:27).



Sex is a wonderful blessing, given by the Lord, that serves to express intimacy to another. The sexual union is God ordained and God given and must be experienced in a godly way within marriage. The sexual relation is only properly ex-

pressed in marriage between a husband and wife (1 Corinthian 7:2-3). Sexuality is to remain pure. The marriage bed must not violate commandments of God in deed or thought - no adultery, no pornography, no voyeurism, no bestiality, incest, etc. In this, the sexual union can bring glory to God as it is experienced in fulfillment of God's design and purpose to provide pleasure, companionship, intimacy and a means of fulfilling the commands of God to fill the Earth.

"Research shows that teens are more sexually active before marriage than parents think." By the time they are 19, seven out of 10 teens have had sex. Two thousand teens get pregnant in the United States every day. Sexually active teenagers have very high rates of sexually transmitted diseases and are more likely to grapple with depression."¹

Parents really can make a difference! They can TALK and LISTEN to their children, build strong relationships with them, and also set clear expectations and boundaries for them. These are proven ways they can help prevent teenage pregnancy, reduce teens' chances of getting STDs and help ensure that they lead healthy and rewarding lives.

Although teaching abstinence is a great choice for some, it is not the only tool proactive parents need in

their kits. To do due diligence in arming teens for this rocky terrain, they will have to do something typically reserved for your best bud: **Talk about SEX!**

Bringing up the subject about the "S" word (sex) with young people can be very difficult. S. Tia Brown, LMSW (a Professional Love Coach) has written "A Parent's Guide" with suggestions to help guide parents through this awkward phase in their lives and their child's life. Brown says that candid talks about responsible intercourse will help guard a minor's health and heart—and your sanity!



A Parent's Guide: Teaching Healthy Sexual Attitudes (Without Encouraging Sex) by Age... S. Tia Brown, LMSW

AGES 13-15

- *Do not leave Minors Home Alone After School.* Organized activities—sports, social clubs and adult chaperoned meet ups—are a key way to keep your teen occupied and supervised. Idled minds lead to not-so-idled bodies.
- *Do talk about body images and self-respect.* Hormonal changes are a regular occurrence once puberty kicks in. It is crucial that youngsters learn how to love, value and protect the skin they're in, which includes embracing who they see in the mirror and cultivating regular grooming rituals.
- *Do revisit the Birds and the Bees.* Make sure your child has a clear understanding of what constitutes sexual activity, including oral sex. Share why you are advocating abstinence at this time and be open to answering questions.

(Continued on page 12)

Health Corner

TEENS and SEXLet's Talk

Submitted by Rosemary Wells, R.N.

(Continued from page 11)

Repeat often and as necessary!

It is important that your child be told about "the Birds and the Bees" by YOU (their parents) rather than ANY-ONE else (including their BFF's)!!

AGES 16-17

- **Do not Assume Your Child Will Disclose All.** Consider that adults often have a hard time dealing with the connection between intimate acts and physical or emotional consequences, so imagine how tough it is for young people. To some minors certain topics are awkward to broach and your teen may feel comfortable talking with someone (grandparents, Aunt, Uncle) other than their parents, whom they trust. Keeping the line of communication open is very important.
- **Do Discuss STDs:** Have frank discussions about the importance of sexual protection and all the options available, preventing disease as well as un-wanted pregnancies. It can take only one time of unprotected sex to contract an STD or to become pregnant. STDs are more than just embarrassment. They are a serious health problem. If untreated, some STDs can cause permanent damage, such as infertility (the inability to have a baby) and even death (in the case of HIV/AIDS).
- **Do Address Feelings.** Puppy love should not be dismissed as meaningless; teens can have deep romantic sentiments. Be transparent with your child about how physical intimacy can impact the intensity of emotions for both parties.

AGES 18-19

- **Do Talk About the Future.** Encourage your older teen to share his or her professional and familial goals. Stress how impulsive or irresponsible decisions can negatively impact long-term outcomes.
- **Do Open up About Your Own Choices.** Be candid about some of your experiences, both good and

bad, and their repercussions. Show that everyone has to go through this phase. Be open to some questions about your regrets and what you did correctly. Be there for your child if they do slip and make a mistake, let them know that they can always come to you for support and guidance. Remember no one is perfect.



ALL AGES

Do Pay Attention. If you believe your child is depressed, pregnant or has an STD, enlist the assistance of a medical professional. Don't let shame or denial stop you from reaching out for support.

*Sexuality is one of God's good gifts and the source of much human happiness
...when used appropriately.*

*Talk....Talk....Talk....and Talk Some More to Your
Teen about **SEX!!***

The Problem: Anything The Answer: Gratitude

By Jaquette R. Smith

Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach



*Giving thanks always for all things to
God and the Father in the name of our
Lord Jesus Christ.*

- Ephesians 5:20

How easy is it to praise, worship, and thank God even 'in' the middle of hard times? Tough, right? Yet, 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (KJV) says, "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Do we give God thanks for the bombing in Paris or when we hear a young unarmed person is shot down by police? What about the cancer diagnosis we received or the news of the passing of someone we love very much. No, it would be unimaginable to even our dear Heavenly Father to think we could thank Him FOR those things. What He does ask is that if we will keep our eye on Him IN the

midst of those things, the strength of God, protection and covering of God is activated and we are then able to make it through. IN everything give thanks...not FOR everything give thanks.

Here is more about the importance of gratitude written by Joshua Becker, the father of four living in Peoria, Arizona. He, his wife and children are just a typical middle-class family... minus the dog and physical possessions. After a conversation with their neighbor on Memorial Day 2008, they decided to become minimalist and intentionally live with fewer possessions. They have a very new perspective on gratitude. If discontent is the cause of many of our unhealthy habits, contentment is the cure. If contentment is the cure, gratitude is the pathway to it. Enjoy!

Maybe The Only Thing We Really Need is More Gratitude

Written by Joshua Becker

Gratitude provides proper understanding of our place in the world. Gratitude is the feeling and expression of thankfulness for the actions of others that are costly to them and beneficial to us. **By definition, gratitude requires humility.** It requires us to admit we have been the recipient of something we did not deserve. And it calls us to admit there are no entirely self-made men or women.

Gratitude assigns worth to those who rightly deserve it. Whether I am thanking a parent, a spouse, a veteran, a teacher, a policeman, or a mentor who has invested into my life, my response of gratitude to their action gives the praise and worth to those who rightly deserve it.

Gratitude directs attention to what we already have. Gratitude always requires our attention to be focused on the good things we already possess. It calls us to notice our blessings and take greater appreciation of them. As a result, our eyes are turned away from the things that are fostering the discontent in our hearts.

Gratitude improves our overall well-being. Scientific studies over and over again confirm what we already know to be true: Grateful people are happier people. Grateful people routinely report increased well-being, better health, healthier lifestyles, increased optimism, and a more positive outlook on life. Additionally, those who display a high level of gratitude are much more likely to have below-average levels of materialism.¹

Gratitude is not a result of our circumstances. I have lived my entire life inside the United States, but have led numerous groups of people to third-world countries. I can attest first-hand that gratitude is not a result of circumstances. I have met grateful people in some of the poorest neighborhoods in our world and I have met grateful people in some of the richest neighborhoods in our country. I have also met ungrateful people in both.

¹ Taken from http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/mrmccullough/Papers/gratitude_materialism.pdf, April 2018.

50 Days of Easter

Understanding the Eastertide Season

The EASTERTIDE SEASON consists of Easter Sunday and the six subsequent Sundays which are designated as "Sundays after Easter." The last Sunday is called Ascension Sunday. It is the 50 days from Easter to Pentecost.

Easter is the oldest of the Christian festivals and the basis from which the entire church year originated. On the first day of the week Jesus arose from the dead. This proclamation is the apex of Christianity for its believers. Each Sunday thereafter was celebrated as a "little Easter." The resurrection observance on the first day of the week caused the day of worship for Christians to be changed from the Sabbath, which is Saturday, to Sunday which became known as "the Lord's Day."

The early church called Easter, Pascha, a word derived from Hebrew which means "Passover." The name, Easter, comes from the Anglo-Saxon goddess of Spring, East-er, whose festival coincided with the Spring equinox. Easter is considered to be the "Queen of Christian Feasts," therefore, Christians should feel joy, life, newness, hope and victory during this great season.

The liturgical color for the Eastertide season is white which expresses celebration, festivity, joy and victory. Gold may be used as an alternate color for Easter Sunday to express the special prominence of the greatest day of the church year.

Eastertide Resources:

- The four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles as they relate to the resurrection and ascension narratives.
- The New Testament Letters and Epistles revealing the influence of Christ in the life and work of the church.



Weekly Prayer Time

Tuesdays at Noon

Conference Call Credentials:

US Toll Number (530) 881-1212

Meeting ID: 876-863-940

Listen to the playback any time.

Playback Number (530) 881-1219

Meeting Id 876-863-940

"...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints," - Ephesians 6:18

Go Green

In preparation for the warm weather in late spring and summer, remember to tune the air conditioner system.

- Replace air filters. The standard recommendation is once a month. Clogged filters cause poor air circulation and cause the air conditioner to work harder.
- Hire a professional to give the air conditioner system a thorough cleaning and performance check before you begin to use the unit for the warm weather.

Online Giving Options

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AME Proud

On April 8, 2016, Bishop John Richard Bryant, Senior Bishop of the AME Church, announced that the Council of Bishops decided to ordain Jarena Lee posthumously during the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference in July 2016. Jarena Lee was the first woman authorized to preach by Bishop Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1819. Because of the laws of the church at that time, she was not ordained. Despite the blessing she received from Bishop Allen, she continued to face hostility to her ministry because she was black and a woman.

#AMEPROUD

Church School Lesson Overview – May 2016

The lesson reviews were written by Brother Kenneth Parham.

May 1, 2016

Lesson Title: Increased Faith

Lesson Scripture: Luke 17:1-10

Print: Luke 17:1-10

Devotional Songs: #321, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "Be on your guard! If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive" (Luke 17:3).

Upon reflecting on this lesson, the reader notes that it appears that Jesus is in a teaching moment. He takes the opportunity to speak on the relationships between faith and repentance as well as between faith and service.

On repentance, Jesus indicated that, yes, believers may stumble in their faith but it will be better if one dies, than allow one's actions or teachings to cause an innocent one to stumble in their faith. But if there is repentance, forgiveness must be granted. This forgiveness must occur each time a wrongdoer offers repentance.

It is noted in this lesson that the disciples inquired about an increased faith to deal with the issue of repentance. Jesus replied by indicating that they had all the faith that was required and that what the disciples were lacking was their commitment to service. Jesus then took the opportunity to illustrate a true commitment to service by giving an example of a servant who came from working in the field all day, and even though the servant may be exhausted, he must be willingly energized to take care of the master's household and the master's needs.

Jesus' illustration pointed not to a desire for increased faith, but to a need for unselfishness in service.

May 8, 2016

Lesson Title: Grateful Faith

Lesson Scripture: Luke 17:11-19

Print: Luke 17:15

Devotional Songs: #424, #258, and #243

Key Verse: "Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice." Luke 7:47.

This lesson highlights the importance of having a grateful or thankful spirit. The story of the interaction of the ten lepers and Jesus is noted. These ten lepers were aware of their lot in life and they also knew and believed in Jesus, the healer. Jesus indicated to the ten that they were to go and present themselves to the priest. As they traveled, they were healed.

It was noted that only one leper thought enough of his old and new circumstances, to stop and say thank you to Jesus. Jesus' response was, "Were not ten made clean? But where are the other nine?"

The lesson scripture indicates that the ten lepers had faith to believe that Jesus could deliver them from their predicament, but what differed from the one who took time to stop and give thanks to Jesus was a sense of gratitude. Sometimes in dealing with daily issues, individuals forget how to either stay humble or take for granted the blessings they have been given. Based on that time in history and the nationality of the nine that expected a healing, they may have been in a rush to get acclimated back into the Jewish community. The nine may have been thankful, but they lacked the self awareness that their healing experience may have not been complete.

The identity of the one who offered thanks was identified as being a foreigner. It may be postulated that as a foreigner (a Samaritan), he may have been overwhelmed that Jesus showed him mercy and the Samaritan's gratitude or grateful faith played a part in his complete healing. The Life Study Bible commentary indicates that God does not demand that we thank Him, but he is pleased when we do so, and that He uses our responsiveness in either a positively or negatively encounter to teach us more about himself.

May 15, 2016

Lesson Title: Humble Faith

Lesson Scripture: Luke 18:9-14

(Continued on page 16)

Church School Lesson Overview – May 2016

(Continued from page 13)

Print: Luke 18:9-14

Devotional Songs: #412; #77; and #243

Key Verses: "The tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'" (Luke 8:35).

In reading the Life Study Bible commentary and the preamble to the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:1-8), it is noted that the custom of the Pharisees (Jesus called hypocrites) was to stand out in the public streets and pray aloud stating how good they were and had been living in comparison to other sinners. It is noted that the Pharisees practiced this custom in order to be seen and to gain praises of man. Jesus, in Matthew 6, indicated that these men have already received their reward.

But in this lesson, Jesus indicated that believers should be most like the tax collector who took on the persona of being unworthy to be near anyone (a characteristic trait of being humble). We should pray in secret and God, who sees in secret, shall reward openly.

May 22, 2016

Lesson Title: Childlike Faith

Lesson Scripture: Luke 18:15-17; Mark 10:13-16

Print: Luke 18:15-17; Mark 10:16

Tentative Devotional Songs: #549; #25; and #243

Key Verse: "Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it" (Luke 18:17).

Background information noted that during this time period, it was customary for mothers to bring their children to a rabbi for a blessing and that is why the children were gathered about Jesus. It was also noted in the Quarterly that the disciples thought of the children as unwanted interruptions since the status of the children during this time period was practically nonexistent. However, Jesus, through His love for the children, elevated the children's status by discussing the "childlike faith" of children with the disciples.

The child-like quality that is really being discussed is

the pure heart. Infants arrive on earth without a blemish on the soul. It is the worldly influences that shape prejudices toward or against various concepts. Even in exploring the concept of faith, one sees where a childlike faith is required. Matthew 5:6 reminds readers that only the pure of heart shall see God.

May 29, 2016

Lesson Title: Joyous Faith

Lesson Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

Print: Luke 19:1-10

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525; #215; and #243

Key Verse: "The Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

In Luke 18, Jesus indicated to His disciples that His time was near and that He must go to Jerusalem in order that the scriptures be fulfilled (His impending arrest, death on the cross and His resurrection). While on the road near Jericho, Jesus healed a blind man and the crowd was so overwhelmed that they followed Jesus on His journey.

Here in this lesson, Luke 19, the story of Zaccheus' encounter with Jesus is told. Because of the crowd, Zaccheus climbed a tree to see Jesus. The tree was also used as a tool of isolation (a tax collector was the most despised member of the Jewish community). It was noted that Jesus saw him, called Zaccheus by name, and asked that he come down from the tree so that Jesus could go home with Zaccheus and have supper. It is noted that Zaccheus asked forgiveness for anyone that he had wronged. Jesus immediately forgave Zaccheus and gave Zaccheus salvation. Those in the crowd did not like this exchange and wondered why Jesus would visit the home of a sinner.

In this lesson, and the previous three, it was noted that Jesus went out of His way to converse with the outcasts (those having no class status, low class status and even sinners), bestowing His love on them and changing their lives forever; bringing joy, hope and salvation to those who were considered unworthy.

May 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:00 am Worship 9:45 am. Church School 10:00 am Worship Communion	2 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	3 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Mtg. Steward Board Mtg.	4 6:00 p.m. Quarterly Conference	5 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	6	7 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
8 8:00 am Worship 9:45 am. Church School 10:00 am Worship Mother's Day	9	10 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	11 6:00 p.m. Men & Women's Bible Study	12 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	13 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	14 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMBI Staff Meeting
15 8:00 am Worship 10:00 am Worship 11:30 am Witnessing PENTECOST	16	17 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Trustee Bd. Mtg. VIP Choir Rehearsal	18 6:00 p.m. Men & Women's Bible Study	19	20 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	21 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
22 8:45 am Worship 10:00 am Worship WMs Day	23	24 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	25 6:00 p.m. Men & Women's Bible Study	26	27	28 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
29 5th Sunday 8:45 am. Church School 10:00 am Worship	30	31 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal				

PRAYER for the MONTH - Heavenly Father, thank you for your mercies and Your faithfulness. You have been so good to us. As long as we live, we will give You praise and thanksgiving. Help us to boldly tell of your goodness and share the message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. In His name, we pray. Amen

Scripture for the Month—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," (1 Peter 1:3)



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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

April 20-23, 2016 Ninth District Mid-Winter Meeting, Daniel Payne Community Plaza
Golden Awards Gala April 22 at 6 pm

May 4, 2016 Quarterly Conference, 6:00 pm,
Presiding Elder Oliver Allen, presiding

May 8, 2016 Happy Mother's Day

May 15, 2016 Pentecost Sunday
Ninth District Pentecost Scattered
Worship at 8:00 am and 10:00 am. Witnessing at 11:30 am

May 22, 2016 Womens Missionary Society Day, 10:00 am Service
Mother Arelis Davis, Guest Speaker

July 6-13, 2016 AME Church General Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*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 21 Issue 5

May 2016

Mother's Day and AAMU Founder's Day Worship



New Beginnings

By Charles Brooks

On Wednesday, April 6, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. St. John experienced "A New Beginning for Jason Solomon Gilmore." Yes, Jason a life-long active AME, reared in the cradle of the AME Church began a new walk in his service to God. Jason accepted a call to the ministry to preach the Lord's Gospel. The service included the call to worship, prayer, scripture and beautiful praise and worship led by the Praise Ministry. Pastor Clayborn introduced Jason, stating that God will rain down power and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost and that the church was gathered as God leads anew this young man's life. He stated that he was happy to present Jason to deliver his Initial Sermon. The Reverend Clayborn asked persons to pray for Jason as they welcomed the Holy Spirit as He spoke through Jason.



Jason thanked God, as well as Pastor Clayborn, the Reverend Sheri Clayborn, his family and friends for their support. Jason's text was from John 5:15 and the sermon was entitled "That Ain't No Welcome Mat!" This familiar text, Jason explained, was not the first time Jesus performed a miracle. He reminded worshippers that in the previous chapter, Jesus met the woman at the well. Jason said the man had come every day and suggested "this was probably his daily field trip." He speculated that he may have even lived there. The lame man shared his story of why he had been prevented from being healed. "We do this as well," he continued. Jesus did not ask the question to just get information that He already knew. Jason paused and stressed that "we too have familiar stories—for misery loves company." This sufferer had a MAT - "A Welcome Mat". He had no wheelchair or no health devices for assistance. Jason reminded those in attendance that people have mats at worship as well as work. When Jesus told the man to pick up his mat—he was healed (no water, no stirring was needed.)



Pastor Clayborn,
Brother Jason Gilmore and
Presiding Elder Allen

Jason then shared his personal "Mat" story. On August 2007, while attending service (not worship), he along with his dear friend sat in the balcony, for they had found their mats. The pastor, Dr. McCall, called them out. Their thoughts were on getting their lunch money, but this Sunday, they heard the Lord ask if they wanted to be healed. After that point they put away their mats and began service. Jason concluded: 1) We need to listen to Jesus, 2) We must suggest to others that we need help, 3) We can hear the voice of the Lord Himself say—"No welcome mat, you are needed for your service." After the invitation to Christian discipleship, Pastor Clayborn introduced Jason's family and friends, and closed with the Benediction.

A Church Conference was held immediately after the service and the church voted to support the ministry of Brother Gilmore. During the business session of the Third Quarterly Conference, Presiding Elder Oliver Allen, Jr. issued a license to preach to Brother Jason Gilmore.

Words of Wisdom "From Mother to Daughter"

By Lydia Owens



Esperance Nomel and
Roselyne Akines

"Don't hang around the wrong crowd because their influence can lead you on the wrong path."

- Roselyne Akines



Tami McGhee and
Ann Glover

My mother, Ann Glover, has always been the most positive role model in my life, and she has always led by example. Following is some of the most valuable advice she has given me:

- (1) Always treat people kindly, even when they have not been kind to you.
- (2) When making life decisions, listen to what others have to say, but do what you feel is best for you, after seeking guidance from God.

- Tami McGhee



Charisie Brooks and
Ann Daniels

My dear mother was the greatest role model I know. She set a shining example of fortitude and persistence for my sister, me, her YPders and all who knew her. Her motto was: God's gifts should never be taken for granted, "Prepare and Pursue as you Grow and Glow for Christ!"

- Charisie Brooks



Lenora Ash and Lydia Owens
(circa 1974)

My mother has always been my biggest supporter, even when I (being the last child) was being "non-traditional". She has always encouraged me to be my own person. One situation stands out.... I asked her advice before making a decision that was NOT at all popular in the 90s and her response was: "It's your decision to make, even though I wouldn't do it; you're not me, you're you!"

- Lydia Owens

Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church

MAY 22, 2016

10:00 A.M.

ONE SERVICE



Special Guest Speaker

MOTHER ARELIS DAVIS

A Celebration of Women!



Join us!
AS WE
CELEBRATE
WOMEN IN SERVICE

Ninth District Celebrates Eight Years with "The Golden Awards Gala"

By Nedra McDaniel



On the evening of Friday, April 22, 2016, the Ninth Episcopal District celebrated eight wonderful years under the leadership of Servant Bishop James L. and Mother Arelis B. Davis. The "Golden Awards Gala" was held at the Ninth District owned Daniel Payne Community Plaza, which is one of the most celebrated accomplishments of the past eight years. The walkways, entrances, corridors, cafeteria and auditorium were beautifully decorated and set the atmosphere for a festive black-tie event.

The Pre-Celebratory Reception began at 6:00 pm in the transformed cafeteria. Throughout the evening and the remainder of the conference, many persons complimented the committee on the reception setting and the delicious food.

Guests and members of the Ninth District filled the auditorium to capacity as they arrived, dressed in formal attire, to honor the Davis family and fellow lay and clergy for outstanding service. Ms. Veda Howard, a

comedienne, voice actor, and gifted vocalist from Atlanta, Georgia served as the Mistress of Ceremony. She managed the flow of the program and kept the audience laughing with her comical remarks and introductions. Many persons were nominated for the awards for Administration Leadership, Servant Shepherd, Daniel Payne Spirit, Dr. Joan Cousin Service, Spirit of Fellowship, Spiritual Inspiration, Spirit of Compassion, Sara Allen Mission, Lay Discipleship, Innovative Worship, Presiding Elder Leadership, Black Male Image and Next Generation Discipleship. St. John members the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn, Dr. Jeanette Jones, the Reverend Dr. Homer L. McCall, Mrs. Ernestine Barnes-Ivery, Mr. Willie Sandifer, and this writer were among the nominees. Teams of clergy and lay, mostly couples, presented the awards for the various categories in their own unique styles that added humor and "roast" style comments that honored the nominees as well as the Davises. Pastor Patrick and the Reverend Sheri Clayborn did a wonderful job of presenting the Spiritual Inspiration Award. Celebratory performances were interspersed with the award presentations and included Ms. Frederica Coleman, Harpist, the Tuskegee University Men's Glee Club, Mrs. Shelia Jackson, Mrs. L'Tanya Moore Copeland, Pendulum "Spoken Word." Mrs. Shelia Jackson sang the invocation, The Lord's Prayer and the Dancers and Flaggers provide a selection prior to and during the processional, "Olympic Fanfare and Theme."

The final award for the evening was presented to Bishop and Mother Davis for their selfless leadership.

The gala was the product of many persons throughout the District who planned and executed the event. Highest commendations are extended to Dr. Cordelia B. Moffett and the Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, General Co-Chairpersons, and the Reverend Dr. Letitia Watford and Mr. James C. Bonner, Co-chairpersons. This was a fitting celebration to honor the leadership for their service.

To God Be the Glory!

"Loving Mom"

By Paulette Bargon



This reflection is not for everyone, it is for some of us who feel a little different about Mother's Day. This writer hopes this helps.

When we were young children we showed our mother love on Mother's Day by giving her flowers, making our own Mother's Day Card and my favorite, the famous picture crafted with various sizes and shapes of pasta noodles. But now some are older adults and have become the caregiver, the relationship is a little more perplexing: meeting her needs as she ages can become emotionally draining and time consuming. Past relationships with mom can also affect how we feel about her. Some have experienced conflict, mistreatment or rejection and now are resentful. They have witnessed other families where mom is the most loving and caring person they have ever seen and struggled with the question; "Why didn't I have a mother like her?"

But despite past histories and present challenges she is still mom and as Christians one cannot ignore the Bible's commandment to honor parents. (Ephesians 6: 2-3) So we should love and respect our mother regardless of what has happened in our relationships.

Remember that love requires forgiveness. Animosity is poisonous and it keeps a good relationship from developing. Treat mother with kindness and respect. Being rude does not benefit mom and it does nothing to improve the relationship with her. It also keeps children from moving forward in their relationship with God.

Sometimes the child has to put mom's needs first, regardless of how inconvenient it is. So go out of your way to show some love.

Yes it sounds hard, but why would you choose to live with hurt and resentment when you can

(Continued on page 9)

Soup Kitchen

By Charlie Brooks



COMPASSION FOR OTHERS

"If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion -how can God's love be in that person?" (1 John 3:17)

A small boy was left home alone one day while his parents were out. A beggar came to the door and asked for money. With the impulsivity of a child, the boy went to his own money box which had a few coins in it, forced it open, and gave the beggar all the money he had saved. He afterwards said that he had never before or since, experienced as much joy as at that moment.

Giving money to the poor is not without its own problems. Sometimes there is concern that they will buy alcohol or drugs with the money. Some feel that if they help a person in need the person may develop an attitude of dependency and in some cases helping them actually does more harm than good.

The world is swamped with poverty and some believe one small act of kindness will not solve the problem. Yes, people can think of a thousand excuses to not help others and some of them are probably valid. Yet, there are many reasons to help.

A Christian believer might ask, "What would Jesus have done?" or "What does love, the Love of God expect from me?" Even if helping a person in need cannot solve a major problem, it can at least bring a little relief. The "Bi-monthly Soup Kitchen" welcomes each person's gift of sharing to help feed the homeless who come to this ministry for nourishing food. Help is always welcomed and someone will be helped by simply knowing people care.

All donations are welcome!!

Lord Jesus, give me a heart filled with compassion, that shares with others what You have given me.
Amen.

May is Mental Health Month

By Bridget J. Floyd



Annually, May is designated as Mental Health Month. The purpose is to raise awareness about mental health issues and decrease negative attitudes and misperceptions related to mental illness. Ideally this education and reduction of stigma will facilitate seeking screenings, assessments, and treatment by mental health professionals for those in need.

Mental Health Week, originated by Mental Health America (MHA), began in 1949. In the 1980's the "week" transitioned into Mental Health Month, during the month of May. The theme for 2016 is "Life with a Mental Illness." The organization has incorporated an interactive plan to meet the goals of enlightenment of the public. The organization is encouraging persons with a mental illness to share how it feels to live with a mental illness via words, pictures and video, in an effort to let those not yet in treatment know that they are not alone in their feelings and symptoms. Submissions may be anonymous. The posts will be collected and displayed at mentalhealthamerica.net/feelslike.

As a caveat, this writer, as a mental health professional, would urge thoughtful consideration by a person who is considering submitting a post. Albeit redundant in many ways, The noble goal of the MHA organization should be weighed by any individual who might choose to share their information. Similarly, those viewing the posts need to do so with sensitivity and appreciation for the courage of those who submit their experiences/feelings. Caution is still appropriate when submitting information via social media, remembering the wide range of exposure and that information cannot be retrieved.

While attitudes have improved and mental health issues and treatment are gaining acceptance - the fact remains, there still is a need for increasing awareness because stigma has not been eradicated.

The American Psychological Association, as part of Mental Health Month, sponsors National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day during the first week in May, which is National Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. The green ribbon is a symbol for this week/event. The American Psychological Association (APA) focused on the challenges /barriers that effect access to mental health treatment for children. Additionally, during the month of May, APA had a podcast by a psychologist on "surviving a relationship with a narcissist". A psychologist or psychiatrist would need to evaluate a person to diagnose him/her with Narcissistic Personality Disorder, the disorder goes beyond extreme egocentrism.

During Older Adult Mental Health Week (May 16 – 22) APA coordinated with the National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging to address issues that impact the mental health of older individuals. May is also Older American Month. On May 24th, the APA will brief Congress on the need and recommendations for eliminating the health disparities that exist for men and boys who are of lower socioeconomic status and ethnic/minority members. They are at risk in terms of trauma, violence, and substance abuse.

It is important to recognize that familiar conditions such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and post-traumatic stress disorder can be managed. It is important to realize that help is available. It is also important to become enlightened and realize that it is as inappropriate to stigmatize those with a mental disorder as it is to stigmatize those with diabetes, hypertension, asthma, heart disease, etc.

**LIFE WITH
A MENTAL
ILLNESS**

#mentalillnessfeelslike

Habitat for Humanity

2016 SPRING BUILD SCHEDULE

2409 Garden Park
Huntsville, Alabama 35810



Although the Habitat 2016 Spring Build is almost complete, there is still an opportunity to volunteer. Please contact Sister Tami McGhee to find out how you can help. The home dedication is tentatively scheduled for June 4.

Weekly Prayer Time

Tuesdays at Noon



Conference Call Credentials:
US Toll Number (530) 881-1212
Meeting ID: 876-863-940

Listen to the playback any time.
Playback Number (530) 881-1212
Meeting Id 876-863-940

"...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints."
- Ephesians 6:18

Agnes Cooper Area WMS Meeting Held in Huntsville

By Paulette Bargon

St. John AME Church, Huntsville was the host site of the Agnes Cooper Area WMS meeting on Saturday, April 30, 2016. Area President, Sister Ophelia Chandler, presided over the session.

Prior to the meeting, Sister Pearlean Myhand and the Food Service Ministry prepared and served a delicious continental breakfast.

The meeting was called to order and devotion was led by Sister Janice Hereford. Sister Mary Powers, St. John's local President, welcomed everyone to St. John on behalf of the Betty E. Derrick WMS Society and on behalf of the pastor, the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn. Dr. Jennifer Patterson also welcomed the Missionary sisters.

After the reading of various reports, the Missionary business session was concluded. Ms. Shonda Miller of the Auburn-Alabama A&M Extension Agency presented a workshop on Nutrition Facts for individuals with diabetes. Ms. Miller talked about the difference between good fats and bad fats. She stressed how important it is to eat whole grain breads and pasta and fresh vegetables. She explained what carbohydrates are and how their consumption should be limited. Ms. Miller also gave a brief lesson on how to read a nutrition label. The presentation was very informative.

Area Chairperson Sister Ophelia Chandler announced that the Northwest Alabama Conference WMS Conference Institute for 2016 will be hosting at Hatfield Reception. The reception will be honoring Episcopal Supervisor, Mother Arelis B. Davis. The Conference Institute will be held at St. James AME Church, 4200-5th Court North, in Birmingham, Alabama, May 21, 2016 at 9:00 A.M.

Announcements included St. John AME, Huntsville will hold its WMS Annual Day on May 22, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. Supervisor Arelis B. Davis will be the guest speaker. Grady Madison AME hosts its Missionary Day every fifth Sunday.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Missionary Benediction was recited.

Loving Mom

By Paulette Bargon

(Continued from page 6)

live as Christ did. Remember He died so that we can be forgiven for our sins. Seek Him. He knows exactly how to love your Mom. He will guide and empower you to respond as He would. Do it before it is too late.

Love is patient, love is kind. Love is not jealous, is not proud; is not conceited; does not act foolishly; is not selfish; is not easily provoked to anger; keeps no record of wrongs, takes no pleasures in uprightness, but rejoices in the truth; love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

2016 MS Walk Thank You!

By Pat Grier



MS Walk Team: Front row (Left to right) Jonathan Bailey, David Bailey, Lorraine Parham. Back row (left to right) Agnes Gilmore, Pat Grier, Lula Rochelle, Lillie Rivers.

The 'PJ's Partners' Team participated in the 'Walk MS' event for Multiple Sclerosis (MS) here in Huntsville on April 30th. The Huntsville event was held at the Providence School, which served as an alternate walk site due to potential inclement weather.

A little more than 27 years ago this 'Walk MS' team was formed to support our sister, who had been recently diagnosed with MS. Then a little more than a decade after that time, our support for the Walk expanded to include a niece that was diagnosed with MS. Fast forward a decade and a few years more and we expanded our support to include a church family member that was diagnosed with MS. Our 'Walk MS' team support has expanded over the years; but our goal has remained the same — raising funds to help find a cure for MS. MS is a chronic,

often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system (CNS). MS treatments have increased and improved over the years, but MS still can be a life changing disease if the impairments increase and persist. The disease can then render the person into a disabling and debilitating condition. Finding a cure for MS is so important and is why we participate in the 'Walk MS' event each year.

The PJ's Partners' team knows that the success of our fund-raising is largely due to all of you for your generous contributions and support of this annual team activity and fundraiser. We thank you so much! The 'PJ's Partners' team members participating this year were: Agnes Gilmore (Team Captain), Pat Grier, Lorraine Parham, Lula Rochelle, and Lillie Rivers. The Team was also supported and cheered on this year by Johnathan and David Bailey. The members will be collecting donations through mid-June. If you would like to support this worthy cause and the team members have missed contacting you, please contact Agnes Gilmore, the team Captain, at 256-536-9131.

Thanks again for your generous support.

Church School Lesson Overview – June 2016

The lesson reviews for June were written by Brother Willie J. Sandifer, Church School Superintendent.

June 5, 2016

Lesson Title: The Day of the Lord

Lesson Scripture: Zephaniah 1:2-2:4

Print: Zephaniah 1:4-8, 14-18

Devotional Songs: #77, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger" (Zephaniah 2:3).

King Hezekiah reigned about 727 to 698 BC and the first verse of the book of Zephaniah establishes him as King Hezekiah's great-great-grandson. He preached to Judah in the South, while King Josiah, who ruled from 640 to 609 BC, reigned.

Josiah's rule started about three centuries after Israel split into two kingdoms (northern and southern) and about twenty years before Nebuchadnezzar, a Babylonian ruler, started invasions into Judah that ended in 586 BC with the fall of Jerusalem.

Josiah is thought to be one of Judah's best kings. He attempted to restore Israel to a favorable position with God after he discovered "the Book of the Law" in the temple during its renovation. Zephaniah's and King Josiah's efforts to restore Israel worked in tandem and appear to have been the last bit of hope before Judah spiritually spiraled into a free fall that resulted in God's divine judgment.

June 12, 2016

Lesson Title: That Day is Coming

Lesson Scripture: Zephaniah 3:1-8

Print: Zephaniah 3:1-8

Devotional Songs: #424, #258, and #243

Key Verse: "Therefore wait for me," declares the Lord, "for the day I will stand up to testify." Zephaniah 3:8).

This lesson focuses on the judgment of Judah's capital city of Jerusalem. One may ask what was the cause of the wrath of God that destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC? It was the fact that it was a low-moral, unclean city that

beleaguered the people that lived within in many ways. Zephaniah listed many charges against Jerusalem; but the people were so arrogant toward God that they accepted no correction.

God wants His people to choose the right things and stay faithful. He is deeply saddened when His people do not.

June 19, 2016

Lesson Title: A Day of Joy for the Remnant

Lesson Scripture: Zephaniah 3:9-20

Print: Zephaniah 3:9-14, 20

Devotional Songs: #283; #97; and #243

Key Verses: "Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem!" (Zephaniah 3:14).

This lesson starts just after the last verse of the previous week's lesson. That lesson finished with a note of judgment not just on God's people but on all nations. God assured His favor on the vestige of the people of Judah. The focus for Israel now shifted to a promise of hope.

Zephaniah saw only a small number that were true to God, as he walked the streets of Jerusalem. Only a small number lived by God's ordained law. Believers are challenged by the prophets in both the Old and New Testaments to do more than just talk about the truth.

June 26, 2016

Lesson Title: Ignoring God's Plain Truth

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 52

Print: Romans 1:18-32

Tentative Devotional Songs: #412; #251; and #243

Key Verse: "Since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood by what has been made, so that people are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

This lesson comes from a letter that Paul wrote to the church in Rome, which had been planted by others many years before. Paul pursued support from the Roman Christians as he planned a trip to Spain.

(Continued on page 11)



Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 10)

Emperor Claudius issued an edict in AD 49 that forced the Jews living in Rome to leave. Now the number of Gentile believers outnumbered the number of Jewish believers. There was a division inside the Roman church as each group claimed to have a better claim on salvation in Christ.



Annual Vacation Bible School

June 12-16, 2016

Sunday—3:00 pm Potluck, followed by classes

Monday—Thursday 5:30 Dinner, 6:00 Opening



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Church School Book Club

May 2016 Discussion Date: May 21, 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

The Lawman Claims His Bride, Renee Ryan, 2013

June 2016 Discussion Date: June 18, 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Three Motives for Murder, Michelle Perry, 2007

The small town of Coalmont, Tennessee is shattered when a car crash on graduation night leaves three of its teenagers dead and another three fighting for their lives. Four years later, the aftershocks still ripple through the town, and no one feels them more than Natasha Hawthorne, the young driver. When someone targets the survivors of the horrific crash for murder, the obvious motive is revenge. But things are not always what they seem, and the notion of revenge served cold does not ring true with Brady Simms, newly appointed police chief. To make things even more difficult, Brady ultimately finds himself standing squarely between the killer and his next victim, the woman who broke his heart four years ago. As the killer escalates his attacks, Brady's only hope of saving the intended victims is to get into the mind of a sociopath. When the relative of the first victim makes a startling revelation, Brady reopens the investigation and what he finds will change all of their lives forever.

pentecost
sunday, may 15
come, holy spirit



How Fear, Failure, and Frustration Can Help You Soar

By Janette R. Smith

Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

As a Results Strategist for businesses, churches and individual clients I am often asked some version of the question, "What is your secret to success?" The answers vary and often surprise my clients. It seems that globally everyone has some version of "The Secret to Success." If you Google the phrase "how to succeed" more than 182,000,000 entries pop up. We innately know most of the elements of success: hard work, dedication, vision, ideas, applied talent, character, loyalty, teamwork, strategy, execution, drive, adaptability, accountability...etc. However, I came across an interesting read that will make you think, because it focuses on three counterintuitive elements that are said to be absolutely essential if you want to succeed: Fear, Failure and Frustration. WAIT! What's that? YES! You can learn from

your fears, just like you can learn from failures and even your frustrations.

1. Fear

Tor Constantino says that most people have plenty of fear but they typically do not see it as a stepping stone toward success. In fact, we know that fear of success is one of the main reasons people are held back. We're afraid that we may lose our friends, lose a comfortable way of living, even if it's beneath our potential. There is also fear that people might be jealous and resent us, or that expectations of future success will be even tougher to achieve. The charge he says is to not engage or listen to the fear but look at what it wants you to avoid. Use the fear as a form of GPS. No one is successful without some degree of fear and the ability to forge ahead despite the fear. I would also offer that though fear is a human emotion, God never intended for us to live under a dome of the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)

2. Failure

One of the greatest fears we face is that of failure. Constantino says that this underlying fear is based on the fact that most people are more inclined to keep what they have than risk losing it pursuing more. But failure is another essential element of success because it helps eliminate unworkable options, sharpens our focus and clearly directs next steps. In fact, failure is the underlying principle of the scientific method --hypothesis, test, fail, repeat until a solution is found. The author cites Thomas Edison as an example. He tested and failed 9,999 times while trying to find the correct filament for the incandescent light bulb. He is famously quoted as acknowledging none of those were failures but instead helped him find the correct workable solution.

3. Frustration

The last unavoidable aspect of failure shared in the article is frustration. It is completely natural in the face of relentless and repeated failure for humans to become frustrated and discouraged. Often we have very little control over the causes of failure and frustration, but we have absolute control over the response to those externals. You can choose to let frustration beat you down, or you can choose to let it build mental toughness and perseverance within you.¹

So you see, where you are and what you are experiencing may be EXACTLY what will propel you on your path to fulfilling God's purpose and plan for your life. Fear, failure and frustration are all a natural part of the human experience. Use them to help to gain godly wisdom and courage for the journey. Remember we are overcomers through Christ Jesus!

¹CONSTANTINO, TOR. "3 Phases of Succeeding You Wish You Could Avoid but Can't" Entrepreneur.com, 30 July 2015. Web. 16 May 2016. Fear, Failure, Frustration.

June 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 NO Bible Study	2	3 Flow Worship Service 7:00 PM	4 9:00 a.m. New Members Class 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
5 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship Communion AMEN DEADLINE	6 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	7 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Stewardless Board Mtg. Steward Board Mtg.	8 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	9 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	10	11 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting
12 8:00 a.m. Worship Graduates Retiree Recognition	13	14 Noon Prayer Call	15 SB HB Church School Conventions	16	17 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	18 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
Vacation Bible School June 12-18						
19 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship FATHER'S DAY	20	21 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Thurs. Bd. Mtg.	22 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	23	24 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	25 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
26 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	27 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	28 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	29 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	30 6:00 p.m. Mass 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

June 3	Flow Service, 7:00 pm
June 12	Graduate-Retiree Recognition, 8 am No 10:50 am service
June 12-16	Vacation Bible School
June 15	South Birmingham-Huntsville-Bessemer Church School Convention
June 19	Father's Day
July 6-13	AMEC General Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
July 25-28	Ninth District CEC (Troy, 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 21 Issue 6

June 2016

Thoughts from the Pastor's Desk

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I realize it has been a while since my last communication through this wonderful vehicle called the AMENewsletter. So much has transpired since my last article in February. Don't worry! I will not dare an attempt to recover all of that ground in one communiqué. Instead, let me offer several brief thoughts.

First, we have had some wonderful guest speakers over the last three months. To the Rev. Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr. (Leadership Enrichment), the Rev. Bankole Akinbinu (Holy Week Revival), Mrs. Arlis Davis (WMS Day), and Mr. Kenny Anderson (Graduate and Retiree Sunday), thank you for pouring into our lives with a fresh word from Almighty God! You challenged us and blessed us with your sermons and your love. May God continue to bless you, your families, and your ministries.

Second, let us take time to thank our Servant Bishop, the Rt. Rev. James L. Davis, for eight years of love, prayer, sacrifice, work, dedication, faithfulness, service, fearlessness, and faith. When this publication is printed next month, we will have a new episcopal leader. Other words of commendation for him may be printed at that time as we also welcome our new leader. However, I just wanted to shine a light on Bishop Davis now - especially for his care of me during this difficult season of my life. We pray that God's blessings will be upon you and your family in this time of transition. Our hope is that wherever you go, you will see and feel God's hand of guidance, wisdom, provision and protection.

Third, to my wife - the Rev. Sheri D. Smith Clayborn - who made sure that our church and home operated smoothly through Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost, annual days, board meetings, day to day operations, children's school schedules, extracurricular activities, and travel between Memphis and Huntsville while I pressed my way through, I praise God for you with my whole heart. Thank you for taking this leap of faith with me each and every day! I LOVE YOU!

Fourth, to my family, close friends, St. John AME Church (Huntsville), and all those who sent support my way, thank you for your love and care. My mom used to say, "No one has to be nice to you. The very least you can do for them is to say, 'Thank you.'" Thank you all for everything you've done for me and my family. I pray that God will continue to bless and keep you and all you hold dear. I am able to stand because your prayers and service have helped me up.

Fifth, many significant world events have taken place - the loss of airplanes, the deaths of historic figures (e.g., Prince, Muhammed Ali, Jan Crouch, Daryl Coley, Harper Lee, Vanity, Maurice White, David Bowie, Billy Paul, Kimbo Slice, Morley Safer, Glenn Frye, Allen Rickman, and Gordy Howe), the shootings in Chicago over Memorial Day weekend, and most recently the murders and shootings in a night club in Orlando, Florida. We pray for peace. We pray for God's love to be spread abroad. Regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, genetics, economic status, church affiliation, or academic background, God's love is present and working for all of us. We lift the families of those who are suffering from all of these losses. We lift their communities and their support systems. We pray that hatred and gun violence be eradicated in Jesus' name! Let us all work to love each other as God loves us!

Sixth, we salute all of the Fathers as we celebrate Father's Day! May God smile upon each of you as you seek to do God's will.

Finally, for those who may not have picked up on it yet, this is my first article since the passing of my mother. I wrestled with what to say and how to say it. Since my mom was an amateur poet, I thought it fitting to put my thoughts in the poem that is printed on page 2.



Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D.

Thoughts from the Pastor's Desk

A Piece of Me

A Piece of me died on March 4th
One Friday afternoon
The nurse told me she expired
How could she say that so soon?

So many thoughts began to float up
With my heavy lead
Here is one so full of life
Now to be pronounced dead!

My heart began to race just like hers did
Just before she passed
How would I tell dad that the breath I
just heard
was my mom's last?

I picked up the phone without a second
thought
And told my father the news
We both hung up very quickly
And I slowly fell into the blues

"The thrill is gone
The thrill is gone away!"
No more wife - no more mom
No more G-Ma with whom to play

A piece of me died on March 4th
One Friday afternoon
Questions began to choke my talk
With a sense of impending doom

How do I go on? How do I preach
without my prayer warrior beside?
How do I stand and proclaim His name
without her earthly care?

Grief... like molasses
covering my heart
Regret... a sharp pain
Pricking every tender part

Of my soul - of my wishes - of the words
of my testimonies
The rain through my mind
Cause I kept on saying to myself
I'll have a little more time

To write the book - Record the album
To live the impossible dream
And have her celebrate each step
As she watches me do my thing

All the sights she won't see
All the experiences that we won't share
All the talks we will not have
About the gospel preached till and fair

A piece of me died on March 4th
One Friday afternoon

While I talked to the nurse my Mom
died
And I asked "Why so soon?"

The nurse voice replied - Don't ask why
so soon
Instead see what's happening this hour
Death's time makes a story for mom
She lives again in resurrected power

A piece of me was born on March 12th
One Saturday afternoon
While we celebrated her life And with
much fire
gave my God praise too

The preachers preached - The choir sang
with all the heartfelt zeal
Friends testified to her love
Even I shared how I feel

We gathered we talked we cried we
laughed
As we honored her memory
I gained some strength and some insight
On what my new life would be

She'll see my work and see my heart
Just from the other side
I'll hear her voice and get her wisdom
Now from the inside

A piece of me was raised on March
14th
One Monday morning clear
As we buried her remains I declared
Anticipation is in the air

That there is more - so much more
For each of us to do
Mom knew it and felt it - as did I
And she told me it was true

Some months ago she said it real plain
From her hospital bed
"No need to grieve around & tarry here
Be sure to lift your head

Go preach the word - Don't play around
Avoid the follies of my life
Give God your best - love the rest
And work for the crown of right

She sent me home & on my way that
day
Like on that clear Monday morn
With mission purpose prayer and power
To do it again once more

To preach to teach to lead to grow
To be loved to baptize
To love to reach to give to think
And do it for the prize

It's easier to say that it is to do
While putting all this in view
The pain is still fresh and wounds too
some
To think so briden eases

Though I walk through the valley of
shadows & death
No fear will I be slain
I'll take each step even with tear filled
eyes
As my dad did that day

Leaving the remains of a blessed
bride
Of 45 glorious revolutions
In sorrow so vast and anguish so deep
With no apparent solution

Bitter it was - just as plain as day
Right within my scope
Dad kept walking & that's the key
To live a life of hope

Keep on going - that's what she meant
That's what she's hoping I do
Even as my heart severely aches
By going I'll make it through

Some days will be bright - some will be
gray
And a lot in the meantime
If I press toward the mark of what God
wants
At least I will sustain

I pray I thrive - I desire to leap
For a joy I once knew
To be the man - the Called of God
That mom saw from her view

I will work - I will serve
Just as mom would
I will dream - I will build
As God says I should

A piece of me lives anew
Each and every day
Because my mom -
Lois Ethelva Patrick Clayborn
Came to light my way

St. John Members Share Fatherly Advice

By Lydia Owens



Claudinet Purifoy and Jesse Purifoy

My dad, Jesse Purifoy, shared many gems or love lessons. The two things that he shared that impacted me the most as I was growing up and the other as I wrangled with managing the work/life balance are:

1. "Ass oclation brings about assimilation."
2. "Don't be so busy making a living that you forget to live."

Pictured on the left are Claudinette and her father Jesse Purifoy in 1997 with General Joe Ballard, Chief Engineer USACE.

Karin Owens Hudson and Otha Owens

Advice: Always maintain an excellent credit score! Your credit standing is a good indicator of your character and integrity.

Pictured on the right are Karin, Otha and Edna Owens - 2015



Michael (MJ) & father Michael Clark

MJ said the advice his Dad has consistently given to him is:

- 1) Always work hard and do your very best in everything such as, classwork, homework, and sports.
- 2) Never say I can't do something until I've actually tried.
- 3) Look people in the eye when talking to them. If my pants have belt loops, then I need to wear a belt.
- 4) Always hold the door open for a lady.

Pictured on the left are Michael Clark and son Michael James Clark.



St. John Members Share Fatherly Advice

By Lydia Owens

(Continued from page 3)

Monica Dillihunt and Jesse Lee Fugh

Granddaddy (Jesse Lee Fugh) and I talked daily for hours and he gave me a lot of wisdom on a variety of things.

Two that I practice daily:

- 1) Family first, know your people and always love and support them.
- 2) Never loan more than you can afford not to get back.

Pictured on the left are Monica Dillihunt & Grandfather Jesse Lee Fugh



Bridget Floyd and James H. Floyd

My father, James H. (Harold) Floyd, was one of the most patient and dedicated persons that I have ever known. He would counsel that anger and retaliation towards those who would mistreat you was ill advised, and that kindness was a more appropriate response. He would quote from Romans 12 enumerable times, noting that such kindness would be tantamount to heaping hot coals on the head of those who would do evil to you. He went beyond the advice – he lived (modeled) it.

Pictured on the right are James H. Floyd and Bridget J. Floyd



Paula Eliard and Earnest Ellison, Jr.

Advice my dad shared with me:

1. Be true to yourself and always explore your options when making a decision.
2. Prepare yourself to be successful.
3. Love and stay committed to family.
4. Be happy.
5. Don't be afraid to ask for advice, especially from your dad, because I will always give you the best that I have to support you.
6. Respect yourself and do your best to enhance your family name and values.

Pictured to the left are Paula Eliard and her father Earnest Ellison, Jr.



Celebrating Gerald and John: By Love and In Love

Submitted By Rev. Sheri Smith Clayborn



Gerald Wesley Smith, Sr., My Daddy, is the greatest. He is my father by love and blood. I know he is my father through the love he has shown me my entire life. From a young age I understood the love of a father based on what he did. He set the standard and he set it high.

According to the Gospel of My Daddy, love is being willing to be the best you that you can be and empowering others to do the same. Love is being willing to keep your commitment to your wife, children and family. Love is honoring your parents and seeing about them daily. Love is working hard and being willing to support your family. Love is taking a job or several at one time to make sure your family has what they need and some of their wants. Love of a father is not thinking any legal job is beneath you- if it feeds your family. Love is not abusive or passive but intentional. Love treats all people right. Love forgives. Love positions others to be blessed...not just yourself. Love finds time not just money to spend. Love makes memories not regrets.

My daddy continues, even as he struggles with his own health challenges, to push us forward and lift us up. He continues to love us with all that he has, and for this I give God thanks and praise...because God sent me the best Daddy ever. He continues to remind us that love never fails.



John Clayborn is my father-in-love...not law but love. I love him and he has a special place in my heart because he (along with Mom Lois) raised Patrick Clayborn, my husband. He did for Patrick what was not done for him by his father...he was /is present and active in his son's life. Through his love manifest in sacrifice, time, care, and support he laid a foundation on which his son could build. I believe the love of this father has made all of the difference in who Rev. Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D. is, and because of the love poured into him by his father, we (my children and myself) receive a love that is unparalleled.

A few words from P2 and Joya



The Rev. Patrick Clayborn is my dad and he is the most special person I've ever known in my entire life. My dad makes me feel happy. My dad taught me that I can do my best every day. Daddy gives me grace when I don't deserve it, and he gets on me some times. I like when my dad watches Dragon Ball Z with me. I totally like spending time with my dad. I love you Dad!

Joya Clayborn simply says, "I love my daddy."

Spotlight with Rev. Sheri



In celebration of Fathers I am Spotlighting *LaVerio Barnes*, founder of Cool Dads Rock. Mr. Barnes is one of the answers to the question that so many ask, "What are black men... young black fathers in particular doing?" Too often the spotlight is on statistics that negatively impact the image of black men in our communities, and we fail to celebrate the black men/fathers who are taking care of their children and stabilizing our communities. I am convinced that if we will focus more on those who are helping to build, it will become a magnet that helps fathers be their best self.

Who is LaVerio Barnes? Mr. Barnes is an accomplished dj (disc jockey), who has performed with artists such as Robin Thicke, Ne-Yo, Usher, A Tribe Called Quest, and Sting and having entertained guests at events for NASCAR, Turner Broadcasting, Focus Brands, Coca Cola, Conan O'Brien, BMW, NBA All-Star weekend and the NCAA Final Four just to name a few... he also drums for Jesus at his church on Sunday mornings. Even with all of his accomplishments, his favorite "gig" is as the father to a very active young boy. It was through his excitement and love for his son that he realized he wanted to do something to help ignite that same excitement in other men. So Mr. Barnes did just that, he set out to make a difference in the lives of fathers and their children, believing this would have a positive impact on the whole community.

Mr. Barnes grew up only having spent time with his father on a couple of occasions. He says, "My mom was the best mom she could be, but she could not teach me how to be a man. As a kid, I saw father-son or father-daughter relationships and always wondered what that was like. I never wanted my son to wonder." Cool Dads Rock is for single and married dads, dads across the board. Mr. Barnes recalls that for years whenever he would hear the word dad it was preceded with "deadbeat" or "no good." The goal of Cool Dads Rock is to put a dent in that pattern. Cool Dads Rock is a growing 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization aimed towards building lasting and memorable relationships amongst fathers and their children. The mission of Cool Dads Rock is to strengthen relationships by creating environments where fathers and their children can bond through engaging educational and entertaining events.

Mr. Barnes' philanthropic passion comes from his grandmother, the late Mother Mary Ann Wright. Mother Wright was a world renowned humanitarian who started feeding the homeless in 1980 using her social security check. Today, the Mary Ann Wright Foundation feeds up to 450 people per day in Oakland, California. It was his grandmother's faith in community service that inspired him to start Cool Dads Rock with his own funds. His goal was to make a similar impact on families and young people in Metro Atlanta and across the United States.

I applaud Mr. LaVerio Barnes for moving forward with the vision of Cool Dads Rock. So many times people have ideas and visions that can help change families, communities and even the world, but they do nothing with it or about it. You get the spotlight for being a change agent in the midst of a valley of dry bones. Please go to the Cool Dads Rock website www.cooldadsrock.com to learn more about this nonprofit and support LaVerio Barnes in changing the world one father-child relationship at a time.

Cool Dads Rock...

Where we make uncool Dads cool and cool Dads even Cooler.

Where we encourage and build better relationships between Dads and their children.

**Information taken with permission from AJC article and Cool Dads Rock website.*

Episcopal Supervisor Speaks for Annual Missionary Day

By Paulette Bargon



Left to right—Presiding Elder Oliver Allen, Jr., Mrs. Mary Allen, Bishop James L. Davis, Mother Arelis Davis, Rev. Sheri Smith Clayborn, Pastor Patrick Clayborn.

"A Celebration of Women in Service" was the chosen theme for the Betty E. Derrick Women's Missionary Society (WMS) of St. John A.M.E. Church 2016 Missionary Day. The WMS celebrated their Annual Day on Sunday, May 22 at the 10 a.m. service. Mother Arelis Davis, Episcopal Supervisor of the 9th Episcopal District of the AME Church, was the guest speaker. Sister Lorraine Parham served as chairperson of the special day.

After the announcements were given by Sister Mariah Gullatte, the service began with a processional of the Women's Missionary Society members and program participants. Sister Mary Allen, First Lady of South Birmingham Huntsville Bessie Presiding Elder District, led the call to worship. Sister Eleanor Burnett set the spiritual tone with the opening prayer. Scripture (Romans 12: 1-8) was read by Sister Janice Hereford. Sister Donnie

Thompson led The Summary of the Decalogue.

The Children's Choir, directed by Sister Mary Rankin, performed two inspiring and spirit-filled songs: "There is Hope" with Miss Jessica Harbin as the soloist and "Bless that Wonderful Name." This choir and their director are truly a blessing to St. John. The occasion was presented by Sister Claudinette Purifoy-Fears. She emphasized that on this day the WMS celebrates women of religion who make up the Missionary Society, they celebrate those who toiled in the mission fields and those who support the work of the mission, which is all about sharing Christ. She also told of all the various ways that missionaries share Christ. Sister Rosemary Wells welcomed all visitors and guests.

The Women's Choir, directed by Mr. Reginald Pearson, along with the talented Mrs. Deidre Walton as the soloist rendered the song, "Just Call on the Name of Jesus." After tithes and offerings were received, Sister Angeline Brownlow gave the offertory prayer. Judge Martha Sherrod and Mrs. Adrienne P-K Washington presented Mother Davis with gifts from the St. John members of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. The WMS president, Sister Mary Powers, thanked everyone who participated in the service. She also invited St. John members to become a member of the Missionary Society.



Women's Choir, directed by Reginald Pearson, Deidre Walton, Soloist

The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn introduced the guest speaker,
(Continued on page 8)

Episcopal Supervisor Speaks for Annual Missionary Day

By Paulette Bargon



Mother Davis

(Continued from page 7)

Mother Arelis B. Davis. A very warm and touching song, "Safety," was sung by soloist Ms. Janette Smith and the Women's Choir.

Mother Davis spoke on the Missionary theme of "A Celebration of Women in Service." A few highlights are included in this article. She encouraged worshippers to celebrate all women who have made a contribution in their lives, the church and around the world. Mother Davis stated that if there were more women of power and more women in key positions, the world would be in a better state. She stated that the reason is "because we are compassionate, caring and loving. We think more logically and most importantly, we are praying women of God. We know the power of prayer." She encouraged women to remember to praise Him and thank Him and to celebrate that they are making their own contributions and making a difference in the lives of others as they serve and work to alleviate the ills of this society. She stated, "Remember to celebrate the fruit of the Spirit within us."

Mother Davis went on to say that Missionaries should expand the work of missions. They should elevate Christ so others will see Him through their work. She stated that true greatness comes through service. Missionaries can witness more effectively if they are in love with God. They will be better agents with God if they are in love with God. She stated "Missionaries, if you want to please God, then serve His people with humility. We must share with others. As missionaries we must be the essence of God's presence, the essence of God's spirit and the presence of God's love."

After Mother Davis' challenging speech, the Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn offered the Invitation to Christian Discipleship. Pastor Clayborn made remarks, as did Bishop James L. Davis, who expressed appreciation for the great welcome and warm hospitality shown by the St. John Church family. At the request of Pastor Clayborn, Mother Davis

led a soul-stirring prayer.

During the service the St. John Missionary Society presented a donation of \$2,100 to the Harris Home for Children. This was the culmination of the Missionary Society's service project to support this Huntsville home for foster children.

The Missionary Day service concluded with the singing of the Missionary Benediction, led by Missionary Patricia Smith, president of the Northwest Alabama Conference WMS.



Mother Davis (center) with Missionaries from St. John and visiting churches.

Pentecost Celebrated in Worship and in Witness

By Nedra McDaniel



Rev. Sheri leads worship service



Pastor Clayborn preaches during Pentecost Service

Pentecost, in the Christian church, is the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit and is the birthday of the church. This special day in the liturgical year is fifty days after Easter and the liturgical color is red, symbolizing the fire of the Holy Spirit.

The Ninth Episcopal District of the AME Church observed Pentecost with a day that they called "Pentecost Scattered." This was a celebration that was "scattered" across the District as each of the more than 275 churches in the state of Alabama observed Pentecost at their local churches. This is in contrast to "Pentecost Gathered" where the churches from across the District come together in one location to observe Pentecost.

St John held worship services at 8 am and 10 am on Pentecost Sunday, May 15. The sermon was entitled "When God Speaks ... Spirit." At 11:30 am members of all ages took the Gospel to three Huntsville communities. Teams went door to door at L. R. Patton Homes and Lincoln Park to share what salvation means to them and to offer salvation to those who had not accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior. One person accepted Christ and prayers were offered for all who would receive the blessing. One hundred lunch bags that included sandwiches and other snacks were distributed to persons who were visited. A subset of the group visited the Friend Home for the Elderly where one of St John's members resides. The Praise Ministry offered songs of praise during the visits to all three locations.

Members who participated gathered at the church afterwards to give praise to God for this celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit and to thank Him for the blessing received when believers share with others.



Sandwich bags being prepared for families



Members preparing to witness at L.R. Patton Homes.

Congratulations NICE GOING!
GREAT! Way to Go!
Yea! FELICITATIONS
CHEERS Take A BEST
BOW! WISHES!

St John AME: Honoring Academic Accomplishments

START
Children
 off on the way they
Should Go
 and even when they are old
They will not
TURN FROM IT

Kennedy Briana Harris 2016 Graduate of Sparkman High School A-B Honor Roll National Honor Society	Robyn Sanderson A Honor Roll 4 th year Dance- North Alabama Dance Center	Patrick Clayborn II A-B Honor Roll Outstanding Conduct Superior Bible Achieve- ment Superior Language Arts Achievement Outstanding Reading Comprehension Science Fair Award- "DNA Extraction"
Mya M. Taylor A-B Honor Roll	Marshall J. Taylor, Jr. A Honor Roll	Brooke Thompson A-B Honor Roll
Isaiah Albert Mayes A Honor Roll Presidential Award for the high- est GPA in his 1 st grade class (97% average) Youngest Student in class Completion of First Grade	Caylon Noah Mayes A-B Honor Roll Reading Club Completion of Second Grade	Collin Adkins 2nd Place District Finals Doubles Tennis
Samantha Adkins A-B Honor Roll	Destinee Buford A Honor Roll Perfect Attendance	Devin Buford Perfect Attendance

Flow Service Offers Alternative Worship Style

By Nedra McDaniel



Pastor Clayborn and the Praise Ministry

On Friday, June 3, a special worship service was held at St. John. The service of praise and prayer was entitled "Flow," symbolic of the vision that the order of the service would "flow" as the Spirit led. The St. John Praise Ministry was led by the special guest director, Pastor Patrick Clayborn. They set the tone for a spirit-filled evening. A "flowing" prayer was offered by Janette Smith, Justin York, Pamela Whitehead and Roselyne Akins. The Dance Ministry joined in praise with the Praise Ministry as they circulated throughout the sanctuary. Mime Ministry was presented by Kristina Jefferson. A word of inspiration was presented by Pastor Clayborn as he encouraged those present using scriptures from Hebrews 11:6 and John 7:37-39. The word encouraged persons present to open themselves to the will of God and let a new mindset flow in them. Afterward, Pastor Clayborn offered fervent prayers of deliverance for those assembled at the altar.

This special "Flow" service was the vision of Executive Minister, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn. Although family illnesses kept her from being physically present on Friday, she was there in spirit. This innovative worship service is one that will most likely be repeated.

Kaitlyn McClung---C.A.F.Y., Young Citizen of the Month!

by Barbara Johnson

Pictures printed by permission of C.A.F.Y.



L-R: Ms. Barbara Johnson (Nominator), Ms. Kathryn Dulaney (Mother), Ms. Kaitlyn McClung (Awardee)

St. John AME Church member, Miss Kaitlyn McClung, became the third youth member to be recognized by the Community Awareness for Youth organization, known as C.A.F.Y. Miss Mariah Gullatte, and Mr. Wallace Parham were recognized in 2012 and 2014 respectively. Kaitlyn was awarded the title, Young Citizen of the Month for the month of May 2016.

C.A.F.Y. is a Huntsville Police Department community organization, whose goal is to give Madison County youth the tools necessary to achieve success by providing guidance, knowledge and resources that enable the youth to gain insight into what it takes to become a successful adult.

Kaitlyn's nomination stood out above the other nominees for the month because of her academic achievement, numerous awards for poetry and spoken word, church involvement, and her many, many hours of volunteer service.

As a C.A.F.Y., Young Citizen of the Month Awardee, Kaitlyn was honored at the May, Huntsville City Council meeting. She received gifts and tokens from each of the C.A.F.Y. sponsors and received a Huntsville City Coin from the Mayor, Mr. Tommy Battle. Kaitlyn also taped a public service announcement for CAFY on radio station, STAR 99.1. Mrs. Clarrisa McClain, WHNT, Channel 19's, Pay it Forward representative, did a TV interview with Kaitlyn, highlighting her many volunteer experiences. As a Pay it Forward awardee, Kaitlyn competed for the monthly grand prize of \$1,000.00 being given to the Pay It Forward Candidate for the month of May. Thanks to St. John members and friends who voted for Kaitlyn, she received the grand prize of \$1,000.

Nominations for the Young Citizen of the Month are open to students, in grades 7-12. Adults who are members of a civic organization, clergy, or school system can submit nominations to Rocket City Broadcasting at www.mystar99.1.

Congratulations, Kaitlyn, St. John is very proud of you!



L-R: Mr. Alfred Adams, Jr. (Optimist Club of Huntsville), Ms. Kaitlyn McClung (RCB-CAFY YCOM Awardee), Dr. Harry Hobbs (Huntsville Utilities Public & Governmental Affairs Liaison and C.A.F.Y. Founder), Mrs. Clarene Teague-Johnson (Huntsville Human Relations Commission Representative), Cpt. Jeff Rice (Huntsville Police Department, CAFY Assistant Director), and City of Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle —at Huntsville City Council Chamber.

"Born Dreamers"

Spoken word presented by Kaitlyn McClung at the Lee High School Commencement Ceremony



We were born dreamers,
Creating galaxies and lava out of blankets and pillows,
We were able to be anything we wanted until supper.
Stuck in the clouds of imagination and cartoons,
We waked with our head held high in our dreams,
Proclaiming that we would be a mad scientist, Spiderman,
Or just like our parents.

It hasn't been long, but somewhere between then and now
We've allowed our imagination to fade into a pre-determined reality
And our dreams to become feeble wishes.
So as we walk across this stage into the realm of adulthood,
Remember this is a journey that is meant to be fun and challenging
And while the road may not always be smooth,
The breeze will whisper its telling song, and
Almost as lightening, the sky will split itself in two
The rain baptizing us in its miracles,
So long as we promise to never give up.

As we step out on faith and move forward,
Be sure to take a breath of life and take the time to live,
Because a heartbeat can seem redundant without the magic of living
and the glory of loving.
Let laughter trickle down the shuddering gutters of despair
And be the water which grows our dreams.
Let knowledge be the bread we eat for mental and spiritual growth,
And exercise humility to strengthen our character and wisdom.

We were born blessed.
Hands prayed over us like an offering in the high temple,
Because they knew we would grow to bless our surroundings
With our talents and intellect;
Because they knew we were destined for greatness,
No matter how long it would take.
So, do not fear the unknown--- Embrace it.
The only thing to fear is never trying, and now is always the best time to try.
Try not to wait to do new things, go new places, and make new friends.
Let us walk in our purpose-- and speak as leaders.
And remember, no matter how hard things may get,
Every one of us is smart, capable, beautiful, and important.
Keep the faith and live a life to be proud of.
And good luck to the Class of 2016.

Happy
Father's
Day

What Makes a Dad

Submitted by Paulette Bargon

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

Alzheimer's Disease is a Progressive Condition

By Bridget J. Floyd

Alzheimer's Disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disorder that results in loss of memory and thinking skills and ultimately simple, daily tasks cannot be completed (such as hygiene and dressing). The age of onset tends to be the middle 60's.

Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia in older adults. Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning; that is, thinking, memory, and reasoning, as well as behavioral, to the point that emotional functioning and daily living skills are negatively impacted. The first signs are often memory problems; however, individuals differ in first signs – some have word-finding or visual spatial problems as well as impaired reasoning and judgement. There may also be problems with movement and/or smell. Over the course of the disease the brain tissue shrinks, resulting in severe problems such as the inability to communicate and needing others to provide daily care.

A doctor can run tests to see if the symptoms are due to conditions such as sleep disturbance, stroke, tumor, Parkinson's, etc. Treatment can be provided in order to reduce or slow the disease progression. For more information refer the information on the web at nia.nih.gov/alzheimers/publication/alzheimers-disease-fact-sheet

Soup Kitchen

By Charlsie Brooks



"You shall not see your neighbor's donkey or ox fallen on the road and ignore it; you shall help to lift it up."

- Deuteronomy 22:4

Helping Hand

"Each day is comprised of 1,440 minutes, which equates to numerous opportunities to help others—whether opening a door, assisting a neighbor, and so on."

Someone once said, "Never get tired of doing little things for others. Sometimes those little things occupy the biggest part of their hearts." These words are a reminder of how powerful a person's actions can be to another. The little things matter for they create a flow of love and gratitude that blesses others. An unhappy day can quickly turn into a pleasant one just by smiling at someone or offering a listening ear.

Please consider sharing just a portion of your 1,440 minutes on the 3rd or 4th Tuesday at St. John's Soup Kitchen. Just a few hours can make a big difference in the life of a person who comes that day. The Soup Kitchen Ministry invites volunteers to share in this opportunity to help others.

"With joy in my heart, I lend a helping hand to others."

¹ Helping Hand, Erin Burrington, travelingthehardroadtowisdom.com, May 6, 2016.

² Ibid.



Church School Lesson Overview – July 2016

The lesson reviews for July were written by Brother Willie J. Sandifer, Church School Superintendent.

July 3, 2016

Lesson Title: Ignoring God's Truth within Us

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 104; Romans 2:14-29

Print: Romans 2:17-29

Devotional Songs: #77, #272 and #243

Key Verse: "It is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified" (Romans 2:13).

Paul's letter to the church in Rome began by establishing the universal need for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He explained that God's wrath is justly poured out on those who willingly reject Him despite ample evidence that He exists, that He is the Creator, and that He is worthy of humanity's worship.

Paul anticipated that his own Jewish people would object to this. They saw themselves as the exception. They were different from pagans who did not acknowledge or worship God. The apostle countered those arguments, however, and showed that the Jewish people really were a lot like their pagan neighbors. But they too needed the salvation that comes only through faith in Christ.

July 10, 2016

Lesson Title: We're All under Sin's Power

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 136:1-9; Romans 3:9-20

Print: Romans 3:9-20

Devotional Songs: #377, #258 and #243

Key Verse: "No human being will be justified in his sight by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20).

This lesson explores the concept that all are spiritually accountable because all persons know the truth.

There is a simple reason why no political movement can produce perfect equality, peace, and justice: while people might gain some freedom from oppression and injustice, they cannot escape their own sinful natures.

The Apostle Paul made it clear that every human being is born into sin, is depraved in nature, and is in need of the glorious gospel of Christ.

No person wants to hear that he is guilty of an offense, especially against God. When the subject comes up, someone may start to make excuses and diversions, like "Well, what about the mentally challenged?" The answer here is that people must let God handle issues such as this since they do not know the answers and cannot do anything about it anyway. A diversion to a related but unanswerable topic does not contradict the truth of God's Word. Each person must know in his heart how he has dealt with his sins.

As to who is ultimately to be saved and why and who will ultimately be lost and why, one must depend on God's Word and learn to not speculate beyond what is written.

July 17, 2016

Lesson Title: God Set Things Right

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 148; Romans 3:21-31

Print: Romans 3:21-31

Devotional Songs: #424, #97, and #243

Key Verses: "There is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:22-24).

This lesson gives insights into the grace of God, which all so desperately need.

The idea of earning something by working is deeply ingrained in most people's minds. They may think that simply having faith and believing what God has said is giving God very short change in the bargain of salvation. Yet God does not need a person's belief in Him to be happy or blessed in some way. He does not need good works. Nor does He need praise. Christians are the ones who benefit from good works, faith, and worship. God has no needs. He is perfectly capable of carrying out all He desires and plans. He is complete and perfect whether or not anyone trusts in Him.

In contrast, humankind is completely needy. People have no ability to save ourselves or even to believe in God. This lesson examines

(Continued on page 15)





Church School Lesson Overview – July 2016

(Continued from page 14)

the one thing that makes all the difference. That one thing will make a person right with God. That one thing is the grace of God and His grace makes all the difference.

July 24, 2016

Lesson Title: Not Without Hope

Lesson Scripture: Romans 5:1-11

Print: Romans 5:1-11

Tentative Devotional Songs: #464, #251, and #243

Key Verse: "Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).

This lesson explores the hope one has in the salvation God gives to those who believe. It is a hope no other religion or belief system has or can even comprehend.

The hope the believer has of heaven when they die is a solid certainty for their present standing in the grace of God. It is also certainty for the future. Their hope is based on the character of God and the fact that He never changes. He has given His promise. As a result, believers can be sure of the outcome.

If a person has trusted in the Lord Jesus, s/he has a real hope for things that are beyond human comprehension. Even if they suffer hardship, persecution, martyrdom, and death, they still have a blessed hope because they have been justified by faith. A Christian's hope does not depend on current circumstances but on the trustworthy, living God.

Followers of Christ enjoy many blessings. Often, they fail to see them, either because they think they are inaccessible or they are ignorant of them. But the blessings are there, and they are accessible in Christ.

July 31, 2016

Lesson Title: Death Becomes Life

Lesson Scripture: Romans 8

Print: Romans 8:1-4, 12-14, 20-23

Tentative Devotional Songs: #464, #251, and #243

Key Verse: "Therefore, we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of

life" (Romans 8:4).

This lesson we will demonstrate how salvation is not a dry fact. Believers are truly raised to new life in Christ.

It is at the same time both easy and difficult to live the new life. It is easy because God has changed believers on the inside and given them His Holy Spirit to guide and empower them. It is hard because humankind has not done away with old habits and nature. Learning about new life in Christ and its foundation and standing will help Christians move forward.

Someone may see believers either waking in the flesh or walking in the Spirit. They may be seen either responding to God's leading or rebelling against God's leading. Making a commitment to God's way when facing a choice makes future decisions a little easier. Without that commitment they may not make the choice that would be pleasing to God. It is always possible for a Christian to repent for his or her actions and to begin again. Steady progress can be made in the new Christ-like life.



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Finding God's Purpose for Our Lives: Lessons from the Movie Joy

By Janette R. Smith

Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

The Women of Worth (W.O.W.) bible studies use various activities to drive home spiritual principles through practical applications. On June 8 the women gathered to watch the movie Joy.

The movie's promotional site describes Joy as "A story of a family across four generations, centered on the girl who becomes the woman (Jennifer Lawrence) who founds a business dynasty (self-wringing mops) and becomes a matriarch in her own right."

Though bible study fellowship focus was for women, the lessons that were extracted can inspire anyone, especially those with an entrepreneurial spirit.

KEEP DREAMING.

Think back to when you were a kid. There were things you wanted to do, or a certain way of doing things that just seemed natural. Joy remembered who she was after years of living through what she wasn't. Those memories from childhood reminded her of what she was willing to work so hard on, so she would never accept failure.

YOUR GOD-GIVEN DREAM SOLVES A PROBLEM.

Think of what other people need and if you solve that need, you can find purpose and success. Joy was trying to mop up broken glass and cut her hand. Joy realized that SHE WAS people. She had real problems! So she set out to solve one of her problems, thinking that if she had that problem, other people did too.

Thinking about yourself is not always selfish. Expecting others to solve your problems for you - is. That being said, Joy spent most of her day solving other people's problems. Almost to a fault. There is something called boundaries, where if people act like you're their servant, you call them out on it, but only to the extent that they start taking care of the things you know they can do.

FAMILY MEMBERS DO NOT ALWAYS MAKE GREAT BUSINESS PARTNERS.

Sometimes your family is going to misunderstand you. They aren't trying to shelve your talent, but they can often become 'border bullies.' In this movie, Joy's family is terrible. They are lazy, co-dependent, and turn on her like jackals whenever she's wounded. It's enough to sink most people. We are the average of those we spend the most time with, which is why becoming rich from nothing can be a big challenge.

In contrast, Joy's childhood friend really had her back. She saw the light in Joy's eyes when she did what she was born to do, and knew what it was to face adversity. Joy's fight was her fight as well. Even Joy's ex-husband proved helpful since his transient job history gave her the connections she needed to meet the people running QVC.

Business friends are not always the same as personal friends or family.

They will spend time with you when it is in their financial interest to do so. If you're lucky, you will have respect for each other even when it is not. They'll give you a shot if what you're saying makes sense, but only if it makes sense. So make sense.

Success brings its own challenges.

When you finally start succeeding, some people see you as a target. Joy's manufacturer raised the price high enough to kill the product, and tried to knock off her design because they couldn't figure out how to make the idea work for themselves. This happened AFTER her product started selling. Getting successful is one thing, staying successful means continuing to do what got you there.

(Continued on page 17)





Church School Book Club

June 2016 Discussion Date: June 18, 2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Three Motives for Murder, Michelle Perry,
2007

July 2016 Discussion Date: July 18,
2016
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Exclusively Yours Shannon Stacey, 2011

When Keri Daniels' boss finds out she has previous carnal knowledge of reclusive bestselling author Joe Kowalski, she gives Keri a choice: get an interview or get a new job.

Joe has never forgotten the first girl to break his heart, so he is intrigued to hear Keri is back in town—and looking for him. He proposes an outrageous plan—for every day she survives with his family on their annual camping trip, Keri can ask one interview question.

The chemistry between Joe and Keri is as potent as the bug spray, but Joe's sister is out to avenge his broken heart, and Keri has not ridden an ATV since she was ten. Who knew a little blackmail, a whole lot of family and some sizzling romantic interludes could make Keri reconsider the old dream of Keri & Joe 2gether 4ever?

Finding God's Purpose for Our Lives: Lessons from the Movie **Joy**

By Janette R. Smith
Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

(Continued from page 16)

Passion is everything.

QVC hired the best salesman they had to sell Joy's product and he made a mess of the sales. If the host had succeeded, there would have been no impetus for Joy to overcome her insecurities. Joy knew the problem she was solving. Joy knew the product, and she knew that if anybody else did this for her, nobody would understand how their lives would be improved.

FACING IT TO FIX IT

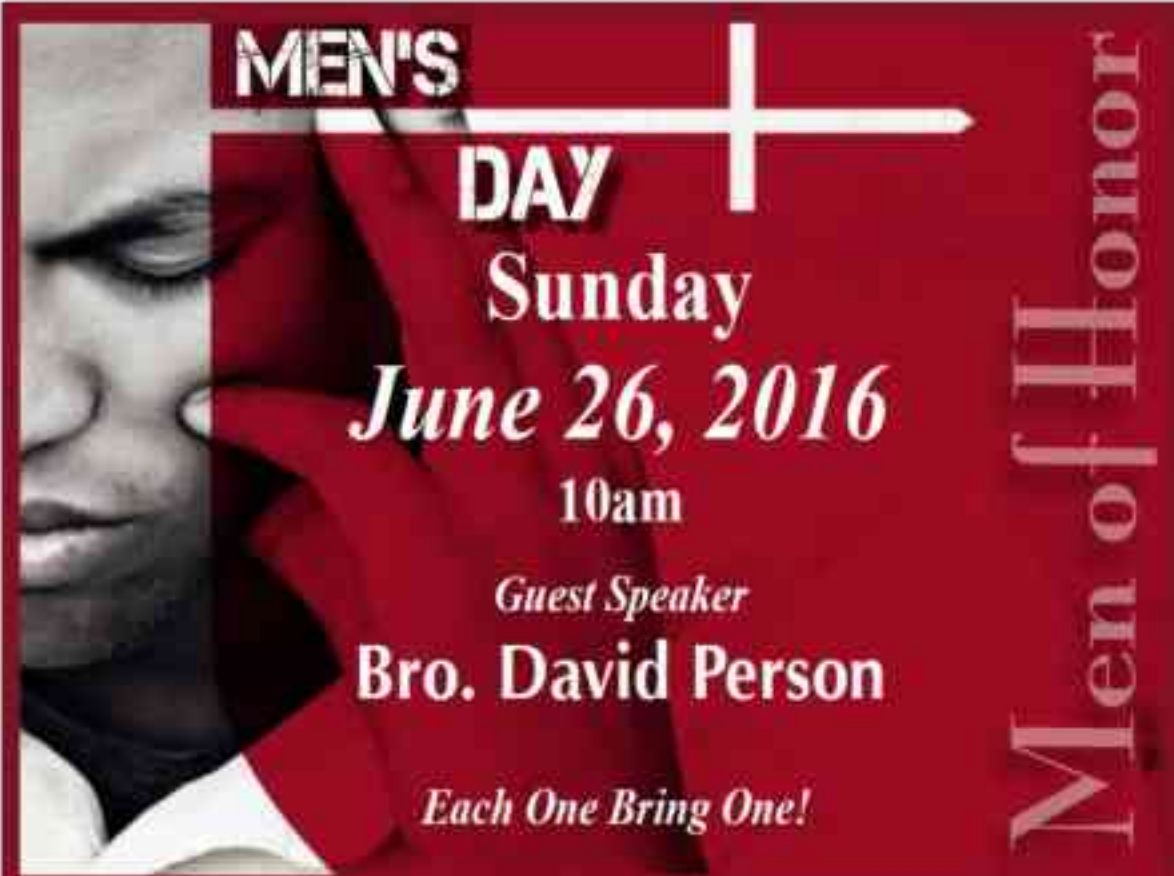
When Joy goes to Texas and has her own private chat with the "manufacturing enemy" who had been sabotaging her through half the movie, she faced it-to fix it. The only way EVERY OBSTACLE got sorted out and destroyed was for her to face the manufacturing giant head on... and have it out.

Joy went through a lot of birth pains before she could be rewarded for her talents, and continued to experience failure. The narration says her own family tried to sue her, even after she funded their ideas. Was it all worth it?

If you expect other people to solve your problems, the answer is no. But if you follow God's lead, and sacrifice in service to solve other people's problems, including your own... then you're closer to finding and fulfilling God's purpose for your life.

If you have not seen the movie, it's on pay-per-view television and out on DVD. There are a few adult words in it, not too bad. Probably nothing worse than you've ever heard in line at the grocery store. ALL OF CREATION is waiting for the sons and daughters of God to stand up and walk fully in our calling and help solve the problems of world, both those of the spirit and those that deal with life in this physical realm.

Keep dreaming, believing and building!™



MEN'S
DAY
Sunday
June 26, 2016
10am
Guest Speaker
Bro. David Person
Each One Bring One!

Men of Honor

iTHRIVE **FREEDOM** **WEEKEND**

July 29th
FRIDAY
NITE
LIVE!
7PM

July 30th
Saturday
FREEDOM WORKSHOPS
[All Ages]
9am-12:00pm

July 31ST
iTHRIVE
Worship
Service
10AM

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Saying Goodbye



Thank you Bishop and Mrs. Davis for your service and love to Alabama. We appreciate all that you've done and pray that God will continue to bless you in your future arenas of leadership. No matter where you go, just know that you have left an indelible mark on the 9th Episcopal District! We salute you and praise God for you!



General Conference

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

What is The General Conference?

The General Conference is the supreme body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. It is composed of the Bishops, as ex-officio presidents, according to the rank of election, and an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates, elected by each of the Annual Conferences and the Lay Electoral Colleges of the Annual Conferences. Other ex-officio members are: the General Officers, College Presidents, Deans/Presidents of Theological Seminaries; Chaplains in the

Regular Armed Forces of the U.S.A. The General Conference meets quadrennially (every four years), but may have extra sessions in certain emergencies.

Why is this General Conference so special?

This will be the 50th Session held since the AME Church was incorporated in 1816. We will celebrate the Bicentennial incorporation of the church, representing 200 years of service to God.

So....WIFM?? (What's in it for me?) I love Jesus. I support my local church. Why should I attend the 2016 General Conference?

Attending the 2016 General Conference will give you a first-hand understanding of how the AME Church works. As a registered Observer, you will have complete access to 90% of the meetings, elections and special programs for this multiple day experience. You will see how bishops and general officers are elected. You will hear about all of the policy changes and programmatic issues of the entire AME Church. And you will sit side by side with all 20 Districts of the AME Church! That's all of the districts in the 39 countries of the denomination.

In addition, presidential candidates and international dignitaries will most likely visit the 2016 General Conference. In 2008, the then Senator Barack Obama was a featured speaker. In 2012 First Lady Michelle Obama was a featured speaker. Dr. Martin Luther King spoke at one of the General Conferences in the 1960s.

An estimated 20,000 people will attend part or all of the 2016 General Conference.

For persons preparing for the 2016 General Conference, there are some things to KNOW BEFORE YOU GO! Visit the official website of the African Methodist Episcopal Church at www.ame-church.com and click the 50th Quadrennial Session "logo" for the latest information on --

- The General Conference Agenda
- Registration
- Transportation
- Official List of Candidates
- Voting Commission Report
- Legislation Submissions
- Pre-General Conference Committee Meetings
- Housing
- The Bicentennial Celebration

For more information go to 2016generalconference.org.

July 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
3 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship Communion AMEN DEADLINE		5 Noon Prayer Call (Replay Prayer Only)	6	7	8	9
AME Church General Conference July 6-13				6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal		
10 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	11	12 Noon Prayer Call (Replay Prayer Only)	13	14	15	16 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 11:00 a.m. AMEN Staff Mtg. 11:00 a.m. Children's Choir Rehearsal
AME Church General Conference July 6-13					6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	
17 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	18	19 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Thurs. Bd. Mtg.	20 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	21	22 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	23 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
24 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	25	26 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call (Replay Prayer Only)	27	28	29 Friday Nite Live	30 Freedom Workshops 9:00 am — 12:00
31 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship THRIVE Worship						



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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 19	Father's Day
June 26	Men's Day, 10:00 a.m., Brother David Person, Guest Speaker
July 4	Independence Day
July 6-13	AMEC General Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
July 25-28	Ninth District CEC, Troy, Alabama
July 29-31	iTHRIVE Freedom Weekend



ST. JOHN A.M.E.N NEWSLETTER



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 21 Issue 7

July 2016

20th Anniversary Edition of the St. John A.M.E.N Newsletter



*Pastor Clayborn, Rev. Sheri, and the St. John Family
welcome*

**Bishop Harry L. Seawright
and
The Reverend Sherita Seawright
to the Ninth Episcopal District!**

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The St. John AMENewsletter Celebrates 20th Anniversary

By Nedra McDaniel, Editor



Twenty years ago this month the first St. John AMENewsletter (The AMEN) was published. The first headline of the newsletter twenty years ago was on the 45th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the AME church and this anniversary month's edition includes an article on the 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference. Hundreds of articles have been published between the span of the first headline and the articles in this issue. The newsletter was a vision of the Reverend Doctor Homer McCall. The newsletter was named the St. John A.M.E. Newsletter by Ms. Kimberly Brown (daughter of Jason and Thalia Love Brown) and a charter member of the AMEN staff.

This monthly publication has grown from less than 200 subscribers to over 350 subscribers located across the United States and internationally. The first publication was eight (8) pages and today the average number of pages is twenty (20). In 1996, and for several years afterwards, the publication was printed at a local copier shop. Later the church acquired a copier that allowed the newsletter to be printed internally, but required manual collating, stapling and folding. Today newsletters are printed directly from the computer - collated, stapled and folded. The color version of the AMEN was introduced in 2010. Electronic copies of the newsletter are e-mailed to those who chose to receive the newsletter in that format.

In addition to publishing the monthly newsletter, the AMEN staff has been involved in providing information for the church's website and preparing annual reports. The Taste Tea is a holiday fellowship sponsored by the AMEN staff and recipes collected from the tea have been published in two editions of the *A Taste of St. John and Friends Cookbook*.

Articles in the AMEN have covered events at all levels of the connectional church. The AMEN staff ensures there are announcements for upcoming events and articles that report on the many worship services, ministries and other activities at St. John. The publication's goal is to be informative and spiritually enriching. A bulletin board in the hallway outside of the sanctuary will display some of the newsletters from the past during the month of July.

The AMEN staff appreciates the service of all who contribute to this ministry and pray that the AMEN is a blessing to all who read its articles. As this publication moves into its third decade, the layout has been enhanced and there will be more changes in the future. The AMEN staff meets the second Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m. New members are always welcome.

As the AMEN staff celebrates the twenty (20) years of service, this ministry also mourns the passing of Mrs. Mable McCall, a charter member of the staff.

To God be the glory, for the things He has done!

Thoughts from the Pastor's Desk



Pastor Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D.

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

July has been a power packed month for so many of us. Scores of you are having family reunions and family vacations. We've celebrated our country's Independence Day. The African Methodist Episcopal Church celebrated 200 years as a denomination at the General Conference in Philadelphia. With all of these happenings, I wanted to

make sure that we noted several important events.

First, let us welcome our newly appointed Bishop - The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright - and our Episcopal Supervisor - his wife, The Reverend Sherita Moon Seawright - to the 9th Episcopal District!¹ We are excited about the gifts, skills, and anointing that they will bring to the AME churches of Alabama. They come with the spirit of fervent prayer and expertise in building ministries, businesses and grant writing. As they transition from Maryland to us, we pray that God continues to bless their family and their home. We also pray that their ministry here will be effective and that we lovingly follow their leadership. Lord, help us all to grow together. We hope that the work we've done under Bishop James L. Davis will serve as a foundation for the ministry that Bishop Seawright will begin. We thank God for the Episcopal Committee that heard and answered our request to bring Bishop Seawright to us. We thank God in advance for blessings we shall experience under the leadership of Bishop and Supervisor Seawright.

Second, Alabama proposed legislation at the General Conference that would make the Mirroring Project available to entire denomination.² The revisions committee refused to

bring it to the floor of the conference because they viewed it as repeating our procedure on church mergers. If the legislation had been read thoroughly by the committee, they would have seen that their view was inaccurate. Though we did not get the chance to share with the entire denomination a way to help our churches grow, several important results did occur. We saw clearly a number of inefficiencies in how the revisions committee operates that we can speak to and attempt to change. We showed the entire denomination the growth that is taking place in the AME churches in Alabama. We discovered how legislation practically makes it before the general church. Those of you seeking to get legislation heard by the General Conference need to get that legislation heard by various bodies (such as the AME Convo) that meet long before the General Conference. When it is submitted afterwards, it is "familiar!" We give thanks to Mrs. Bernella Knight Rose for being Alabama's representative to the revisions committee. Thank you Mrs. Rose for fighting for us!

Third, our nation has been rocked by the police shootings of African Americans Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, LA, Philando Castile in St. Paul, MN, and Charles Kinsey in Miami, FL. Sterling and Castile died. All three were visibly showing no threat to officers. Our nation was also devastated by the shootings of police officers in Dallas, TX, and Baton Rouge, LA. Both shooters were reportedly former military that were disgruntled but had no ties to the Black Lives Matter movement. It is clear that our land needs healing from the racism, hatred and fear that divides us. Our prayers go to the victims and their families. As well, we pray for those communities. We pray that God brings justice, peace, restoration, reconciliation, and restitution to all who are suffering. Yet, the question remains: What will we do? My hope is that we can begin in two simple ways. At the end of the month we will have our iThrive weekend. On July 29th, we will have Friday Nite Live at St. John. On July 31st, we will have iThrive Sunday. These events will uplift the theme "Living Free." Our prayer is that all who attend will experience God in radically new ways so that they may be truly free and that their freedom will become contagious. On the evening of August 16th, we will have a Meet the Candidates Forum for the persons running for City Council in District 1 of Huntsville. Invitations have been extended to each candidate. This will not be a debate. Each participant will be allowed ten minutes to share his or her platform. Afterwards, we will open up the forum to questions to the

¹Bishop and Supervisor Seawright are pictured on the front page.

²The Mirroring Project is a study of self-examination for churches. It takes the church through a series of questions and exercises that help the church assess its true health as an organization and organism. It gives the church several options in light of its findings: merging with another church, relocating, or making specific adjustments to certain processes or systems.

(Continued on page 4)

Thoughts from the Pastor's Desk

(Continued from page 3)

candidates from the audience. All of the events - Friday Nite Live, iThrive Sunday, and Meet the Candidates Forum - are free and open to the public. It is our hope that through radical worship and intentional civic engagement we will be able to create an atmosphere for healing along the divides of race, gender, class, and every other divide that harms our communities. Please come out and support our efforts to bring peace to our land!



Finally, I want to share news from our church family. Mrs. Mable Jones McCall passed away earlier this month. As the wife of Rev. Dr. Homer L. McCall, she was the first lady of St. John for 40 years. She served our church and this community with honor and distinction. We held her homegoing celebration at First Missionary Baptist Church in Huntsville. We thank Rev. Dr. Julius Scruggs and the First Baptist family for their hospitality and kindness.

Bishop James Davis preached a mighty word for the eulogy: "Get Ready World! Here Comes Mable!" We pray for comfort for the Jones and McCall families. Lady Mable will be sorely missed.



This month we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the AMENewsletter. We congratulate the entire ministry for their faithfulness, dedication and spirit of excellence. They have not missed one month, and each issue is a glorious witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ. This vehicle has helped the ministries of St. John to grow beyond our borders into churches, communities and homes we would not ordinarily touch. St. John salutes you! As pastor, I also want to acknowledge Ms. Nedra McDaniel, who has and continues to serve as the editor. For your 20 years of tireless leadership and extraordinary selflessness, we praise God for you. May the Lord bless you Sis.

McDaniel, the ministry members, and this ministry in every way!!! Please help us celebrate this amazing ministry!

It is with bittersweet hearts, that we announce Ms. Janette Smith's departure as the Administrative Assistant to the Pastor. Her career prior to her arrival to this position is world renown. In her almost four years as my assistant, she has given unbelievable support to both Pastor and Executive Minister. She has established a tone of contagious joy, fearless faith, and humble service in our office. Sis. Smith not only aided us in organizing our office processes, but she also used her expertise and previous experiences to help expand the ministry of our church.



Just take a look at our new website or the screens in the sanctuary. Though we are sad to see Ms. Smith leave our office, we are excited about the opportunity to which she is headed. May God's promise be made manifest for you Sis. Smith - that everywhere your feet tread you will prosper! We thank God for your service and continued sacrifice to our church. Please join us in thanking Ms. Smith for her brilliant work!

We are in the process of entering a new season. Let us be sure to "hold to God's unchanging hand." In so doing, let's also love one another as God loves us.

May the God of peace bless you beyond measure.



Graduates and Retirees Celebrated in Special Service

By Bridget J. Floyd



Graduates and committee members: Judge Sherrod, Sarah McGraw, Terasha Jefferson, Mr. Anderson, Pastor Clayborn, Kaitlyn McClung, Chelsea Carter, Germani Abrams, the Rev. Sheri Clayborn

St. John celebrated the accomplishments of members who were graduates and retirees, on Sunday, June 12, 2016. There was a single worship service, which was held at 8 am. The speaker for the event was Mr. Kenneth L. Anderson, Multicultural Affairs Officer for the City of Huntsville.

The Scholarship Committee consisted of the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn, pastor; the Honorable M. Lynn Sherrod, chairperson; the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, executive minister; Col. (Ret.) James O. Heyward, Ms. Nedra McDaniel, and Mrs. Pamela Whitehead. They coordinated an extraordinary event.



Pastor Clayborn and Mr. Anderson

In addition to celebrating those who had reached culminating milestones in academics and careers, there was praise and worship in each aspect of the service. The dance ministry, worship through song by the Gospel Choir, a beautiful prayer by Col. Heyward and scripture reading by Sister Janette Smith.

Pastor Clayborn introduced the speaker, Mr. Kenny Anderson, who spoke on the topic, "Oh, For a Faith." The scriptural reference was Luke 8:40-48. He also cited Joshua 1:9, emphasizing that "God is with you - no matter what life brings". He noted that the honorees did not achieve their academic and career successes by their skills alone, rather they had God on their side. Mr. Anderson not only shared his interpretation of the scripture but also his personal experiences and reflections regarding the importance of perseverance in the midst of adversity. He encouraged them as they move to the next phase of their lives/aspirations, to "embrace the power of God" which will provide "whatever we want"- being mindful that God works on His, not man's, time.

The graduates or their representatives, and the retirees, received presentations from St. John. The graduates also were each given a scholarship from the Class of 1976 from Gentry High School (who worshipped with St. John as part of their 40th anniversary celebration). Dr. Thalia Love repre-

(Continued on page 6)

Graduates and Retirees Celebrated in Special Service

By Bridget J. Floyd

(Continued from page 3)

sented her class in presenting the gifts. There was prayer for the honorees which culminated a beautiful worship service and tribute to the hard work of the celebrants. The joy, thankfulness, and relief of the graduates, retirees, and their loved ones was evident.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FUTURE ENDEAVORS!

2016 Graduates and Retirees

High School Graduates

Germani Brionna Abram received the High School Diploma with Advanced Academic Endorsement from Columbia High School. She will attend Mercer University (Macon, GA) on a full athletic scholarship. Germani plans to continue to serve the Lord, Jesus Christ and work towards becoming a pediatrician and opening her own practice. She is the daughter of Angelear Abram and niece of Melena Warren, and cousin of De'Shaun.

Chelsea Carter received the Advanced High School Diploma with Honors from Buckhorn High School. Chelsea has chosen to attend the University of Mississippi and will major in Psychology with Pre-Medicine courses. She plans to become a Psychiatrist. Chelsea is the daughter of LTC Felicia Carter.

De'Asia Collins is a graduate of Columbia High School. She plans to attend Calhoun College and would like to join the military. De'Asia is the daughter of Terasha Jefferson.

Kennedy Briana Harris received the High School Diploma from Sparkman High School. Kennedy will attend Tuskegee University and major in Biology. Her career objective is to attain a MD/PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology. Kennedy is the daughter of Reginald and Yvonne Sanderson and sister of Robyn Sanderson.

Kaitlyn Marzetta McClung received the High School Diploma from New Century Technology High School. Kaitlyn plans to attend Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University. After completing her undergraduate degree she plans to get a masters degree and attend film school. Her dream is to be a successful poet and screenwriter and travel the world. Kaitlyn is the daughter of Kathlyn Dulaney.

Baccalaureate Degrees

Wesley Lamar Daniels earned the Bachelor of Science degree with majors in Criminal Justice and Emergency Management from the University of North Alabama. He plans to enter the military. He is the son of Sylvester and Angela V. Daniels and the brother of Keri Daniels.

Advanced Degrees

Tamela E. McGraw earned the Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Arkansas Medical School (UAMS) Little Rock, Arkansas. Dr. McGraw will be a resident pharmacist participating in the University of Cincinnati's Medical Center (UCMC) Pharmacy Practice Residency Program with the intent to focus on critical care pharmacy or emergency medicine pharmacy. She is the daughter of Rickey and Sarah McGraw, the granddaughter of Princetta Mackey, and the sister of Phillip R. McGraw.

2016 Retirees

Carol Foster Ball retired from Huntsville City Schools (Huntsville Center) after 38 years of service as a kindergarten teacher. She is the wife of James Ball and the mother of Ashley Ball.

Clementene H. Pearson retired from the URS Federal Services / NASA as a Procurement Specialist. She is the wife of Dr. Clifton Pearson.

Templena Stanley served 22 years in the Baltimore City Police Department as a 911 operator, and officially retired after 5 years of service with BookSystems, a local computer software company, as a help desk technician. The late Larry W. Stanley was her loving husband.



Dr. Brown presents scholarships on behalf of her class.

Men of Honor: Reclaiming Faith

By Justin York



Pastor Clayborn, Mr. Person and Brother Justin York

Men's Day was held on June 26, 2016. The speaker for the morning was Brother David Person. The men of St. John came dressed in their slacks and polo style shirts -- in a more comfortable, relaxed attire due to the recent temperature increase. Nothing about Brother Person's message was comfortable. Nothing about the worship service was relaxed. Brother Person's message, entitled "The Unthinkable Atrocity," was taken from the text of Judges 20:6 with background information from Judges 19 and 21. The men of St. John were challenged on the morning of June 26th. Challenged to rise above the norm. Challenged to treat women with the respect and dignity they deserve. Challenged to live the example of a true Man of Honor. Challenged to be accountable and take action against the mistreatment of women. Challenged to be in position to break the cycle of women being abused. Challenged to communicate. Challenged to counsel. Challenged to reflect. Challenged to speak up publicly. Challenged to live in the will of God for their lives.



Male Dance Ministry member minister in dance

Brother Person stated, "If we are going to legitimately claim to be Men of Honor, then we are going to have to come to grips with the fact that when it comes to the treatment of women, we have failed."



Men gather at the altar for prayer

The gravity of this statement set the tone for the entire message. Throughout the message there were moments of silence that seemed to last for hours. Those moments communicated the relevance of Brother Person's message. Those moments were indicative of the change required to become Men of Honor.

"We (men) can't be who we are supposed to be until women are allowed to be who God called them to be," according to Brother Person.

This was Men's Day and the focus was on women? If this is the message you received, you could not be more wrong. The focus was irrefutably on men; the actions they have taken, and the treatment they have allowed to become acceptable for their women. This message was not just a challenge for those men who have not treated women with the respect and value due to them. This message was a call to every man and boy to take a stand and put an end to what has been allowed for far too long. After the message, every man and boy willing to accept Brother Person's challenge was asked to come to the altar for prayer. The number of men at the altar displayed a renewed commitment to becoming Men of Honor. This writer is confident that the men of St. John accepted the challenge given by Brother Person and plan to walk in purpose, on purpose to reclaim the faith of their women, their community, and their church.

2016 General Conference Celebrated Bi-Centennial of the AME Church

By Nedra McDaniel



The 50th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was a grand celebration of 200 years of African Methodism. It was held at the Philadelphia Convention Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, July 6-13, 2016. The theme was "An Extraordinary History ~ An Incredible Future." The First Episcopal District, led by Bishop Gregory G. M. Ingram and Episcopal Supervisor Jessica Ingram, hosted the conference. They, along with the General Conference Commission, left no stone unturned in the planning and execution of the conference. The torch run from Delaware to Philadelphia was July 3, and representatives from the Ninth District participated. The unveiling of the Richard Allen statue in the courtyard of the Mother Bethel property was held on July 3, and the mural on the wall of the First District building was dedicated on July 4. The evening before the conference began, a celebratory gala banquet was held that included a display of the arts.

There were over 1,600 delegates from forty (40) countries and five (5) continents, and more than 20,000 observers. Worship and praise services, concerts, business sessions, retirements, memorials, elections, march for justice, political speeches, component breakfasts and luncheons, District meetings, prayer labs, 'lunch and learn' health commission sessions, RAYAC revival, Christian Debutante-Masters Dedication, bicentennial reflections and sponsor presentations filled the agenda of this eight-day conference. The organizers of the conference incorporated more technology than ever before. Documents required to conduct the business of the conference were provided electronically. The main worship services were streamed live so that persons unable to attend physically were able to attend virtually.

Worship and Special Services

The General Conference opening service was held at 10 am on July 6, 2016. Senior Bishop John R. Bryant presided and Bishop T. Larry Kirkland was the preacher. His message was entitled "Back to the Future" and the text was Acts 2:41. The First District choir rendered music, accompanied by a host of dancers. The ceremony of the transfer of the Presidential Medallion of the president of the Council of Bishops was also held during this service. The medallion was passed from Bishop Julius McAllister, Jr. to Bishop John White.

The Holy Communion Worship Service was held at 10 am on July 10, 2016. Bishop Richard Franklin Norris, presiding

prelate of the Seventh Episcopal District, was the preacher. His sermon was entitled "You Should Know Me by Now." Again, ministry in music and dance completed the worship experience. The Bishop's Quadrennial Distinguished Service awards were presented to the Honorable Kenneth Ezra Mapp, Governor, United States Virgin Islands, and The Most Reverend Michael Bruce Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church. The Richard Allen Freedom Award was presented to President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

The Closing Worship Service on July 13, 2016 was another traditional General Conference worship service, with the processional of the general officers, chaplains and bishops of the church. The retiring Senior Bishop John Richard Bryant brought the message. His text was John 18:17 and the sermon was entitled "Don't Get Caught Warming at the Wrong Fire." The General Conference honored the legacy of sister/exhorter Jarene Lee by posthumously conferring the ordination of Itinerant Elder. This service also included the presentation and passing of the medallion of the Senior Bishop to Bishop McKinley Young, the consecration of the newly elected Bishops and the Episcopal assignments of all active Bishops by the Episcopal Committee.

Prior to business sessions, services of Word and Worship were held. Preachers for these services include the Reverend Vernon R. Byrd, the Reverend Doctor Ann Lightner-Fuller, the Reverend Doctor William D. Watley, and the Reverend Tarkolo A. Miller. The Ecumenical service was held on Friday evening. There was participation from various denominations. The Reverend Doctor J. Louis Felton, pastor of Mt. Airy Church of God and Christ, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was the preacher. His sermon was entitled "Jesus Takes a Selfie" and the scripture was Matthew 10:28-34, 11:12.

The retirement service honored retiring Judicial Council members, General Officers and Bishops. During this service, Bishop Richardson offered words of wisdom. His subject was "If You Don't Breathe, You Will Die" and the text was from Acts 2. The following retirees were honored.

Judicial Council – Attorney Benjamin Edwards and Judge Rosemarie Rhodes-Miller

General Officers – Dr. Calvin Sydnor III, 20th Editor of *The Christian Recorder* and Dr. Johnny Barbour, President/Publisher Sunday School Union.

Bishops – Bishop John R. Bryant, Bishop T. Larry Kirkland, Bishop William DeVeaux, Bishop Richard Norris and Bishop

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2016 General Conference Celebrated Bi-Centennial of the AME Church

By Nedra McDaniel

(Continued from page 8)

Preston Williams.

Business Session and Other Highlights

The business sessions began the afternoon of the first day and continued until the final session at the close of the Consecration Service. There was far too much business addressed to cover in this article. Over 60 bills (revisions to *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2012*) were presented. All of the Districts and components (WMS, SADA, Women in Ministry, Sons of Allen, RAYAC, and more) made written and/or verbal reports to the General Conference. The budget for the Connectional Church for the next quadrennial was approved. Reports were received from the church's institutions of higher learning. Resolutions addressed the area of global warming, health, conference boundaries, and other topics. Powerful statements were delivered by the young adults who participated in The Adam-Coleman Williams Distinguished AME Scholars Guild.

As part of the original agenda, the Social Action Commission was scheduled to present a Social Action Position Paper. The commission incorporated into the agenda of the General Conference a statement on the violent acts of police against Blacks and the tragic sniper attack on police officers in Dallas. The Commission along with Senior Bishop John Bryan, the Philadelphia NAACP, and the young adults organized a justice march and rally on Thursday, July 7.

The presumptive democratic nominee for president of the United States, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, addressed the conference on Friday afternoon. In light of the week's events, her speech included actions she would implement to improve policing and justice for all Americans.

Elections were held on Monday afternoon. The results of the election are printed below.

GENERAL OFFICERS

TREASURER/CFO LEWIS, RICHARD ALLEN (Dr.)

GENERAL SECRETARY/CIO COOPER, JEFFERY B. (Rev. Dr.)

AMEC DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT SERVICES

HARRIS, JEROME V. (Rev. Dr.)

GLOBAL WITNESS AND MINISTRY

FLOWERS, GEORGE F. (Rev. Dr.)

HISTORIOGRAPHER/DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP, EDITOR OF AME REVIEW

FRY BROWN, TERESA L. (Rev. Dr.)

PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER, SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION

BELIN, RODERICK DWAYNE (Rev.)

EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN RECORDER

THOMAS, JOHN III (Mr.)

DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

PIERCE, GARLAND F. (Rev. Dr.)

CHURCH GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

WADE, JAMES C. (Rev. Dr.)

JUDICIAL COUNCIL

CLERGY MEMBER—JUDICIAL COUNCIL

BESS, THOMAS LEON (Rev. Dr.)

CURRY, EDUARDO K., Esq. (Rev.)

LAY MEMBER—JUDICIAL COUNCIL

ANDERSON, DEREK H. DAWSON, WARREN H., Esq.

MAYBERRY, PATRICIA M., Esq. WRIGHT, TANIA E., Esq.

LAY ALTERNATE

BATTLE, STARR L., Esq.

BISHOP

SEAWRIGHT, HARRY LEE (Rev. Dr.)

MITCHELL, MICHAEL LEON (Rev. Dr.)

HENNING-BYFIELD, E. ANNE (Rev. Dr.)

BRILSFORD, RONNIE E. SR. (Rev. Dr.)

WICKER, STAFFORD J. N. (Rev. Dr.)

REID, FRANK MADISON III (Rev. Dr.)

Following the consecration service for the Bishops, the Episcopal Committee made their final report, the episcopal assignments for 2016-2020. The full list of assignments is on page 17 of this newsletter. Bishop Harry Seawright, the 133rd elected and consecrated bishop of the AME Church was assigned to the Ninth Episcopal District. Bishop James L. Davis was assigned to the Second Episcopal District.

The St. John Delegation

St. John members were delegates and observers at the General Conference. The delegates were the Reverend Doctor James R. Johnson (Chaplain), the Reverend Doctor Patrick D. Clayborn (Ministerial), Nedra McDaniel (Lay) and Jason Gilmore (Lay, first-alternate). Observers were the Reverend Doctor Homer McCall, the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn, Mrs. Mary Allen, Ms. Gale McCall, Ms. Sharon Butler, Dr. Jeanette Jones, Dr. Jennifer Patterson (liturgical dancer), Mrs. Abbiegail Hugine, Mr. Hodges and Mrs. Juanita Washington, Mrs. Charlsie Brooks, and Mrs. Dana Johnson. Presiding Elder Oliver Allen was a ministerial delegate and a member of the Episcopal Committee.

Vacation Bible School Showcases Talent

By Karmen Latimore



Pastor Clayborn and Rev. Sheri



Dr. Dillihunt, VBS director.



The theme for this year's Vacation Bible School was "I've got Talent!" St. John sure did showcase all its many talents! There were classes for all ages: "talented stars," "showstoppers," "junior performers," "executives," "super stars," and, last but not least, "the celebrities." Dr. Monica Dillihunt was the director.

Each class was able to dive in and look at different types of talents: Esther and her courageous spirit, Noah and his willingness to do as God commanded, and even Jesus, the carpenter, leading and showing how to love others. Pictures at

the bottom of this page captured some of the teaching, fun and fellowship of VBS.

Each night attendees gathered for food, fun and fellowship. This theme would not be complete without a "talent" show! Each class was able to showcase their many talents and gifts from God in front of everyone at the closing celebration.

Overall, VBS 2016 was a complete success as a result of much help from members, friends, and church auxiliaries.



**JULY
31
10:00AM
SERVICE**

ST. JOHN AME CHURCH

THRIVE **Sunday**

Theme: Living Free!



**PASTOR PATRICK
& REV. SHERI
CLAYBORN**

St. John 
AME Church



**REV.
JENNIFER
WATLEY
MAXELL**



**PASTOR WILLIE
DIGGS**

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

**229 CHURCH ST. NW
HUNTSVILLE, AL 35801
256.534.3265**



iTHRIVE Ministry presents

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

JULY 29TH // 7PM



FEATURING

Adia
Psalm 3 Mime
Ministry
The Comedy of
Rev. Rita
DJ Sam Smite
Unanimous

◀ HOSTED BY
Pastor Patrick &
Rev. Sheri Smith
Clayborn

ST. JOHN AME CHURCH 229 CHURCH ST NW • HUNTSVILLE, AL 35801 • (256) 534-3265

STJOHNAME-HSV.ORG • REV. PATRICK D. CLAYBORN, PH.D., PASTOR



Habitat for Humanity

2016 SPRING Build House Dedication
By Tami McGhee

2409 Garden Park
Huntsville, Alabama 35810



Completed 2016 Habitat Home



2016 Habitat Home Sponsors

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization that provides affordable, decent homes in the community for those who qualify. St John partnered with other local churches to support the Habitat for Humanity of Madison County's Spring Build. The 2016 Build is a 4 bedroom home at 2409 Garden Park Drive for the Carter Family. Sister Tami McGhee and Brother Jesse Johnson represented St. John at the home dedication service held on Saturday, June 4, 2016.

All St. John members who are physically able are encouraged to support this outreach ministry each year. Build site volunteers must be 16 years of age or older. Watch for announcements about the build next spring.



New home owners and volunteers



New home owner presented home



Technology Corner

By Ricardo Williams

Social Media Posting

Most people are involved in some type of social media. Taking precautions to post only certain information to the web is a must. Once information has been posted to social media, there is really no deletion from the social media database. It only appears to be deleted from your profile or page. This article highlights those things that people should consider when posting.

First, home and work addresses should not be shared with someone that you do not know. For example, geotags for Instagram retrieve the location. All of these tags may point to the same location. By doing this, other users can pinpoint frequent locations, which could be work and/or home locations. This provides valuable information to a stranger. Also be careful who is tagged at locations using the check-in features.

The most important persons in our lives are our kids. Always get permission from parents before posting pictures of their kids on social media. Even if the kids are yours, be mindful of the pictures that you are posting on social media. If pictures of kids are posted using map features of social media, someone can easily find school or other information about the kids. Do not post private pictures that should not be shared throughout the Internet. This also applies to the direct messaging of private information that can easily be exposed to unwanted viewers.

Be careful when posting to social media while away from home. When posting to social media that you are away from home for an extended amount of time, you are basically telling home invaders that your home is available for break in. Never post travel itineraries to social media sites. Although there are many precautions one can take to protect their personal data, each post to a social media site is exposure to the risk of Internet hackers. This is not saying to not use social media, but please think about what you are posting to social media sites prior to hitting that share button.



Soup Kitchen Serve Like Allen

By Chastie Brodie

Not gold, but only a man can make
a (church), great and strong.
A man who, for truth and honor's sake,
A man who stood fast and suffered long.

A brave man who worked while others slept,
who dared while others slept.
He built a church pillars deep
and lifted many thousands to their home on high.
— Anonymous¹

The AME Church is honoring its founding Bishop, Richard Allen, who organized the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) two hundred years ago. Allen's love for people drove him with a desire to serve.

Will you join Allen's children as they serve those who come to the St. John Soup Kitchen on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month? The soup ministry feels this would please Founder Richard Allen.

¹ *Leaves of Gold*, 1948



Weekly Prayer Time

Tuesdays at Noon
Conference Call Credentials:
US Toll Number **(530) 881-1212**
Meeting ID: 876-863-940

Listen to the playback any time
Playback Number **(530) 881-1219**
Meeting Id 876-863-940

"...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication,
to that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication
for all the saints," - Ephesians 6:18

The Agony of the Feet

Submitted by Rosemary Wells, R.N.



For many, a trip to the podiatrist is not on their to-do list, but it is time to realize that feet are made for much more than just showing off trendy footwear! Despite being comparatively small extremities, they contain

one-fourth of the body's bones, 214 ligaments and 38 muscles. According to the Illinois Podiatric Medical Association feet mirror an individual's general health and are where conditions ranging from arthritis to circulatory disorders show initial symptoms.

Some of the most common foot problems are discussed below.

Fungal and bacterial conditions, including athlete's foot, occur because feet spend a lot of time in shoes— a warm, dark, humid place that is perfect for fungus to grow. Fungal and bacterial conditions can cause dry skin, redness, blisters, itching and peeling. If not treated right away, an infection can be hard to cure or the infection may reoccur. To prevent infections, keep feet—especially the area between the toes—clean and dry. Try dusting feet daily with foot powder. If the condition does not get better within two (2) weeks, talk to the doctor.

Corns and calluses are caused by friction and pressure when the bony parts of the foot rub against shoes. If you have corns or calluses, see your doctor or podiatrist. Sometimes wearing shoes that fit properly or using special pads solves the problem. Treating corns or calluses oneself may be harmful, especially if the person has diabetes or poor circulation. Over the counter medicines contain acids that destroy the tissue but do not treat the cause. Sometimes these medicines reduce the need for surgery, but check with your doctor before using them.

Bunions develop when the joints in the big toe (also called the great toe) no longer fit together as they should and become swollen and tender. Bunions seem to run in families. If a bunion is not severe, wearing shoes cut wide at the instep toes, taping the foot, or wearing pads that cushion the bunion may help the pain. Other treatments include physical therapy and wearing orthotic devices or shoe inserts. A doctor can also prescribe anti-inflammatory drugs and corti-

sone injections for pain. Sometimes surgery is needed to relieve the pressure and to repair the toe joint.



Ingrown toenails occur when a piece of the nail breaks the skin—which can happen if toenails are not cut properly. Ingrown toenails are very common in large toes. A doctor can remove part of the toenail that is cutting into the skin. This allows the area to heal. Ingrown toenails can often be avoided by cutting the toenail straight across and level with the top of the toe.

Hammertoe is caused by a shortening of the tendons that control toe movements. The toe knuckle is usually enlarged, drawing the toe back. Over time, the joint enlarges and stiffens as it rubs against shoes. Your balance may be affected. Wearing shoes and stockings with plenty of room is a treatment for hammertoe. In very serious cases, surgery may be needed.

Spurs are calcium growths that develop on bones of your feet. They are caused by muscle strain in the feet. Standing for long periods of time, wearing badly fitted shoes or being overweight can make spurs worse. Sometimes spurs are completely painless-at other times they can be very painful. Treatments for spurs include using foot supports, heel pads and heel cups. Sometimes surgery is needed.

The American Diabetes Association suggests that people with diabetes can develop many different foot problems. Foot problems often happen when there is nerve damage, also called neuropathy. This can cause tingling, pain (burning or stinging) or weakness in the foot. It can cause loss of feeling in the foot, so a person can injure it and not know it has been injured. Nerve damage can also lead to changes in the shape of feet and toes. Diabetes can cause blood vessels of the foot and leg to narrow and harden, causing poor circulation (blood flow), making the foot less able to fight infection and heal. Because people with diabe

(Continued on page 17)

AME Proud

EPISCOPAL ASSIGNMENTS 2016-2020

EPISCOPAL DISTRICT	BISHOP	ORDER ELECTED	RETIREMENT DATE	LOCATION
1	Bishop Gregory G. M. Ingram	118	2020	Bermuda, Delaware, New England, New Jersey, New York, Western New York, and Philadelphia
2	Bishop James Levert Davis	123	2028	Baltimore, Washington, Virginia, North Carolina and Western North Carolina
3	Bishop McKinley Young	109	2020	Ohio, Pittsburgh, North Ohio, South Ohio and West Virginia
4	Bishop John Franklin White	130	2024	Indiana, Chicago, Illinois, Michigan, Canada and India
5	Bishop Clement W. Fugh	131	2024	California, Southern California, Desert Mountain, Midwest, Missouri, and Pacific Northwest
6	Bishop Regina H. T. Jackson	132	2028	Georgia, Southwest Georgia, Atlanta-North, Macon, South Georgia and Augusta
7	Bishop Samuel Lawrence Green, Sr.	125	2036	Palmetto, South Carolina, Columbia, Piedmont, Northeast South Carolina, and Central South Carolina
8	Bishop Julius Harrison McAllister	129	2024	South Mississippi, North Mississippi, Central North Louisiana, and Louisiana
9	Bishop Harry Lee Seawright	133	2032	Alabama River Region, Southeast Alabama, Northeast Alabama, Southwest Alabama, Northwest Alabama
10	Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie	117	2020	Texas, Southwest Texas, North Texas and Northwest Texas
11	Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr.	115	2024	Florida, Central, South, West Coast, East, Bahamas
12	Bishop Michael Leon Mitchell	134	2036	Oklahoma State, Arkansas, East Arkansas, and West Arkansas
13	Bishop Jeffrey Nathaniel Leath	128	2032	Tennessee, East Tennessee, West Tennessee, Kentucky and West Kentucky
14	Bishop E. Earl McCloud, Jr.	127	2028	Liberia, Central Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire and Togo-Benin
15	Bishop David Rodynica Daniels, Jr.	124	2032	Angola, Cape, Eastern Cape, Kalamari, Namibia, and Queenstown
16	Bishop E. Anne Henning Byfield	135	2024	Guyana/Suriname, Virgin Islands, European, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and Windward Islands
17	Bishop Wilfred Jacobus Messiah	120	2028	Southeast Zambia, Southwest Zambia, Northeast Zambia, Northwest Zambia, Zambezi, Congo Brazzaville, Katanga, Karanga, Kinshasa, Mbuji-Mayi, Rwanda, Burundi and Tshikapa
18	Bishop Stafford J. N. Wicker	137	2036	Botswana, Lesotho, Northeast Lesotho, Mozambique, and Swaziland
19	Bishop Paul J. M. Kawimbe	121	2036	Orange, Natal, M.M. Mokone Memorial Conference, East, West
20	Bishop Ronnie Elijah Brailsford, Sr.	136	2032	Malawi North, Malawi South, Malawi Central, Northeast Zimbabwe, Southwest Zimbabwe, Central Zimbabwe
Ecumenical Officer	Bishop Frank Madison Reel, III	138	2024	

The Agony of the Feet

Submitted by Rosemary Wells, R.N.

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tes are more prone to foot problems a foot care specialist may be on their health care team.



Foot massages are not just about relaxation; a foot massage stimulates muscles, improves circulation, lessens stiffness and tension, and can eliminate pain. People who have a serious foot

injury or serious pain, should see a doctor or podiatrist prior to obtaining a foot massage to prevent aggravating the injury.

Chinese Medical research says that most of the sensory nerves of internal organs are in the feet. The reflexology massage theory is that certain points on the feet correspond to certain organs and body parts and that applying pressure to the areas can promote health in the corresponding parts. Reflexology foot massage is an incredible healing force that can help alleviate many symptoms including tension headaches, insomnia, chronic fatigue, arthritis, menstrual disorders, such as premenstrual syndrome (PMS), back pain, sport's injuries, digestive disorders and problems including constipation, stress and stress-related conditions, and many more health problems known to man. Reflexology is also used for post-operative or palliative care. A study by the American Cancer Society Journal found that one-third of the cancer patients used reflexology as a complementary therapy. Begin by giving the reflexologist a complete and accurate health history. If a person has foot ulcers, injury, blood vessel disease such as clots, other conditions or is pregnant, reflexology may not be appropriate or safe. Both reflexology and traditional foot massage have been shown to promote psychological and physical health. Be sure to consult with your physician before considering a reflexology or traditional foot massage.

For more info go to www.nih.gov

(National Institute of Health)

SBHB Church School Convention Held on the Lake

By Willie Sandifer, SBHB Church School Superintendent



The South Birmingham Huntsville Bessemer District's (SBHB) 2016 Christian Education and Church School Convention, hosted by Livingston Chapel, was held at the Civitan Park at Lake Guntersville. The Presiding Elder is the Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr.



The theme was "Walking on the Lake with Jesus." This theme was explored in four channels:

- Channel 1: Church School Lesson - A Day of Joy for the Remnant, Zephaniah 3:9-14, 20
- Channel 2: Oratory Contest - Why Prayer is Important to Me—and Church Trivia Questions
- Channel 3: Poster Contest
- Channel 4: Church Family Feud, Jeopardy, Bingo, Volley Ball, Tug of war, and Sidewalk Games



Church School Lesson Overview – August 2016

The lesson reviews were written by Brother Kenneth Parham.

August 7, 2016

Lesson Title: Safe in God's Love

Lesson Scripture: Romans 8:28-39

Lesson Print: Same

Key Verse: If God is for us, who is against us? Romans 8:31

Comments noted in the *Life Application Study Bible* concerning verses 29-30 indicate that before the beginning of the world, God chose, of His own free will, to give the gift of salvation. Scholars point to Ephesians 1:11 which states: "...that we are predestined according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will..." for support of this point. The commentary also made it a point to indicate that God's plan for humanity was not an afterthought. It was settled before the foundation of the earth was laid. Humankind was created to serve and honor God.

The commentary addresses verses 32-34 by indicating that sometimes people feel unworthy of God's salvation, but they should not dismay. God gave His son, He is not going to hold back the gift of salvation. If Christ gave His life for people to be saved, then He is not going to turn around and condemn them. God will not withhold anything that is needed to live for Him.

The commentary provides Paul's words of comfort in verses 35-39. Comments indicated that believers have always had to endure hardships in many forms: persecution, illnesses, imprisonment, and even death. These afflictions may cause one to question whether Jesus has abandoned them. Paul exclaimed that it is impossible to be separated from Christ. His death for believers is His proof of His unconquerable love. Those who believe these overwhelming assurances, should not be afraid.

August 14, 2016

Lesson Title: Living Under God's Mercy

Lesson Scripture: Romans 9:6-29

Lesson Print: Romans 9:6-18

Key Verse: So then he has mercy on whomever he chooses,

and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses. Romans 9:18

This summary with assistance from the *Living Application Study Bible* reminds readers that God's ways are not their ways. They assume God, being perfect, would work in perfect order but sometimes He must deviate (in the eyes of humans) in order to fulfill His ultimate goal. Here in verses 6-13, Paul reminded readers of the promises made to Abraham – "I will make you a nation of millions." There was a delay in God fulfilling His promise to Abraham. This delay gave the appearance that the promise would be fulfilled by the servant, Hagar, who bore Abraham a son, Ismael. However, God was faithful in dealing with Abraham, and Sarah conceived Isaac late in life. It is noted again in Isaac's life that God's promise was also not consistent with the times. It was assumed that the firstborn would inherit the birthright. In this case, Isaac's youngest son, Jacob, received the birthright over his oldest brother, Esau, and God proceeded with the promise through Jacob.

Paul reminded readers in verses 14-17 that the actions of God may seem unjust, but who are they to question? Paul recounted the encounter of God with Pharaoh during the time of Moses and how God intentionally hardened Pharaoh's heart in order that God could reveal His power.

In verse 18, Paul reminded readers that God can show mercy upon whomever He chooses as well as hardening of hearts of anyone He chooses.

August 21, 2016

Lesson Title: God Prunes and Grafts

Lesson Scripture: Romans 11:11-36

Lesson Print: Romans 11:11-24

Key Verse: Note then the kindness and the severity of God; severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness toward you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. Romans 11:22

In this lesson, Paul discussed the importance of the Jews in the new church that was mainly comprised of Gentiles. Paul indicated that when a Jew is converted to Christianity, it is like one returning from the dead and that there should be a celebration. Paul warned the Gentiles not to have a superior attitude towards the Jews because he indicated

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Church School Lesson

(Continued from page 18)

that the Jewish religion was like the root of the olive tree, and the Jewish people were the original branches. Once the Jewish people rejected Christianity, God simply pruned off the unproductive branches and has grafted the Gentile branches into the trunk of the olive tree allowing the Gentiles to nourish and flourish on the supplement provided by the roots of the healthy tree.

Paul reminded the Gentiles that only through faith did God allow the Gentiles to share in salvation, and they should be in awe. Paul indicated that the Gentiles should demonstrate kindness to all (they should cease in persecuting the Jews), and God would continue to show kindness to the Gentiles. Finally, Paul reminded the Gentiles that just as God had pruned the Jewish branches from the tree, God can prune the Gentiles and re-graft the Jewish branches back onto the tree.

August 28, 2016

Lesson Title: Love Fulfills the Law

Lesson Scripture: Romans 12:1-2; 13:8-14

Lesson Print: Romans 12:1-2; 13:8-10

Key Verse: The one who loves another has fulfilled the law.
Romans 13:8

In all that is happening lately in the current world (i.e. political, social, economic and religious intolerances bringing about violence to one another), believers should be mindful of the appeal that Paul delivered to those of his time. Christians must continue to live for Christ Jesus. Christians should continue to study and stay in the Word so that they can do things that are acceptable to God. As much as societal norms are constantly changing, believers should stay steadfast to God's way and not easily influenced by what is happening around them.

It has been pointed out by some religious leaders that events occurring via political, social, economic and religious intolerances are God's judgment being visited on and in our communities and countries. But if this is God's will, Christians can and must continue to show compassion to stricken brothers and sisters by keeping the greatest commandment—Love thou brother as thou self. And in today's time, love means doing what is right in support of our brothers and sisters who are facing hardships.

Church School Book Club

August 2016

Discussion Date: August 20, 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Forty Acres Dwayne Alexander Smith, 2015

A young black attorney confronts issues of race and power as he uncovers a shocking conspiracy in the most page-turning and provocative thriller since *The Firm*.

Martin Grey, a smart, talented black lawyer working out of a storefront in Queens, becomes friendly with a group of some of the most powerful, wealthy, and esteemed black men in America. He's dazzled by what they have accomplished, and they seem to think he has the potential to be as successful as they are. They invite him for a weekend away from it all—no wives, no cell phones, no talk of business. But far from home and cut off from everyone he loves, he discovers a disturbing secret that challenges some of his deepest convictions.

Martin finds out that his glittering new friends are part of a secret society dedicated to the preservation of the institution of slavery—but this time around, the black men are called "Master." Joining them seems to guarantee a future without limits; rebuking them almost certainly guarantees his death. Trapped inside a picture-perfect, make-believe world that is home to a frightening reality, Martin must find a way out that will allow him to stay alive without becoming the very thing he hates.

A novel of rage and compassion, good and evil, trust and betrayal, *Forty Acres* is the thought-provoking story of one man's desperate attempt to escape the clutches of a terrifying new moral order. - Amazon



Change isn't change, until you ...CHANGE

By Janette Smith

Certified Strategic Intervention & Mindset Coach

Romans 12:2

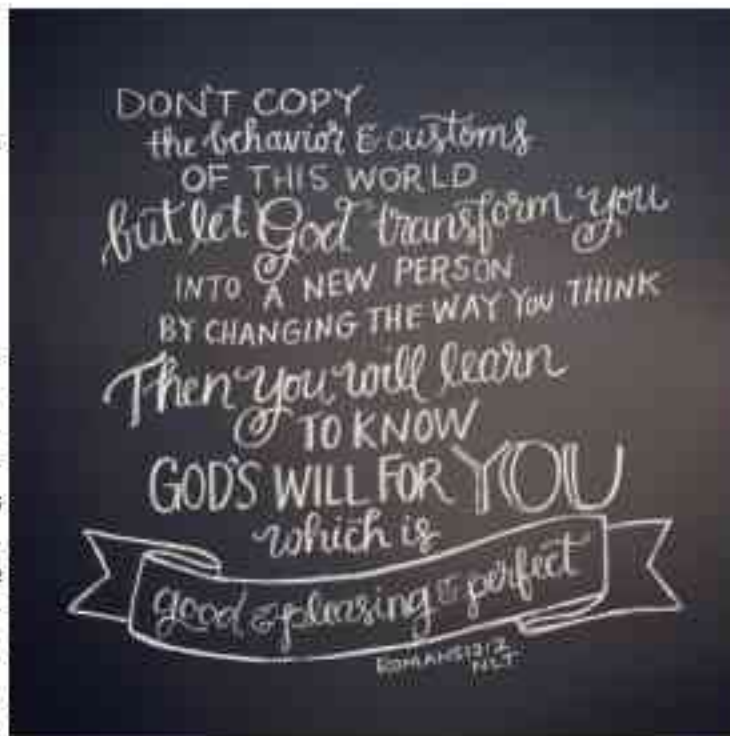
"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

We live in troubling times. The headlines and news reports in this season can leave us feeling wounded and in such despair. Attacks in other countries add to the chaos and unrest. Many ask, "When will there be peace, unity, respect and dignity for all?" In an effort to fight racism and brutality, some act out and speak in counterproductive ways. In this writer's opinion, this tarnishes the work and legacy of civil rights warriors who gave their lives under the banner of non-violent protesting.

Who are we as believers in the world now? Even when it comes to entertainment, we watch shows touted as being 'reality television.' In truth the shows are almost always highly produced as it makes 'stars' of its cast members. In life and art, where are the reflections of the light and love of Jesus Christ? A person might argue that negative behavior is not that of believers. Is that necessarily true? Can it honestly be said that believers do not communicate rudely, gossip, fuel strife, act disingenuously, lie or even fight amongst each other?

2 Corinthians 5:17 says, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"* The responsibility is on us to continue to grow in that 'new.' As believers we must 'do the work.' When the 'newness' of life is introduced and we learn a new way of being, we have to let the old GO. "This is just how I am; take me or leave me." is no acceptable excuse.

Romans 12:2 in the Message Bible translation makes it plain: *"Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place*



it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity." The line that says "recognize what He wants from you, and quickly respond to it..." is most encouraging, because it implies that at any moment, with the leading of the Holy Spirit, we can CHANGE.

If we want to see real change in our country we are going to have to:

- 1.) REFLECT AND BE HONEST. Ask, "What is the thinking in me that I need to really challenge." Often the change we want to see can begin within.
- 2.) ASK YOURSELF can you love God and all His creations? That is what He asks of us: - love Him and our neighbors as ourselves.
- 3.) SEEK UNDERSTANDING. Too many people are more dedicated to 'being right' than being reconciled.
- 4.) PUT LOVE and RESPECT IN ACTION! You have to be willing to teach this to your kids and be the model for this in your everyday life.
- 5.) DO WHAT IS RIGHT BECAUSE IT IS RIGHT. That is what it looks like to *"not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of your mind."*

I pray that we will become more grounded in Your Word so that we reflect the light and love of Jesus Christ, and not operate as a mirror for the dysfunction of the world. Let our character glorify You, God, and be an inspiration to all those we come in contact with. In Jesus' name, AMEN

August 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Noon Prayer Call	No Bible Study			9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
	6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	6:00 p.m. Steward Board Mtg.		5:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship Continuation		Noon Prayer Call	12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	5:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal		9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting 2:00-6:00 p.m. Church Picnic AAUW Farm
	6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	6:00 p.m. Steward Board Mtg. Trustee Board Meeting				
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship Pastor's Appreciation	6:00 p.m. Lay Organization Mtg. VP Choir Rehearsal	11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Meet the Candidates	12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	5:00 p.m. VP Choir Rehearsal	6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. WOMEN'S DAY		11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	5:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m. HARVEST HOME
28	29	30	31			
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship		Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study			

PRAYER for the MONTH God, in the midst of police brutality against defenseless minorities and in the midst of senseless violence against police officers, we plead the blood of Jesus. Let your power come against every evil. In the midst of bondage of all forms, we pray for deliverance through the anointing of the Holy Spirit. We rebuke all forms of demonic activity: racism, sexism, homophobia, heterosexism, classism, militarism, fear mongering, and hate dispensing. We pray for true freedom in Jesus. We ask for your Spirit to give us liberty. We invite your truth that makes us free. We yield to your wisdom that will order our steps. Change our hearts and minds that we may love you and one another in authentic and holy ways. Let that transformation be contagious. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture for the Month — "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." John 8:36 (NRSV)



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229 Church Street
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(256) 534-6828 Fax

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The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright, Bishop
 The Reverend Sherita Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor
 The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
 The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>July 25-28</i> | <i>Ninth District CEC, Troy, Alabama</i> |
| <i>July 29</i> | <i>Friday Nite Live, 7 p.m., doors open at 6:30 p.m.</i> |
| <i>July 31</i> | <i>iTHRIVE Sunday, 10:00 a.m.</i> |
| <i>August 13</i> | <i>Church Picnic, AA MU Farm, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.</i> |
| <i>August 14</i> | <i>Pastor's Appreciation, 10:00 a.m.,
The Reverend Mashad Evans, Pastor of St. John AME Church Birmingham will be the preacher</i> |
| <i>August 16</i> | <i>Meet the Candidates Forum, 6 pm
District 1 Gty Council</i> |
| <i>August 21</i> | <i>Women's Day, 10:00 a.m.</i> |

*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 21 Issue 8

August 2016



Pastor Patrick G. Clayborn, Ph.D.

A Message from the Pastor

Sweet Sorrows

Jude 1:24-25

"Parting is such sweet sorrow..." are the words that Juliet utters to Romeo in Shakespeare's classic *Romeo and Juliet*. She is saying goodnight to her fair love and describes their separation - though temporary - as a "sweet sorrow." It's sorrowful because neither one wanted to leave the other and to be apart from each other was agonizing as they prepared to get married. I dare say that most people understand "sorrow." What gives the ultimate character to this phrase is

the word "sweet." How can sorrow be sweet? Two reasons come to mind. First, even though they are separating to go to sleep, Juliet is saying that her feelings of love for Romeo will grow during their separation - "sweet sorrow." Second, "sweet" may make a reference to their future. Notice what Juliet says in full: "Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow, / That I shall say good night till it be morrow." Juliet, heartbroken that they must leave each other, is anticipating their coming back together - "sweet sorrow."

St. John, "parting is such sweet sorrow." There is sorrow because Rev. Sheri, P2, Joya, and I will miss you all greatly. We will miss our times of worship, fellowship, and service. Yet, this sorrow is sweet. These past four years and nine months have been amazing. We have seen God's miracles fall like rain out of the sky. We've witnessed the spirit of suicide taken off of people right at the altar. We've watched healing take place (e.g., Hodges Washington's sister visited church this past Sunday). From Friday Nite Live, Free

to Worship with Anthony Brown & group therapy, and FLOW worship services, we encountered the presence of God in unique and radical ways. Our forums on police community relations or meeting political candidates empowered our people with information and wisdom. Feeding from the Soup Kitchen, giving Holiday meal boxes, adopting schools, helping seniors with home repairs, building Habitat for Humanity houses, visiting members in the

hospital as an entire church, and witnessing door to door allowed us to see God in our community. Though we may be leaving, the memories of what we've shared will intensify our feelings of love - making our sorrow sweet!

Yes, the sorrow is sweet because our future will be blessed. While we will be taking different paths, I rest in the knowledge that God is taking us all to a higher level of wor-

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Vision for the Future

In John A.M.E. Church - Huntsville, AL
800 North Cooper, P.O. Box 10000

(Continued on page 2)

A Message from the Pastor

(Continued from page 1)

ship and service. We left a vision plan for St. John. It contains possibilities for future growth based on the ministry's trajectory over the past few years. Rev. Sheri and I just believe that St. John is about to take off and soar into God's plan for this ministry. We will not be surprised if there is hardly any space for people to gather for worship and work in three to four years. When the ribbon cutting for the new worship facility takes place, we would love to be in attendance. That is what makes the sorrow sweet. When we see each other again, we will all be in a place of blessedness and joy!

We thank you all for your love, your support, your prayers, your faithfulness, your sacrifices, your patience, your understanding, your willingness to try new things, and your walk of faith. Without you, none of what we achieved could've been possible. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Please know that you will continue to be in our prayers and thoughts. We will take the lessons we've learned on this stage of our journey and apply them where we are going. We will hold a special place in our hearts for you all and will pray that God's best blessings come your way. We pray that you will do even more under your next pastor. We pray that there will be even more miracles, healings, community outreach, and free flowing worship. We thank God in advance for what God is about to do in the life of this church. Eyes have not seen; ears have not heard what God has in store for you!

It appears that this is the time for the benediction - the good word that typically concludes our worship experiences. Benedictions seem to encapsulate the idea of "sweet sorrow." We hate to leave the presence of God and the rich fellowship of the saints - SORROW. However, the work of ministry outside the walls intensifies our love for God and each other - SWEET! And, we know that we will see each other again at the next worship service - SWEET! One of these days, Jesus is coming back, and we will be reunited with Him! SWEET!!!!

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 1:24-25)

From the St. John Family *Thank You Team Clayborn!*

From the first Sunday in December 2011 until the last Sunday in August 2016, the members of St. John give God praise for the Reverend Doctor Patrick D. Clayborn and the Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn.



For every sermon, sermon series, team sermon ...Thank You!

For every prayer in church, in homes, in hospitals, on the phone, in the community, on the prayer line ...Thank you!

For every bible study lesson/series/workshop ... Thank you!

For every Sunday morning worship service ... Thank you!

For every word of encouragement ... Thank you!

For every celebration of the joys of births ... Thank you!

For the every celebration of life ... Thank you!

For the administration of the business of the church
... Thank you!

For vision for worship and praise ... Thank you!



Remembering Mrs. Mable Jones McCall

By Zelda Goggans



Reverend and Mrs. McCall were first introduced to St. John at our annual church picnic back in the early 70's. Everyone knew there would be a new minister at St. John, and were excited about meeting the new pastor and his wife, who was pregnant with their first child.

Reverend and Mrs. McCall served 40 years at St. John and were a true pastoral team, a team committed in

serving others and winning souls for Christ. They were there during happy and sad times, providing prayers, comfort and encouragement. They were committed in serving their church and the Huntsville community. They were equally loved. This was evident from their last pastor's anniversary. There were people there from all over the state of Alabama.

While at St. John, Mrs. McCall served on many boards. This included the Stewardess Board, Usher Board, Women's Missionary Society, Vacation Bible School Coordinator, Newsletter Staff, Foodservice and Soup Kitchen Ministries. Mrs. McCall was also a member of the GHMF Minister's Spouse Association and an active member of Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated. These are just a few organizations to which Mrs. McCall gave of her time and service.

It was once asked of Mrs. McCall "How do you find the time and energy to do all that you do?" She was a minister's wife with all that goes along with that, at one time raising a family and teaching full time at Lakewood Elementary School. Her answer was simple. She said, "Homer and I are here to serve and as long as God provides us with health and strength we will continue to serve."

Her answer reminds one of the verse from Proverbs 31:20. It states: "She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hand to the needy."

Mrs. McCall was also all about family. She was a loving mother to Homer II, Sonya, and Gale and grandmother to Madison, Jacob, Aria, Lauryn, and Zuri. She was a devoted wife to Reverend McCall her husband of 45 years. While their children were home, if you saw one you saw five. They seemed to be always together and happy. While as Pastor and First Lady of St. John, Reverend and Mrs. McCall received honors at the AME Connectional Level as the Ninth Episcopal District Family of the year and Pastor and First Lady of the year.

Mrs. McCall was a true woman of God. She sought to be compassionate and loving as a sister, wife, mother and friend, tender-hearted and humble-minded. She looked for the best in others and gave the best she had. Her life was an inspiration and her memory will be a benediction.



iTHRIVE Worship Service Focused on "Living Free!"

By Bridget J. Floyd

Photography by Monica Dillihunt and Bridget Floyd

The worship service, which has a youth emphasis, was held on July 31st at 10 a.m. The theme was "Living Free!" and four ministers coordinated to bring the message, "Living Free" based from John 8:31-36. Two guest ministers, the Reverend Jennifer Watley Maxell, Co-Founder of The Break-

through Fellowship, Atlanta, Georgia, and Pastor Willie Diggs, Youth Pastor of Beacon Hill Worship Center, Madison, Alabama, began the team-preaching endeavor. Pastor Patrick Clayborn and Executive Minister Sheri Smith Clayborn reprised their team — preaching to bring the final points of the sermon. The service was enhanced by St. John's Voices in Praise Choir, Children's Choir, Praise Ensemble and the Dance Ministry.

Prior to introducing the guest ministers, Pastor Clayborn acknowledged the twentieth anniversary of the St. John AMENewsletter. He noted that this ministry has extended beyond St. John and the AME Connection and has been well-received. Pastor Clayborn recognized current and past staff members and contributors to the AMEN and presented the editor, Ms. Nedra McDaniel, with a beautiful floral



Pastor Clayborn presents guest preachers Maxell and Diggs.

arrangement. As she came forward the congregation spontaneously stood and applauded the leader and accomplishments of this ministry.

Pastor Diggs began the sermon by introducing the congregants to Jesus, giving a litany of descriptors — "the cornerstone, deliverer,

healer of the sick... brought forth Lazarus... God's personal sacrifice". He emphasized the text citation that if one is made free by the Son, one is free indeed. He urged the congregants to "participate in your own rescue... raise your hands in worship". The first point was "Know the Son".

The Reverend Watley Maxell focused on the second point "Achieve True Freedom". She noted that although believers know Jesus is "the Son", there is a tendency to treat Jesus as a "divine Santa." That is, they submit a wish list, as it were. In addition, there is a tendency to become angry and "blame God", when things do not turn out as desired. She highlighted the difference between "giving up" the sin versus "giving over" sinfulness to God. True freedom can only be reached if/when the latter occurs; otherwise the free-

(Continued on page 10)



Back to School: Start the Way You Plan to Finish!

By Bridget J. Floyd

This is the time of the year when young people and parents plan for return to academic pursuits and support of same. It's back to school time! This is often met with mixed emotions. Following are suggestions for starting the school year and strategies to be maintained throughout the year.

First, make the psychological adjustment. Prepare mentally for a change from the summer schedule. Emphasize/embrace the positive aspect of learning as well as seeing



friends/making new friends at school. If helpful, remind the child and/or oneself that there are weekends (respite).

Restorative sleep is important. Quality, not just quantity, is important. It is ideal to start adjusting bedtime a week before school begins. Eight hours of sleep are recommended for children. Adolescents need nine to ten hours of sleep. Bedtime should be set based on the time needed in the morning to get ready and to school on time. The bedtime routine should include "quiet time" at least an hour before bedtime. Lights and volume should be lowered (television, music, voices). If video games are allowed on school nights, they should end at least one hour before bedtime (two hours are recommended). There should be no exciting television programs, movies, video games or exercise just prior to bedtime.

A smooth start in the morning can be facilitated by selecting clothes to be worn, packing lunches and book bags at night. Anything that can be done the night before, means that there is one less thing to do in the morning and less stress. A healthy breakfast which includes protein is recommended.

Study habits are key. Do assignments in a timely manner, avoid procrastination. It is helpful to record assignments in a planner, even if assignments can be accessed online and are done by computer. Parents should participate in the homework process. Depending on the youngster's need, this may range from a friendly reminder to do homework, to sitting at the desk or table with the child and taking an active role in helping the child do the homework (without doing the work for the child).

Students should be aware that "active learning" is the best method. This is reviewing what was learned and adding

new information to it. This can be thought of as "building blocks". This method also decreases stress at test time because the student has been "building" knowledge and all that is required at test time is a review, rather than having to learn the material the night before test ("cramming").

Also, the way a person studies for tests can make a significant difference in how well they do on tests. The best way to study is for "recall" rather than "recognition".

The capacity to recall information allows the person to *generate* answers; that is, to explain, define, write an essay. Studying for recognition allows the person to *select* the correct answer. Examples of test questions include multiple choice, true-false, matching, etc. The student must rely on the answer being given, in order to select the right answer. However, if the student studies for "recall", it does not matter the type of test item or question. If the student can generate the answer, s/he can certainly recognize or pick the correct answer. On the other hand, if the person expects a multiple choice test but has to fill in blanks or write essays, this would be problematic. Also, some multiple choice tests require "recall" by the student because there is more than one choice that could be correct, the student must choose the *best* answer.

Education and knowledge are the keys to success. Once obtained, no one can take knowledge from a person. Knowledge is power. Have a successful and enjoyable school year!



Ninth Episcopal District Of the AME Church

Schedule of Annual Conferences

Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Presiding Prelate

The Reverend Sherita M. Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor

7TH SESSION OF THE NORTHWEST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, September 6, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, September 7–10, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

St. Mark AME Church, Dora – Rev. Sheila Williams – Host Church & Pastor

St. Mark AME Church, Mason City – Rev. Gloria Patrick – Host Church & Pastor

Allen Chapel AME Church, Woodlawn – Rev. Venita Farness – Host Church & Pastor

Reverend Oliver Allen, Host Presiding Elder

Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Host Presiding Elder

Held at DANIEL PAYNE COMMUNITY PLAZA

7TH SESSION OF THE SOUTHEAST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, September 13, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, September 14–17, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

John's Chapel AME Church, Enterprise

605 Geneva Highway, Enterprise, AL 36330 * 334.393.2661

Reverend Trevor Woolridge, Host Pastor

Reverend Johnny Rutledge, Host Presiding Elder

7TH SESSION OF THE ALABAMA RIVER REGION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, October 4, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, October 5–8, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

St. Paul AME Church, Montgomery

706 East Patton Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36111

Reverend Dr. Farrell Duncombe, Host Pastor

Reverend Albert L. Hyche, Host Presiding Elder

7TH SESSION OF THE NORTHEAST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, October 11, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, October 12–15, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

Washington Chapel AME Church, Tuskegee

2508 Old Montgomery Road, Tuskegee, AL 36088

Reverend Andrew Holtz, Jr., Host Pastor

Reverend Dr. Letitia Watford, Host Presiding Elder

7TH SESSION OF THE SOUTHWEST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, October 18, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, October 19 – 22, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

St. Paul AME Church, Mobile

1251 Rev. A.T. Days Street, Mobile, AL 36605

Reverend Robert J. Rumley, Host Pastor

Reverend Johnnie M. Bryant, Host Presiding Elder

PRE-PLenary MEETING—Wednesday, November 9, 2016

PLenary MEETING—November 10 – 12, 2016

Ninth Episcopal District Of the AME Church

Schedule of Annual Conferences

Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Presiding Prelate

The Reverend Sherita M. Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor

7TH SESSION OF THE NORTHWEST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 6-10, 2016

Tuesday, September 6, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, September 7-10, 2016

Business, Training & Worship

(Opening Annual Service

Wednesday, September 7, 2016 at 6:30pm)

St. Mark AME Church, Dora

– The Reverend Sheila Williams – Host Church & Pastor

St. Mark AME Church, Mason City

– The Reverend Gloria Patrick – Host Church & Pastor

Allen Chapel AME Church, Woodlawn

– The Reverend Venita Farness – Host Church & Pastor

The Reverend Oliver Allen, Host Presiding Elder

The Reverend Dwight E. Dillard, Host Presiding Elder

Held at DANIEL PAYNE COMMUNITY PLAZA

1500 Daniel Payne Drive, Birmingham, Alabama 35214

TUESDAY, September 6, 2016

PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES & WMS Convention

4:30 pm OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY CONFERENCE (8am – 5pm)

7:00 pm WMS NIGHT IN WHITE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

WEDNESDAY, September 7, 2016

8:30 am Morning Glory Bible Study

9:00 am Conference Institute

9:45 am BUSINESS SESSION

12:30 pm HOUR OF POWER WORSHIP SERVICE

1:30 pm LUNCH / RECESS

3:00 pm BUSINESS SESSION

5:45 pm DINNER / RECESS

7:00 pm OPENING WORSHIP SERVICE

THURSDAY, September 8, 2016

8:30 am Morning Glory Bible Study

9:00 am Conference Institute

9:45 am BUSINESS SESSION

12:30 pm HOUR OF POWER ~ Women in Ministry

1:30 pm LUNCH / RECESS

3:00 pm TO WHALL MEETING

5:30 pm DINNER / RECESS

7:00 pm ORDINATION WORSHIP SERVICE

FRIDAY, September 9, 2016

8:30 am Morning Glory Bible Study

9:00 am Conference Institute

9:45 am BUSINESS SESSION

12:30 pm HOUR OF POWER ~ Sons of Allen

1:30 pm LUNCH / RECESS

2:45 pm Retirement Service

4:00 pm Memorial Service

4:45 pm Church School

6:00 pm DINNER / RECESS

7:00 pm LAY ORGANIZATION WORSHIP SERVICE

SATURDAY, September 10, 2016

8:00 am YPD Session

9:30 am YPD PROGRAM

11:15 am Praise Service

11:30 am CLOSING & COMMISSIONING SERVICE

Check with the St. John Church office for information regarding transportation on one of the church's vehicles.



Prayer Priority

By Paulette Bargon

Prayer should be the most important activity in our lives because we are talking to our Lord. A number of us seem to make it our least important priority. We wake up in the morning too sleepy to even think about praying because we stayed up too late the night before. We say to ourselves, "I'll pray when I get my first cup of coffee" or "when I go for my morning run." We have very good intentions, but for some reason our minds revert to other things like getting the children ready for school, cooking breakfast or planning for the day. Before we know it the day is over and we start the same routine over. We may think that when things are going good we do not need to pray. Yes, we will eventually pray that day, but is it rushed? Do we take the time to read the bible also?

The best time to pray is when you think that you are too busy to pray, because at that time you are making the devil angry. He is the one who put the thought in your mind that you do not have time to spend with your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He wants you to forget that we should ask God for guidance, strength and wisdom for that day. We should ask for protection for our children as they head for school. Satan wants us to forget about asking God for patience when we are dealing with that irritating co-worker. He does not want us to have that true relationship with God. Satan does not want us to know how much God proved His love for us by sacrificing His Son for our salvation and He continues to be interested in every aspect of our lives. We will not know that if we do not read His word.

Prayer strengthens us in times of temptation because we believe His promise when we seek His help (1 Corinthians 10:13). Another reason Satan does not want us to pray is SIN. If we are unwilling to acknowledge our sins and ask for the Lord's forgiveness, we will have no desire to talk to our God. 1 John 1:9 says, "But if we confess our sins to Him. He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong."

Let us make prayer our first priority and not our last resort.

"A Sincere prayer brings wonderful results." (James 5:16)



Soup Kitchen

Living a Fruitful Life

By Charlie Brooks

Autumn is the mellower season and what we lose in flowers we more than gain in fruits. — Samuel Butler

In September and October, we begin to gather in the fruits of the summer's growing season. Beautiful, bountiful autumn, with its crisp apples, plump pumpkins, bales of sweet hay, naturally inspires thoughts about the fruitfulness of our own lives.

One of the key elements of a productive life is service to other people. This does not take anything away from the person who serves, on the contrary, it invigorates them. Service can be hands-on or just offering conversation. Service can be spiritual, lifting prayers for people's needs or just serving as a greeter. The Soup Kitchen Ministry is at St. John on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays serving Huntsville's needy. Everyone is invited to join/support this ministry.

Knowing that you can help make someone's life better makes you feel alive—truly fruitful. We need you!

"Bring the best of the first fruits of your seed to the house of the Lord, your God."
Exodus 29:19 (NIV)



Weekly Prayer Time

Tuesdays at Noon
Conference Call Credentials:
US Toll Number (530) 881-1212
Meeting ID: 876-863-940

Listen to the playback any time
Playback Number (530) 881-1219
Meeting Id 876-863-940

"...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints," - Ephesians 6:18

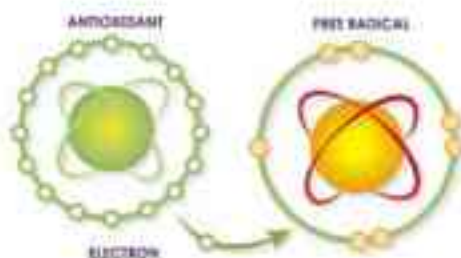
Understanding Antioxidants and Free Radicals

Submitted by Angela Daniels, R.N.

An antioxidant is a molecule that inhibits the oxidation of other molecules. They are substances or nutrients in foods and bodies that can prevent or slow oxidative damage to the cells in the body. When the body cells use oxygen, they naturally produce "free radicals." Free radicals are the byproducts of this cellular process which can and often causes damage to cells throughout the body. Free radicals are atoms with an odd/unpaired number of electrons. Remember the diagram of the atom in chemistry class? The danger of free radicals is that they are highly reactive and that their reactions can cause damage to cell DNA and cell membrane. To prevent this damage from happening, antioxidants play a role by blocking the effects of free radicals. Antioxidants act as "free radical scavengers" and this prevents and repairs damage done by the free radicals.

Oxidation is the process of a substance combining with oxygen and the loss of the electron. It is also defined as to make or become rusty. It is a natural process and it happens to everyone. Because it is natural, a diet rich in antioxidants is necessary to keep the levels in your body low to maintain good health. The oxidation reaction occurs in the mitochondria. There are hundreds in each cell. They are the body's nuclear power plants. They give off a lot of damage. Bodies get energy from the mitochondria. The problem occurs in the process when the mitochondria turn food into energy, free radicals are produced that damage themselves and the rest of the cell.

Over time, as the mitochondria age, more free radicals are produced. The more free radical build-up that occurs, the more cellular damage happens. The stress resulting from this damage, as well as the damage itself, has been shown to cause many age-related physical problems. In other words, this process ages the body and its systems. For example, this process causes the rusting of arteries, damaging the cardiovascular system. Mitochondrial damage is seen in the development of brain disorders such as Alzheimer's and in diabetes where it inflames the pancreas' ability to produce insulin. In fact, mitochondrial damage may serve as a contributing factor in causing certain kinds of cancer. The damaged DNA can evolve into cancer cells and eventually tumors. This mitochondrial damage can adversely affect the immune system, skin, eyes, memory, mood, and many other systems.



Certain behaviors can increase the number of free radicals within the body. Smoking, drinking and sun bathing can cause unsafe increases in free radical production. Other factors that can increase free radical production include air pollution, infection, and exposure to toxic substances.

The human body naturally produces free radicals and the antioxidants counteract their damaging effects. However, in most cases, free radicals far outnumber the naturally occurring antioxidants. To maintain balance, a continual supply of external sources of antioxidants is necessary to obtain maximum benefit. External sources include food eaten and supplements taken. It is very important to maintain that balance of supplying the body with the antioxidants to protect the body from all free radicals that are constantly being produced and building up in the body. Antioxidants benefit the body by removing free radicals from the bloodstream. They prevent cellular damage and destroy cells that are already damaged.

So how can that continual supply of antioxidants be achieved? The body's natural defenses against oxidation free radicals and oxidative stress becomes less effective as one ages. These are important concerns. The body creates antioxidants naturally. Additionally antioxidants are supplied in the diet. Eating enough antioxidants requires a diet high in fruits and vegetables. Supplement the diet with antioxidants in the form of vitamins and medicinal herbs. There are many different types and classes of antioxidants and each type offers different benefits to do specific things. For example, beta carotene is helpful for eye health, lycopene maintains prostate health, and flavonoids are helpful for heart health. Turmeric and ginger are two powerful plant-based antioxidants that are powerful anti-inflammatories.

Antioxidants protect the body from diseases and boosting the intake of them just makes good sense. Antioxidants are present in fruits and vegetables as well as whole grains. Fruits and vegetables that have bright colors, such as red tomatoes, purple blueberries, yellow corn and orange carrots are rich in antioxidants.

A number of the vitamins, minerals and compounds in foods have antioxidant properties. Vitamin A, C, E, and folic acid are some of the most well-known and powerful as are

(Continued on page 10)

Antioxidants and Free Radicals

Submitted by Angela Daniels, R.N.



(Continued from page 9)

beta carotene, lycopene and selenium. Some foods that contain large amounts of antioxidants include carrots, green leafy vegetables like kale, collards and spinach, berries, cherries, grapes, green tea, citrus fruits, apples and pears, cocoa and chocolate also have high levels of antioxidants.

Do research and learn more about those amazing antioxidants and damaging free radicals.

2017 Prison Ministry Volunteer Training Schedule Announced

The Limestone Correctional Facility has announced its volunteer training schedule for 2017. Guidelines require that ALL prison religious volunteers undergo training to be certified to enter the correctional facility. More information is posted on the main bulletin board outside of the fellowship hall.

DATE	LOCATION
Aug. 25, 6:30 p.m.	First Seventh Day Adventist Church 1303 Evangel Dr. / Huntsville, AL 35816
Sept 17, 9:00 a.m.	Capshaw Baptist Church 14944 Dupree Worthey Road Harvest, AL 35749
Oct 1, 9:00 a.m.	Church of The Nativity (Ridley Hall) 208 Eustis Ave. / Huntsville, AL 35801
Nov. 5, 2016, 9:00 a.m.	Hartselle Church of Christ 7005 Sparkman St. / Hartselle, AL 35640
Dec. 3, 2016, 9:00 a.m.	Bridge Builders Church International 1801 Beltline Road / Decatur, AL 35601
Jan. 3, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Lindsay Lane Baptist 1300 Lindsay Lane / Athens, AL 35613

iTHRIVE Worship Service

By Bridget J. Floyd

(Continued from page 4)

dom is limited.

The Clayborns presented the third and fourth points – “Make Room for the Son” and “Accept Your God-Given Identity”. As they alternated, seamlessly making complementary points, it was noted that in the text there was the request “...let Me lead, follow Me and I will show you how...I came to set you free”. The requirement is “you must make room for Him”. With this level of freedom, “you no longer have to be a slave to negative thinking”. It means daily opening oneself to God, in order to receive freedom via a “new identity of who you are in Him. Freedom via this mechanism cannot be taken away by any one, not after it has been given by God. The correlation between truth and freedom was made – truth being “the force that makes them free”. The key point was reiterated; that is, there is a qualitative difference when one receives freedom/identity from God. The illustration highlighted the difference between gaining access to a sporting event by the person in charge of admission at the door compared to receiving a pass/ticket from the son of the owner of the team. The comfort level would be different for the person who was allowed to enter but had to be mindful and avoidant of being caught by the authorities who check tickets. By comparison, the person would have to focus on avoiding discovery which would interfere with enjoyment of the sporting event; while the ticket that is received from the son of the owner would allow for seating in the owners’ box. The person in the story not only had the security of having a pass/ticket in hand, but was located in the owners’ box, where they would not be under the scrutiny of those checking tickets. So in the sky box there was no need to look over one’s shoulder – no hiding. As the preaching duo built to alternating crescendos to make the point – it is the truthfulness of their circumstances that makes the difference between receiving entry by the “person on the door” versus the owner’s son. Similarly, when one is truly open to God’s Son, one can receive / accept the God-Given Identity. What is given by God can be taken by no person (no expulsion from the sky box).

There was altar call and the invitation extended and the response was great. Dr. Clayborn made a special appeal to young people to come to the altar for prayer, especially those returning to school and bound for college. St. John added to its membership and there was recommitment to Christ. There was clearly an openness to God and heeding the call to break free/live free!!

Church School Lesson Overview – September 2016

The lesson reviews were written by Brother Willie J. Sandifer. The reference for these reviews is the *The 2016-17 Standard lesson eCommentary*.

September 4, 2016

Lesson Title: The Peaceful Kingdom

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 72:1-7

Print: Isaiah 11:1-9

Devotional Songs: #25[], #272 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

Isaiah is the first book in the bible that is known as one of the Major Prophets. It is so named because of its length. The book contains many prophecies concerning Jesus and many of them are referenced in the New Testament.

Since Isaiah's time was chaotic in the history of the Israelites, God's Sovereignty is speculated to have been a hot topic by the author of the commentary. "In the year that King Uzziah died" Isaiah began his call to prophetic service. The author shares that this was almost two hundred years after the Israelites had split with Israel in the north and Judah in the south.

God let Isaiah know that his ministry would not look successful to him. However, Isaiah was to deliver God's message until cities were empty and lay in ruin, also, the fields ruined and ravaged.

September 11, 2016

Lesson Title: The Mountain of God

Lesson Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Isaiah 25

Print: Isaiah 25:6-10A

Devotional Songs: #86 [], #251[], and #243 []

Key Verse: "He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The Lord has spoken" (Isaiah 25:8).

This lesson connects nicely with last week's lesson from Isaiah 11:1-9, which ended with the statement about nothing harmful or destructive having a place on God's "holy mountain". This lesson is about a section of Isaiah that is called "The Isaiah Apocalypse". It is called this because of

the similarity of its language describing how the end of the world looks. Isaiah, with vivid symbolism, pictured the whole earth coming under the judgement of God.

September 18, 2016

Lesson Title: Foundations of the Earth

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 40:1-8, Isaiah 40

Print: Isaiah 40:21-31

Devotional Songs: #412[], #77[], and #243[]

Key Verses: "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom." (Isaiah 40:28).

Comforting words, to God's people in Jerusalem, are how Isaiah 40 begins. "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God." (Isaiah 40:1) They were to be released and were able to return home as an indicator that their sins had been pardoned.

However, the future had more in it than homecoming. The next verse speaks of the wilderness voice calling to prepare the way for the Lord. This came to pass in the person of John the Baptist through his work that prepared for the coming of Jesus.

September 25, 2016

Lesson Title: Everlasting covenant

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 42:5-9, Isaiah 61

Print: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525[], #258 [], and #243 []

Key Verse: "I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them" (Isaiah 61:8).

This lesson is the last one in this unit of lessons. The text has an important messianic prophecy. The 61st chapter of Isaiah is within the closing section of Isaiah's prophecy for Israel that is usually identified as chapters 60 through 66. This section is like the grand finale of the restoration of God's people. The contents of which were intended to give great hope to God's people in Isaiah's day. The commentary's author suggests a purpose connection between the closing chapters of Isaiah and the closing chapters of Revelation, which offer hope to Christians in any age, especially those suffering persecution.

St. John Adopts New Beginnings



Suffer the little children to come unto Jesus!

St. John provided school supplies for the students of New Beginnings Academy! These three and four year olds are ready! Thanks to Judge Sherrard and 29:11 Inc. for making this vision real. St. John has now adopted this school and is excited about its possibilities. Please join in prayer and in support of this school, administration, staff, teachers, volunteers, students and families. Eyes have not seen...



Church School Book Club

August 2016

Discussion Date: August 20, 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Forty Acres Dwayne Alexander Smith, 2015

September 2016

Discussion Date: September 17, 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

'Til the Well Runs Dry Lauren Francis-Sharma, September 2015

A glorious and moving multigenerational, multicultural saga that sweeps from the 1940s through the 1960s in Trinidad and the United States. *'Til the Well Runs Dry* opens in a seaside village in the north of Trinidad, where young Marcia Garcia, a gifted and smart-mouthed sixteen-year-old seamstress, lives alone, raising two small boys and guarding a family secret. When she meets Farouk Karam, an ambitious young policeman (so taken with Marcia that he elicits help from a tea-brewing obeah woman to guarantee her ardor), the rewards and risks in Marcia's life amplify forever. On an island rich with laughter, calypso, Carnival, cricket, beaches, and salty air, sweet fruits and spicy stews, the novel follows Marcia and Farouk from their sassy and passionate courtship through personal and historical events that threaten Marcia's secret, entangle the couple and their children in a tumultuous scandal, and put the future in doubt for all of them.

- Amazon



September 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
				5:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal		
4 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship Continuation	5 LABOR DAY	6 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Stewardship Board Mtg.	7 7th Session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference Bishop Harry Seawright, presiding Daniel Payne Community Plaza—Birmingham, Alabama NO Bible Study	8 5:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	9	10
11 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	12	13 Noon Prayer Call	14 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	15 5:00 p.m. VP Choir Rehearsal	16 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	17 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
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. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	21 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	22	23 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	24 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
26 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. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	28 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	29 5:00 p.m. Mass Choir Rehearsal	30	

PRAYER for the MONTH God, we thank You for this time we've had together. Through it all, You've been with us. You've protected and provided. You've given growth and favor. As we go our separate ways, be with us. As we do Your will, empower us. As we use our gifts to honor You, let us shine. We love You and bless You. We praise You and adore You, Lord, You are worthy of all praise. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture for the Month — "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 1:24-25)



St. John AME Church
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(256) 534-3265

Return Service Requested

E-mail: stjohnameh@aol.com

Website: stjohname-hsv.org



The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright, Bishop
The Reverend Sherita Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor
The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
The Reverend Doctor Patrick Clayborn, Pastor

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Important Dates to Remember

- August 28** *The Reverend Patrick Clayborn's last Sunday as pastor of St. John*
10:00 a.m. service - One service only
- September 6** *Northwest Alabama WMS Convention, Birmingham, Alabama*
- September 7-10** *7th Session Northwest Alabama Annual Conference, Birmingham, 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 21 Issue 9

September 2016

St. John Welcomes the Reverend Maurice Wright II

Photography by Darwin Washington



St. John's New Pastor The Reverend Maurice Wright II

The Reverend Maurice Wright II, is a native of the Pacific Northwest, having grown up in Tacoma, Washington and Portland, Oregon.

The Reverend Wright dedicated his life to Christ at a very young age and was called into the ministry at the age of 10. He preached his very first sermon, "You Got What You Wanted, But Lost What You Had" at the age of 13 at the Powerhouse Temple Church of God in Christ.

While in Portland, the Reverend Wright taught choir at Harriett Tubman Middle School and Thomas Jefferson High School. He served as both community leader and social activist in the greater Portland area. He is known as a youth mentor, with a passion of educating and improving the lives of young people. During his time in the Portland Public School System, he was also employed as a Community Agent, working with high school dropouts and at-risk teenagers to help them return to school and graduate.

His thirst for knowledge would lead him to leave his secular employment and study at Portland Bible College and Wilberforce University in Ohio. While at Wilberforce University he was an honor student, having received many scholarships and awards to include the Bishop Vinton R. Anderson Academic Award for two consecutive years. He was also one of the student conductors of the Wilberforce University Choir. He is a proud graduate of Morehouse College, Atlanta Georgia, earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in the area of Choral Conducting and Vocal Performance. The Reverend Wright is currently working on completing a Masters of Divinity Degree and will further his studies to the doctorate level.

While at Morehouse, the Reverend Wright was a key member of the World Renowned Morehouse College Glee Club, and was part of the historic group that toured South Africa. He was also a four year member of the Martin Luther King Jr. Chapel Assistants and the director of the Chapel Choir. In 2012 the Reverend Wright received King Chapel's highest



recognition and was inducted into The Martin Luther King Jr. International College of Ministers and Laity. While in Atlanta Georgia, he also served on the ministerial staff and as Minister of Music at Big Bethel AME Church.

The Reverend Wright received his first pastoral appointment while still a student at Wilberforce University. He served the congregation of St. Paul AME Church in Zanesville, Ohio and then was sent to St. John AME Church in Uhrichsville, Ohio. In 2008, Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry assigned him to the pasto-

ral charge of Bethel AME Church in Alexandria, Louisiana. While at Bethel, Pastor Wright led the congregation in a 2.5 million dollar renovation project of the church's low income housing complex. Over one hundred units were renovated, and today the property continues to serve families and remains a vital part of the Alexandria community.

In November of 2012, Bishop James L. Davis appointed the Reverend Wright to St. John AME Church in Ft. Mitchell, Alabama. Within 5 weeks of being assigned, the Reverend Wright led the congregation into the new edifice. Through his visionary leadership, the church also remodeled the old sanctuary into a multipurpose fellowship hall and children's church center. The Reverend Wright was actively involved in the Phenix City and Russell County area. Through his leadership, the church has become known for being a first responder to many community tragedies and other social concerns and serves as a prayer center for all people.

In addition to his pastorate, the Reverend Wright currently serves as the Associate Director of Music and Christian Arts of the African Methodist Episcopal Church worldwide. He is also the co-director of Evangelism for the state of Alabama.

The Reverend Wright is truly a family man. He is blessed to have the Reverend Joretha Wright as his partner in marriage and ministry for 20 years. Together they are the proud parents of four children; Terrence, Lessie, Isaiah and Joy.

Meet St. John's First Lady

The Reverend Joretha Wright, M. Div.



The Reverend Joretha Wright is an inspirational speaker, teacher, preacher, often recognized for her raw, funny and intellectual approach to addressing topics that affect people from all walks of life. Summarily, her witty style and real life approach motivates inspires and challenges people to a higher call.

The Reverend Rita has a B.S. in Human Services from Shorter University in Atlanta, Georgia and a M.Div. from Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce, Ohio.

She also has a unique gift for the senior population. Her water fitness talents have afforded her opportunities to teach aerobics, therapeutic exercise and swim lessons to adult non-swimmers, special needs individuals and low income children involved in programs to increase water activity exposure to urban youth. She is a certified water aerobics and swim instructor and is currently pursuing a national certification in Water Fitness and Life Coaching for youth.

The Reverend Rita's commitment to empowering youth and women is evident through her lifestyle of service. Ms. Rita, as she is affectionately known, is the founder of Air Enterprise; a social change organization for women and girls that offers a diversified spectrum of programs and services with emphasis on prevention, intervention and diversity tolerance. Her commitment to empowering young women is evident through her lifestyle of service as an HIV and AIDS advocate, community activist, non-violent instructor for girl-on-girl violence, and exceptional leadership building in both church and school environments. She is also the founder of the Project Me Mentoring Project, created to educate and instruct girls 12-18 to make healthy life altering choices.

The Reverend Rita is a native of Lynwood, California. She later moved to Portland, Oregon where she met and has been married to the Reverend Maurice Wright II for more than 20 years. She values the spiritual and loving support of her pastor and husband and the exciting role of mother to their four children; Terrence (U.S. Coast Guardsman, 23 years of age), Lessie (17), Isaiah (11) and Joy (8).



Join the Soup Kitchen Ministry

The Soup Kitchen continues to meet the needs of the community each third and fourth Tuesday of the month. Volunteers and donations are always encouraged and appreciated. Please see Sister Pearlean Myhand and Sister Maeola Peoples to volunteer or make a donation.

A Grandparent's Prayer May I Be Your Vision

My grandchild I love you, you know that for sure.
But here's a reminder, when your world is a blur
Of fun and of heartaches, and of learning life's rules
When there's choices ahead, of careers or of schools,

Don't turn to the world for the answers you seek.
The world has gone crazy. Its future is bleak.
Don't turn to your young friends who have never been
there;
Don't hold too much store by the wisdom they share.

They know just what you know, maybe not quite as much.
They've stepped only as far as you have, and as such
They've no first hand knowledge of what's gone on before,
Or what could be waiting beyond that next door.

But my grandchild, I hope I always can be
The one that you turn to when it's too hard to see
Your way through the fog as you journey along.
May I guide your vision till the day that I'm gone?

My eyesight is dim, but be that come what may
My insight grows brighter with each passing day.
And coupled with love, it may be enough,
To help you my grandchild, when your going gets tough.

I love you!

A grandparent's prayer taken from <http://www.christiangrandparents.com/p/poems-about-grandparents-and.html> (September 17, 2016)

St. John Welcomed New Bishop to St. John and the Ninth Episcopal District

By Bridget J. Floyd



Bishop Seawright addresses the St. John congregation.

The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright was introduced to St. John on Sunday, August 21, 2016. He offered remarks to the congregation during the single worship service that was held at 10 a.m. so that St. John could come together at one time to meet and greet Bishop Seawright. It was apropos for Bishop Seawright to be present at a service where Pastor Clayborn preached his next to last sermon, entitled "The Problem of Change". Both men (and their families) had embarked or were about to embark on a major transition in their professional and personal lives.

Presiding Elder Oliver Allen introduced Bishop Seawright who proceeded to address St. John during what was termed "The Bishop's Moment". He began his comments by giving honor to Presiding Elder Allen. Bishop Seawright reported that he had been a pastor for thirty (30) years. He shared that as he aspired to the position of bishop, he worked with his congregation to prepare them for the change of his leaving. He is the 133rd elected and consecrated bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.

Bishop Seawright indicated, "I feel your pain because a good pastor is hard to find". He was referring to the anticipated change of the Reverend Clayborn assuming the pastorate of Bethel AME Church, Baltimore, Maryland. Bishop Seawright stated that good leadership in church will follow the appointment of a new pastor and that "the work is all divine". The Bishop indicated that with prayerful consideration he, in consultation with Presiding Elder Allen, would appoint a new pastor for St. John. He emphasized his belief in prayer.

Pastor Clayborn subsequently offered a poignant sermon on change (note title above). The texts were Job 42:7-9 and Philippians 3:7-16 with emphasis on verse 12. He cited examples of change and stated that change can be "glorious" and change can release a kind of power... "until we face the problem of change" [the title of the sermon]. Pastor Clayborn gave examples of Job and loss as well as the change that Paul experienced in the scriptural readings. He indicated that the problems brought about by change will change one's perspective, priorities and potential. He noted that "when you strain, God is developing you... on the other side you are stronger". Citing Job, the Reverend Clayborn indicated that Job's losses were greater and greater, but in fact, God was "making a stronger foundation" and that God restored Job beyond what he had originally. The preacher indicated that this was because Job prayed for his friends, as instructed by God, instead of focusing on his loss and questioning God. Pastor Clayborn indicated that "God will supply all of your needs". He concluded that change will happen and the key is how one reacts to what happens.

(Continued on page 12)

Members greet Bishop Seawright after the service.



Ninth Episcopal District Of the AME Church

Seventh Session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference Report

Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Presiding Prelate

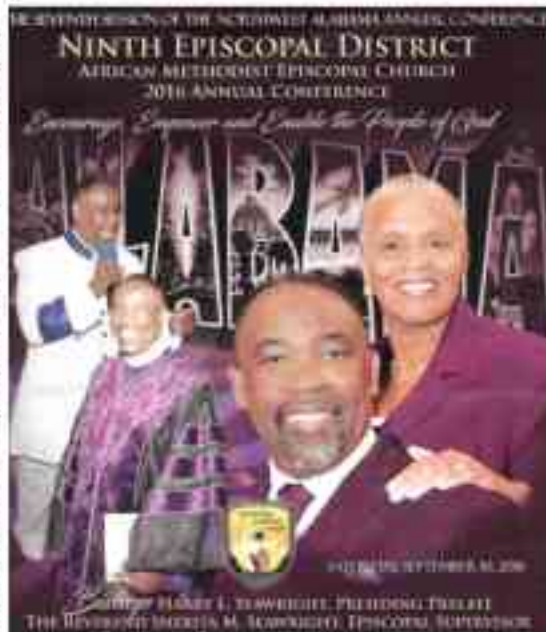
The Reverend Sherita M. Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor

The seventh session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference was held from September 7 to September 10, 2016 at Daniel Payne Community Plaza in Birmingham, Alabama. The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright presided.

The first business session of the conference was the roll call and conference organization on Tuesday, September 7th. The seventh session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference was officially opened on Wednesday September 7, 2016 with devotion, opening song "Blessed Assurance", followed by prayer and the reading of Psalm 149. The conference institute was given by Bishop Seawright. Bishop Seawright elaborated on the triple A's of the church which are Anointing, Appointment, and Accountability.

The business session of the conference included the financial reports (District budget presentation, District audit report). The message of the Hour of Power Service was preached by Bishop Overshed from Kakamega, Kenya. Bishop Overshed shared the following message: "The Invisible God Will Show Up in Your Time of Need" from Psalm 46:1-6. He reminded the Conference that God is faithful and that they must be grateful to Him.

During the afternoon business session, pastor's reports were read, including the report of St. John AME Church, Huntsville. Presiding Elder Allen read the report and this writer, who was the delegate, spoke on behalf of the church. She requested that the next minister be one that "could take us to the next level." The business session also included the Board of Examiners Report that included a recommendation of the licentiates from St. John



AME, Huntsville, Sister Jennifer Patterson, Brother Justin York and Sister Ashley Humphrey to the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference.

After a full day of activities, the Opening Day Worship Service was held. The preacher for this service was the Reverend Chris Walker. Her message was entitled "Change." The Reverend Walker reminded the Conference that time will bring about change and that the only thing in life that remains constant is change. She also pointed out that change enables persons for ministry with grace and gratitude.

Thursday September 8th, the second day of the conference, was also opened with devotion; opening song followed by prayer and the reading of the scriptures. The Conference Institute was given by the Reverend Dederick from Baltimore, Maryland. The Reverend Dederick elaborated on the legacy of the AME church. First, he reminded attendees that their identity as AMEs is inseparable from their discipleship. Then, he reminded them that everything that they do should have Jesus in the center. Finally, he noted the importance of connecting the past, the present and the future.



Presiding Elder Allen (left) and Roselyne Atkins, delegate, make their presentations at the Annual Conference

The business session continued with the reading of pastor's reports. The message of Hour of Power Service was preached by the Reverend Agnes Lover. She shared the message "Don't Abandon Your Mission" from 1 Kings 19:3. She first reminded us that doing God's will can be quite challenging. However, it is not time to abandon the mission when things become challenging. She also reminded us

(Continued on page 6)

Ninth Episcopal District Of the AME Church

Seventh Session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference Report

Bishop Harry L. Seawright, Presiding Prelate

The Reverend Sherita M. Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor



Licentiates received into the Annual Conference (third and fourth from the left are St. John members Dr. Jennifer Patterson and Brother Justin York).

(Continued from page 5)

that our enemy is not bigger than God. The Reverend Lover gave three survival tips for the journey of faith: When things get tough, God will replenish; God will anoint with His wisdom, strength, and courage; God will redirect our steps. Finally, God has a master plan. The business session continued with a town hall meeting which included civic leaders, community activists, and business owners. Bishop Seawright shared the vision of the church and his vision to "encourage, empower and enable the people of God."

The second day of the conference was concluded with the Ordination Worship Service and the anointed preaching of Bishop William Devaux.

Friday September 9th, the third day of the conference, was also opened with devotion, opening song followed by prayer and the reading of the scriptures. The business session continued with the reading of the financial reports, the conference component reports, the administrative committee reports, and the Daniel Payne College reports. The message of the Hour of Power was preached by the Reverend Witherspoon from South Carolina (Pastor of Bishop Seawright's home church). The Reverend Witherspoon shared the following message entitled "The Secret Storm". He first reminded attendees that life challenges can sometimes be secret storms. He gave three points about the se-

cret storm: A secret storm is unexpected and causes one to call God; a secret storm throws people off course and forces them to adapt and adjust; and a secret storm does not last always. Finally, he reminded us that Christ is our evaluation plan.

The business session continued with the reading of the reports. The third day of the conference was concluded by the worship service of the Lay Organization. The preacher of the hour was the Reverend Chris Barnett with a message entitled "Don't Blow It, Play Your Role." The Reverend Barnett reminded that God gets the glory in spite of what one is going through.

Saturday September 10th was the last day of the Annual Conference. The day was opened with a YPD session including the YPD program. Several other activities took place to include the reading of the resolutions and the accountant's finance report. Pastors Prince Sanders and Tommy Lee Harvin were received into retirement. They were presented with retirement certificates. Bishop Seawright and Supervisor, the Reverend Sherita M. Seawright, expressed their gratitude for the success of the conference.

The closing worship service was marked by the anointed preaching of the Reverend Jonathan Weaver of Mount Nebo AME Church, Bowie, Maryland. The Reverend Weaver shared a message entitled: "Neighbor, I Got to Get Through This." The Reverend Weaver reminded that God does not only saves, He keeps. He pointed out that sometimes hard times come to develop us. He gave three points to deal with difficult situations: stand still, let God repositions himself, and go forward.

The appointments were read by Bishop Seawright. St. John, Huntsville was placed in the hands of the Presiding Elder. However, Bishop Seawright reassured the delegate and other St. John members who were present, that he would appoint a pastor for St. John, Huntsville the following week.

Thank God for a spirit-filled Annual Conference with Bishop Seawright. Thank you to my St. John family for giving me the opportunity to serve as your delegate to the annual conference.

Humbly submitted,
Yours in Christ,
Sister Roselyne Akines.

Pastor's Appreciation

By Nedra McDaniel

Photography by Bridget Floyd



The Clayborn Family

On Sunday, August 14, St. John celebrated the Clayborns and expressed appreciation for their ministry at St. John. This was the fifth appreciation service for the Clayborns and at that time it was not known that it would be the last.

The service was organized by the Stewards and incorporated the ministry of music and dance. The Mass Choir and the St. John Praise Team ministered in song. The dance ministry enhanced the worship as they accompanied the choir with liturgical movement and ministered to a special selection. A litany that used Dr. Clayborn's biographical information and scripture to describe the life and character of the Reverend Doctor Clayborn was read.



The Reverend Mashod Evans

A long-time friend of Pastor Clayborn's and his brother in the ministry was the guest preacher. Pastor Clayborn and the Reverend Mashod Evans both served under the Reverend (now Bishop) James L. Davis at Big Bethel in Atlanta and Pastor Clayborn later served at the Reverend Evans' home church, St. James AME in Newark, New Jersey.

The sermon text was Exodus 3:1-14 and the sermon was entitled "It Is What It Is, But Not What God Wants It To Be." The Reverend Evans started the

message by giving examples on the job, in the community, parenting, in school and with family where people sometimes accept the situation and say "It is what it is." He warned that people should be cautious about accepting some situations because it may not "be what God wants it to be." Going back to the text, he gave the background on how Moses found himself in the situation he was in when God spoke to him in chapter 3 of Exodus. Moses seemed to have accepted being in a foreign land, unable to return home, working for someone else and even marrying a "foreigner" as "it is what it is." The experience of God speaking to him through the burning bush was when Moses had to accept that his life was not what "God wanted it to be." God had an anointing on Moses' life.

The preacher related the scripture to the lives of people today. He noted that many have to go through various experiences for God to stretch them. God has to establish His authority, "I am that I am." God also promises "I will be with you." The Reverend Evans used the example of how God was with Moses when he went back to Egypt and delivered the Israelites out of bondage (it is what it is) to the promised land (what God wanted it to be). Believers must trust that God will be with them as He takes them to a place where He wants them to be. In concluding, he urged worshippers to "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand" and let God lead them to the place where He wants them to be.



Following the message and the Invitation to Discipleship, the Stewards presented Pastor Clayborn, Reverend Sheri, P2, and Joya with gifts that were expressions of the congregation's love and appreciation toward them. To God be the Glory!

Pastor Clayborn's Last Sunday at St. John

By Nedra McDaniel

Photography by Darwin Washington

Sunday, August 28, 2016 was a bitter-sweet day at St. John. It was the last worship service for the Clayborns. The Reverend Patrick Clayborn and family were preparing to transition to a new pastoral charge at Bethel AME Church, Baltimore, Maryland. Like loving parents, members were happy for this new opportunity for the Clayborns, yet sad to see them leave St. John. Where had the time gone?

The four years and eight months of pastoring St. John were coming to an end. Through these years, the church has experienced growth in the church's membership and ministry, in the lives of members, and in the lives of the Clayborns.

The combined worship service followed the normal order of service, with the addition of a special musical tribute and remarks from the Clayborn family. Lots of smiles, hugs and tears were shared throughout the day.

The Reverend Doctor Clayborn preached his final sermon as pastor of St. John with the same vigor and conviction as his first sermon on December 4, 2011. The message was entitled "The Promise of Change" and the scripture references were Deuteronomy 1:6 and John 3:22-30. This message



seemed to have been as much a sermon for the preacher as it was for the people. Dr. Clayborn explained how God prepares His people for change by sending a promise of guidance and by creating faith in them. There must be a decrease in personal will in order to yield to God's will. The key points were lifted from the scripture passage in John that was noted earlier. God promises His presence, purpose, and prosperity. The preacher noted that the promise of change causes one to grow beyond their comfort zone in order to increase. He concluded with the challenging question, "Can you see the promise?"

As difficult as parting can be, AMEs know that the denomination is built on a system of itinerate ministry that supports the growth of ministers and congregations across the connectional church. Standing on the promises of the 1 Corinthians 2:9 "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him," both St. John Huntsville and Bethel Baltimore know that "The Promise of Change" will take both church families to a higher level of faith, service and love. "Can you see the promise?"



St. John Hosted Harvest Home Meeting

By Nedra McDaniel



The South Birmingham Huntsville Bessemer Presiding Elder District consists of twenty-two (22) churches in the Northwest Alabama Conference of the Ninth District of the AME Church. This is one of ten (10) Presiding Elder Districts in the Ninth Episcopal District and one of three (3) in the Northwest Alabama Conference. The Reverend Oliver Allen is the presiding elder of this District. As presiding elder, he supervises the churches in his district and is the link between the local pastors and the bishop of the Episcopal District. He holds several meetings throughout the year with individual churches (quarterly conferences) and District meetings like the Planning Meeting, Church School and Christian Education Convention, and Harvest Home.

On Saturday, August 27, members of the SBHB District assembled at St. John for the 2016 Harvest Home Meeting.



Persons present included ministers, delegates and members of the components of the District. There was fellowship, worship, business and food. Presiding Elder Allen provided details about the upcoming Seventh Session of the Northwest Alabama Annual Conference. He shared information that ministers and delegates needed to know about the Conference agenda, pastor's reports and other responsibilities of the delegates and pastors. Presiding Elder Allen noted that SBHB District members would be preaching during the Annual Conference. The Reverend Deborah Peppers would be the preacher for the Missionary Noon Day Service and the Reverend

Chris Walker would preach the Annual Sermon during the opening worship service.



The Harvest Home meeting concluded with a worship service. Music was provided by the St. John music department and the Reverend Gregory Smith, pastor of Mt. Zion AME Church Trussville, was the preacher. His message was entitled "A Charge to Keep We Have," with a subtitle of "Abide by the Door" and the text was Leviticus 8:35-36.

His message was entitled "A Charge to Keep We Have," with a subtitle of "Abide by the Door" and the text was Leviticus 8:35-36.



Members of the SBHB District expressed their appreciation to Presiding Elder and Mrs. Allen for their dedication and service to the District. Lunch was served.



Members Share Their Experiences at CEC 2016

By Justin York



Kristina Jefferson sings with the 9th District Youth Choir at CEC 2016.

The 9th Episcopal District held the 2016 Christian Education Congress July 25-28, 2016 in Troy, Alabama on the campus of Troy University. This was the first meeting of the 9th District since General Conference where the Reverend Dr. Harry L. Seawright was elected and consecrated the 133rd Bishop of the AME Church and assigned to the 9th Episcopal District.

Members of the St. John family were also in attendance and, according to some of their perspectives, they really enjoyed their week in Troy and the experiences gained. For some, the Christian Education Congress, affectionately known as "CEC", is an annual event and they look forward to attending throughout the year. For others, it may have been their first time — but it definitely will not be their last. Growing up in the AME Church, it is easy to get used to annual events as a child. These events come and go and when it is over, you wait for next year. Learning the perspectives of others has shown this writer how important these and other types of Christian Education opportunities can be. Not only are learning the customs and history of the church emphasized, building relationships and growing as a Christian are key focal points of these events. Read what Josiah and Kristina had to say about their experiences this year.

Josiah Gullatte: "At CEC we learned how to stay on our grind. Our teacher taught us to block out fake friends and find God. I also had fun fellowship with my church members and I had the pleasure of getting to know them better. The most important lesson I learned at CEC was to stay together as a family and pray together as a family."

Kristina Jefferson: "My overall first CEC experience was great. I met a lot of new people and made a lot of new friends. I got to do a lot of fun stuff such as, singing in the youth choir, leading praise and worship with Cam (Bishop's grandson), rapping in the teen's "bet you can't praise him like me" challenge, and bonding at the lunch table over the tasty fried chicken. I also learned how to stay on my grind even when people try to knock me off. I also got a lot of new snapchat followers. I am really looking forward to CEC 2k17. I had a great time with the people who were my age that were also on fire for God."

The Reverend Sheri Smith Clayborn was co-chairperson for CEC and was responsible for all registration. She also coordinated the St. John delegation to CEC.

St. John Hosts Huntsville City Council District 1 Candidate Forum

By Barbara Johnson



The stage was set for the District 1 Candidate Forum at St. John AME on Tuesday, August 16th. The mics were hot and bottled water was set to keep the tempers cool. Note pads and pens were on the table to write down speaking points and rebuttals. All five candidates had confirmed their attendance, however only four appeared on the dais, Ms. Michelda Johnson, Mr. Devyn Keith, Mr. Robert Hewlett and Mr. Peter Proctor. Pastor Clayborn welcomed everyone and introduced Dr. Preston Foster, Oakwood University, as the moderator for the evening and reviewed the forum protocol. This was not to be a debate, but a discussion of the issues, plans and strategies to move District 1 forward. Questions were submitted by the audience, read by Dr. Foster and then each candidate was given an opportunity to respond.

While District 1 covers a vast amount of territory, from the far north quadrants of the county to downtown Huntsville, most of the questions and the candidate responses focused on Northwest Huntsville. Ms. Johnson's focus was revitalization of businesses in north Huntsville, funding for not just "patching" roads, but actually resurfacing them and promoting unity and respect between HPD and the community. Mr. Keith's focus was on establishing a community hub in northwest Huntsville to bring the community together. Developing a performing arts facility was on Mr. Hewlett's agenda for northwest Huntsville. Working collaboratively with other council members was the target for Mr. Proctor. He felt that compromise and negotiating were skill sets that set him apart from the other candidates. He would use those skill sets to effect change in District 1.

At the end of the forum, each candidate was given three minutes to make their last pitch for why they should be the final choice for council person District 1. They had a captive

(Continued on page 12)



The last day to register and be able to vote in the November 8th, Presidential Election is, **October 24th**.



For any election, the last day to register to vote or update your voter registration is the 15th day prior to the election.

The last day to apply for an Absentee Ballot for the November 8th, Presidential Election is **November 3, 2016**.

Absentee Ballots are mailed to:

Huntsville
Ken Benion,
Election Officer
P. O. Box 308
Huntsville, 35804
256-427-5085

Madison City
Melanie A. Williard,
City Clerk
City of Madison
100 Hughes Rd
Madison, AL 35758
256-772-5650

Absentee Ballot Applications for the November election can be obtained from **Mrs. Eva Smith or Ms. Barbara Johnson**.

College students that are away at school, who would normally vote in Huntsville, may go online to **AlabamaVote.gov**, print a copy of the Absentee Ballot Application, complete, and return by mail. A ballot will be sent to you with instructions and deadlines for returning.

Sick and shut in members who are registered voters can submit an Absentee Ballot Application. Let the church office know if you need one for a relative or a friend.



Need your voting rights restored, contact Mrs. Alice Sams at 256-551-1320

Voting information can be found at:

AlabamaVote.gov (the state of Alabama's official website)
Madison County elections.gov.



**Tuesday, November 8,
2016**

CEC Find A St. John Connection at Troy University



Art work by St. John member, Dr. Clifton Pearson, is on display at Troy University.

Bishop Seawright Visits St. John

(Continued from page 4)

Pastor Clayborn demonstrated his capacity to interpret the scripture and communicate a poignant message that touches the listener's heart, intellect, spirituality, and fills a need to hear a word and guidance from the Lord.



In the midst of transition, St. John members greeted and welcomed the Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright as they anticipated the departure of the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn. The following Sunday, con-

gregants wished the Clayborns well as they transitioned to Bethel AME Church in Baltimore.

May God Bless and Keep the Seawrights, the Allens, and the Clayborns as they serve in their various capacities; and as they handle the changes that God has in store for their lives.

District 1 Candidate Forum

(Continued from page 11)

audience to speak to for the sanctuary was full.

In the end, when all votes were tallied on Tuesday, August 23rd, a run-off election was called for between the incumbent, Councilman Richard Showers and Mr. Devyn Keith. The run-off election will take place on Tuesday, October 4, 2016.



African Methodist Episcopal Church

Ninth Episcopal District

The Northwest Alabama Annual Conference

Women's Missionary Society 7th Annual Convention

By Claudinette Purifoy

Members of the Bettye E. Derrick WMS traveled to Birmingham, Alabama to attend the Northwest Alabama Conference Women's Missionary Society's 7th Annual Convention on Tuesday, September 6, 2016. St. John attendees were joined by other missionaries throughout the Ninth Episcopal District to report on their accomplishments, elect officers for the new conference year, receive their charge and meet their new Episcopal Supervisor, the Reverend Sherita M. Seawright. The theme for this occasion was "Gifts Given by God to Serve this Present Age Cheerfully."

The morning began with the Tanner Turner Memorial where missionaries honored those 14 WMS members who passed away since their last convention which included Sister Mable Jones McCall. The business session of the Annual Conference Institute was called to order by the Northwest Alabama Conference Women's Missionary Society President, Sister Patricia R. Smith. Greetings were rendered by Sister Shirley Patterson, WMS President (Allen Chapel AMEC, Birmingham, AL), Sister Lolita Nalls Seltzer (Edith Minor Area WMS), Sister Ann Sharpe (NW Conference YPD Director), Sister Djuana Dumcombe-Wilson (9th District YPD Director), Sister Susie Bonner (9th Episcopal District WMS President) and the Reverend Sherita M. Seawright (9th Episcopal District Supervisor). The minutes from the 2015 Annual Conference Institute were approved as well as the treasurer's report. Roll call was held and delegates were seated in preparation for the election of officers. The following officers were elected for the 2016 conference year:

President:	Sister Patricia Smith
1 st Vice President:	Sister Anita Floyd
2 nd Vice President:	Sister Christine Dillard
3 rd Vice President:	Sister Aubyn Thompson
Recording Secretary:	Sister Dianne Battle
Asst. Recording Secretary:	Sister Charlie Evans
Corresponding Secretary:	Sister Thomasine Jackson
Treasurer:	Sister Angela Giles
YPD Director:	Sister Ann Sharpe
Parliamentarian:	Sister Loretta Martin
Historiographer/Statistician:	Sister Minter
Promotion and Missionary Education:	Sister Eula Skanes
Worship Leader:	Sister Lue Ellen McCrary
Member At Large:	Sister Chevron Weatherly

Workshops were conducted by the Reverend Tamara

Penick Yarbrough and former Birmingham Chief of Police Annetta Nunn. The Reverend Yarbrough provided information regarding Alacare Home Health. She stressed the importance of a health care directive which is a legal document in which a person specifies what actions should be taken for their health if they are no longer able to make decisions for themselves because of illness or incapacity. Miss Nunn is with the Family Violence Center which is a division of the YWCA. She provided chilling statistics regarding domestic violence and available services at the Family Violence Center. She stated that every nine (9) seconds in the US a woman is assaulted or beaten and that every day in the US, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends.

The YPD Director and Area Chairpersons provided their reports. We proceeded to the noon worship service where the Reverend Deborah Peppers of St. Paul AMEC, Scottsboro, delivered the message. The message was entitled, "A Mind to Work" and the text was taken from Nehemiah 4:6. She noted that goals are set you must be prayed up; you must persevere because there will be challenges and opposition and that sometimes you will need to partner up because you will need assistance. She further noted that from unexpected blessings come unexpected victories.

Annual Conference Institute concluded with a late lunch.

The Evening Worship Service is known as the Night in White. The evening was filled with joyful praise and the keynote speaker was the Reverend L. Nicole Slater who serves as the pastor of Grant Chapel AMEC in Valley Grande, Alabama. The message was entitled, "Won't He Do It" and the text was taken from Luke 8:38-39 which tells how Jesus healed a demon-possessed man. She told of the restorative nature of Jesus and how He restores us daily but we have to do just as Jesus asked the demon-possessed man to do – Go and tell others how much God has done for you.

The evening concluded with the bestowing of Life Membership to four members and the Missionary Benediction.

Church School Lesson Overview – October 2016

The lesson reviews were written by Brother Willie J. Sandifer.

October 2, 2016

Lesson Title: The Radiance of God's Glory

Lesson Scripture: Hebrews 1

Print: Hebrews 1:1-9

Devotional Songs: #25, #272, and #243

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).

This lesson is the first in a new study unit that aims to show Jesus' sovereignty and superiority over the entire creation. The author of Hebrews set out to reassure converts of the wisdom in accepting Christ as Savior and discourage them from turning back to Judaism or to taking up a mixed form of Christianity and Judaism.

October 9, 2016

Lesson Title: Builder of the House

Lesson Scripture: Hebrews 3:1; Matthew 7:19-29

Print: Hebrews 3:1-6; Matthew 7:24-29

Devotional Songs: #364, #251, and #243

Key Verse: "Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself" (Hebrews 3:3).

This lesson provides a firm attestation to Jesus' superiority over everything. This includes the most revered ancestors of the Jews, religious ideals and precepts. We are fortunate in our time to see how the Scriptures in the book of Hebrews merge with Matthew's accounts of Jesus' personal testimonies to lead to a deeper understanding of Jesus' superiority.

October 16, 2016

Lesson Title: The Great High Priest

Lesson Scripture: Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Print: Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Devotional Songs: #412, #77, and #243

Key Verses: "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess." (Hebrews 4:14).

The scriptural priesthood that stands out the most was that of Moses' brother Aaron, whom God ordained to mediate

for Israel and offer sacrifices for sins. As pointed out by the book of Hebrews, this was merely a harbinger of the ministry of the Great High Priest, Jesus Christ.

October 23, 2016

Lesson Title: The High Priest Forever

Lesson Scripture: Hebrew 7

Print: Hebrews 7:1-3, 18-28

Tentative Devotional Songs: #525, #258, and #243

Key Verse: "Because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood" (Hebrews 7:24).

Because death made it impossible for them to remain in office, the Levitical priesthood had many priests. Jesus, however, lives forever and holds a never-ending, unchanging priesthood.

This lesson shows qualities attributable to Jesus Christ, and the order of Melchizedek, as well as, other priests of the Old Testament. These qualities include a servant leader, commitment to God and ministry to His people, trustworthiness, reliability, and continuity.

October 30, 2016

Lesson Title: Model of Endurance

Lesson Scripture: Hebrew 12

Print: Hebrews 12:1-13

Tentative Devotional Songs: #415, #258, and #243

Key Verse: "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith" (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

In this lesson, the author of Hebrews encourages readers to see how pain and suffering not only serve as discipline. These conditions also lead them to spiritual perfection. The 12th chapter of Hebrews encourages readers to see Jesus as the perfect role model for enduring the pain and suffering that they will experience as Christian believers.

The author of the *Bible Illustrator and Illuminator* suggested the Hebrew Christians needed to consider Jesus' persistence, or they might become weary and lose heart. There was evidence that although they had begun their race well, they were becoming worn down by opposition. They needed a reminder that their Saviour endured more suffering than they would ever know.

Go Green !

Reduce Food Waste

How much food do you dispose of because the "use by date" has passed or the food has spoiled. Here are a few tips to eliminate food waste (and save money).

1. Keep pantries organized so that it is easy to see what you have stored in the pantry and eliminate purchasing something you already have.
2. Plan pantry meals one or two days a week. These meals use ingredients that are in the pantry, refrigerator and freezer.
3. Even though the unit price is sometimes higher, purchase small containers of foods that you use infrequently.
4. Label carefully foods that are not in their original containers.
5. Place carrot packages on a layer of paper towels and wrap celery in foil to extend their life.
6. Research which produce should be stored at room temperature rather than in the refrigerator.

If you have "Go Green" tips that you would like to share with AMEN readers, please e-mail them to nedra.mcdaniel@gmail.com.

Thank you for Your Generosity

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' " Matthew 25:40

In response to an appeal from Bishop Harry L. Seawright, St. John members made donations to assist churches and members who were impacted by the flooding in the 8th Episcopal District (especially the Baton Rouge, Louisiana area). Thank you for the sacrificial offerings that you shared. As a result, St. John donated \$2,500 to this relief effort.



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

Mobile Apps for Parents



Parents often find themselves on the go. Whether it be an education event, sports, or just a family outing, there is always something that has to be done. The need may be a babysitter or diapers delivered for the parents with newborns. There may be a need to connect with kids' coaches, other parents, track kids' activities on their devices or even connect with kids' teachers. Well, nowadays there are mobile apps that can be used for all of these. This article addresses some of the mobile apps that can be used to assist with some of these activities.

First, take a look at Pumpic. Pumpic allows parents to keep up with kids' activities on their iPhone, iPad, iPod and Android devices. By using Pumpic, one can monitor their online activity, social apps and even track their GPS location remotely. Along with these features, parents can also block SMS containing bad words, limit the amount of text messages being sent and block inappropriate web sources and applications.

Next, look at Simply Circle. Simply Circle is a free mobile app that allows parents with kids in school to connect with other parents that may be in their child's class, on their sports team or even connect with other family members. Many schools are now using Simply Circle to keep members of the PTA or PTO updated with announcements without having to attend regularly occurring meetings. Simply Circle can also be used to create a private sports team group that will allow coaches to send out announcements, events, documents and photos to parents.

The first two apps mentioned provide security on apps for kids and the ability to interact or become involved with their kid's school. A third app, 1Password for families, will allow parents to store passwords for things such as Netflix,

(Continued on page 16)

Several Online Giving Options are Available

PayPal™, Givelify and Pop Money are three options that are available to donate electronically to St. John.



You may use the PayPal Mobile App or desktop version of PayPal™ to make donations. By entering stjohnameh@aol.com in the "TO:" field. If the PayPal™ account is linked to your bank account, specify "Family and Friends" as the type of donation. This results in no fees being charged for the donation.



A recent addition to the online giving options is Givelify Mobile Giving. Install this App on your smart phone and select St. John's

AME Church as the organization to which you desire to donate. For faster access for future contributions, mark St. John as your "Home Church."

Both PayPal™ and Givelify can be accessed from the St. John website, stjohnamehsv.org.

Most banking institutions offer the PopMoney option to customers who use their online banking feature. PopMoney transfers funds directly from one bank/bank account to another. In the PopMoney setup, specify you are sending funds to stjohnameh@aol.com. This is an excellent way to contribute if your tithe/offering is the same each month because this can be set up as a recurring transaction.

Talk to the treasurer if you have questions. Online giving is easy!

Church School Book Club

September 2016 Discussion Date: September 17, 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

'Til the Well Runs Dry Lauren Francis-Sharma, September 2015

October 2016

Discussion Date: October 15, 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Stand Your Ground, Victoria Christopher Murray, 2015

A black teenage boy is dead. A white man shot him. Was he standing his ground or was it murder?

Janice Johnson is living every black mother's nightmare. Her seventeen-year-old son was murdered and the shooter has not been arrested. Can the D.A. and the police be trusted to investigate and do the right thing? Should Janice take advantage of the public outcry and join her husband alongside the angry protestors who are out for revenge?

Meredith Spencer is married to the man accused of the killing and she sees her husband and the situation with far more clarity than anyone realizes. What she knows could blow the case wide open, but what will that mean for her life and that of her son? Will she have the courage to come forward in time so that justice can be done?

#1 national bestselling and award-winning author Victoria Christopher Murray's *Stand Your Ground* is a pulse-pounding meditation on race, motherhood, marriage, and vigilante justice that will have readers spellbound until its shocking end.

Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

(Continued from page 13)

the garage door code, or WiFi so that one has a central place to keep up with the many passwords to devices, applications or even home automation tools. To ensure user's information is secure when using 1Password, an encryption mechanism is used to protect sensitive information.

In conclusion, there are many mobile apps for iPhone or Android users that will allow them to track and manage daily activities. Please be careful when using mobile apps, all are not safe. Always check the reviews and comments of other users before downloading mobile apps.



AME Proud

A part of Mother Bethel AME Church will be on display in the new African American Museum by the Smithsonian! An old pew (from somewhere between

1794-1841) is on loan to the museum. According to historians, the founders of the AME Church sat on this pew as they worshipped on the oldest parcel of land continuously held by Black people in America.

#AMEPROUD.

October 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Chdr Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
2 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship Communion AMEN DEADLINE	3 6:00 p.m. Church Conference	4 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Stewards Board Mtg.	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 Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting
9 8:00 a.m. Worship 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	10	11 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	12 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	13 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	14 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	15 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Chdr Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
16 8:00 a.m. Worship 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	17	18 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	19 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	20	21 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	22 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
23 8:00 a.m. Worship 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:30 a.m. Worship	24	25 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	26 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	27	28	29
30 8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship	31					

PRAYER for the MONTH Dear God, thank you for your faithfulness. Amen.

Scripture for the Month—"Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)



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

Return Service Requested

E-mail: stjohnameh@aol.com

Website: stjohname-hsv.org



The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright, Bishop
The Reverend Sherita Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor
The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
The Reverend Maurice Wright II, Pastor

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Important Dates to Remember

Sunday, September 25, 10:00 am Worship, 8:45 am Church School

Sunday, October 2, 10:00 am Worship, 8:45 am Church School

7TH SESSION OF THE ALABAMA RIVER REGION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, October 4, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, October 5-8, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

St. Paul AME Church, Montgomery

7TH SESSION OF THE NORTHEAST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, October 11, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, October 12-15, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

Washington Chapel AME Church, Tuskegee

7TH SESSION OF THE SOUTHWEST ALABAMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tuesday, October 18, 2016 – WMS Annual Convention

Wednesday – Saturday, October 19 – 22, 2016 – Business, Training & Worship

St. Paul AME Church, Mobile

PRE-PLenary MEETING—Wednesday, November 9, 2016

PLenary MEETING—November 10 – 12, 2016

INDNJC

*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 21 Issue 10

October 2016

September 2016

St. John Family,

It is with great joy that I greet you in the matchless name of Jesus. On behalf of our entire family, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for such a wonderful and warm welcome. Please know that we are excited to be a part of the family.

For more than 130 years, this church has been a beacon of light in the Huntsville area as well as the connectional church. I am so humbled to be a part of the rich legacy of pastors that has led this congregation; from the Reverend Dr. William H. Council, to the legendary Reverend Dr. Homer McCall, to the immediate past pastor, the Reverend Dr. Patrick Clayborn. I am grateful to stand on the shoulders of giants and pray that God will give me the vision and strength to work diligently to further the mission and ministry.

Family, as we look to a glorious future, I solicit your prayers and your support. Over my 20 years of ministry, I have come to learn that we are greater together than we are apart. Let's all recommit ourselves to work in unity for the good of the church. As we seek to minister to this community, I pray that God will enlarge our territory. I pray that the people who come in contact with this church will feel the presence of God and our heartfelt welcome. I pray that lives will be changed, families made stronger and that ministry will break forth. Please join in with me as we pray for this "NEW SEASON" to which God has brought us.

As we settle in the area, know that the Reverend Joretha and I make ourselves available to each of you as we seek to serve this great congregation. I have come to adopt a simple slogan, "If you need me, just call me." St. John, you are in my constant thoughts and prayers and I pray that you feel the same level of excitement and anticipation.

Yours In Christ,

The Reverend Maurice Wright II
Servant Pastor



The last day to register and be able to vote in the November 8th, Presidential Election is, October 24th.
For any election, the last day to register to vote or update your voter registration is the 15th day prior to the election.

The last day to apply for an Absentee Ballot for the November 8th, Presidential Election is November 3, 2016.
Absentee Ballot Applications for the November election can be obtained from Mrs. Eva Smith, Mr. Eddie Sherrod or Ms. Barbara Johnson or online at alabamavotes.gov.

Need your voting rights restored, contact Mrs. Alice Sams at 256-551-1320.

Every vote counts!

Voting information can be found at alabamavotes.gov (the state of Alabama's official website).
Information on the site includes:



- Electronic voter registration and registration forms
- Verification of registration and identification of polling place
- Sample ballots (Be an informed voter, know the candidates and amendments before you go to the polls.)
- Absentee voting
- Military and overseas voter services

Contact the church office if you have any questions regarding voting in the 2016 general election or need transportation to the polls.



**your VOTE
is your VOICE**

Encourage

By Paulette Bargon

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." 1 Thessalonians 5:11

I was leaving my local Dollar Store one day and a little girl handed me a sticky note that she had written. It said "God Loves You!" It really touched my heart because I was not in the best of moods that day. I thought, God will always let you know that He is watching and He will send some form of encouragement, even when it is not expected. OH, I forgot to tell you that the little girl was deaf!

Do you know someone who is an encourager? That is a person who will lift you up when you are down. They will motivate you to keep going when you want to give up and they will stand with you in every challenge. I am lucky to have someone like that in my life. He is always there for me. We all need somebody in our lives to encourage us; however, we also need to encourage others. There are people all around us who are discouraged and need a word of comfort. An act of kindness could make a great difference to your friend, family member or a stranger's life.

Let your children or that special someone know how much you love them, especially if you have not told them lately. Point out your child's accomplishments and reward them. Comfort and assure them when they need it. Hug them.

Take a meal to that elderly neighbor or to that person who is recuperating from an illness or loss of a loved one. Accompany them to a medical appointment when you know they are going alone. Encourage with scripture and prayer or just be there to listen. Send cards or flowers. You can give someone a sincere compliment. Say thank you to that store clerk or restaurant worker, tell them how much you enjoyed their service. Smile, Smile, Smile. These are just a few examples of encouraging others. I am sure you know a lot more, just take a little time out to inspire someone or cheer them up. We could make a remarkable difference in someone's life and give them a glimpse of Christ as we follow His example of compassion and kindness.

The Holy Spirit manifests through us qualities we could never produce ourselves.

"Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" Galatians 5: 22-23.

Please encourage someone to vote!!



Find a Need and Fill It

By Christie Brodeur

As a Christian do you sometimes ask, "Lord, help me to find a need and fill it."

Immediately, our entire being, our whole body receives the answer. We move. We act. We hurry to the bedside of a chronically ill friend. We offer a smile or a prayer. We send a card to a bereaved friend, we bake a cake or send flowers. We are empowered by the infinite love of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We are carried on our way with joy, and we know that no matter how difficult the action might be, we move, powered by the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit that stirs us to move.

We respond quickly to a cry for help from a family member plunged into the grips of grief for a sibling or a beloved child carried into the arms of God. We faithfully go there putting away our own needs, sharing grief, offering solace and comfort.

We perform because we are filled with the divine light of our Savior, energized and grateful that our presence has helped and we can see that our presence has made a difference before our very eyes.

You are invited to make a difference before the very eyes of those who gather for food from the St. John "Soup Kitchen" twice monthly. To many, this presence can be as heart-warming as a smile and gentle touch. This may be the only kindness they see that day.

Please come on the 3rd and 4th Tuesday of each month to fill a dire need as this ministry feeds those who come. Volunteers and donations are always encouraged and appreciated. Please see Sister Pearlean Myhand and Sister Maeola Peoples to volunteer or make a donation.

"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

Romans 12:1

Autism Spectrum Disorder is New Diagnosis for Several Conditions

By Bridget J. Floyd, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist

October is the month to focus on Mental Illness Awareness. Several key dates emphasize mental health/illness nationally and internationally. These dates are as follows:

Mental Illness Awareness Week	October 5 – 9, 2016
National Depression Screening Day	October 6, 2016
World Mental Health Day	October 10, 2016

Since various types of depression have been featured in previous articles, the focus in this instance will be Autism Spectrum Disorder. Depression is often a component of this condition however.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental/psychological disorder that is typically diagnosed in childhood, but it is present throughout the person's life. The condition can be managed (not cured), typically by multidisciplinary interventions. There are a range of symptoms and the severity of the condition can range from mild to severe. Impairment can occur in social, occupational, emotional, educational and other areas of functioning.

The new terminology, Autism Spectrum Disorder, was introduced by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), which is published by the American Psychiatric Association. Several disorders now fall under this new terminology (ASD) and the term "spectrum" suggests the differential in terms of severity ranging from Autism, Asperger's Disorder or Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD, NOS). Asperger's Disorder/Syndrome is still used at times when referring to the less severe/milder end of the spectrum.

More children are being diagnosed with ASD. It is unclear whether this is due to a true increase or improvement in identifying and diagnosing the condition. It is found more often in boys than girls. There are no tests for the condition itself. Typically the report of symptoms, family history, and other factors help with diagnosing ASD. Social, emotional, behavioral, educational functioning and sometimes communication and intellectual functioning are impacted. Each child may be effected in different/individual ways depending on the symptoms that are present in a particular child.

Symptoms may be detected as early as the first few months or years of life. The infant or toddler may not like to be held or cuddled. An older child might prefer to play alone. There may be delayed speech and poor development in

speech or after speech develops or they might be verbally expressive and relate well with older individuals, including adults. There may be an unusual rhythm or tone when the person speaks. They may repeat words or phrases or mimic sounds that they hear. They may engage in repetitive behaviors from rocking to hand flapping. They may speak extensively on a topic that is of interest to them. They may make poor eye contact. Often times these children prefer to have a routine and may react to changes in that routine – the range being from annoyed to having tantrums. They may engage in head-banging or other self-injurious behaviors. There may be odd movements that include walking in a special way such as on their toes or they might be clumsy.

These youngsters may be sensitive to light, sounds, touch. They may avoid certain foods or prefer foods and eat those to the exclusion of others. They may have trouble focusing their attention or may be intensely focused, especially on favorite topics or interests. These youngsters may experience anxiety due to change, a new or social situation, or they may generally feel anxious. They might experience emotional distress or depressive symptoms.

This might be treated by prescribing an antidepressant to address the depressive and/or anxiety symptoms or an antipsychotic to regulate mood or manage extreme behaviors. Psychotherapy can help to address mood, anxiety, behavioral issues. This can include behavior management and aiding in improved social and family functioning. Family therapy to aid family members in understanding the diagnosis, symptoms/behaviors, and how to help their child improve. Accommodations in educational settings can be beneficial. The youngster might be best served by having special education or accommodations, and/or they might benefit from having advanced/gifted classes. The range of cognitive/intellectual functioning might range from mental retardation to above average intelligence to savant/genius level in the educational setting or in creative/artistic areas. Occupational therapy can be helpful not only with movement and coordination but also with emotion regulation.

There is evidence that early identification and intervention can be very beneficial. One should seek evaluation and treatment by a pediatrician, psychologist, or psychiatrist who has training/experience in treating this particular disorder. There are children who might be misdiagnosed due to the wide range of symptoms and the complexity of the disorder. There are also specialty centers that work with children "on the spectrum".

Church School Lesson Overview – November 2016

The lesson reviews were written by Brother Kenneth Parham.

November 6, 2016

Lesson Title: Everything is Brand New

Lesson Scripture: Revelation 21:1-8

Print: Revelation 21:9-14, 22-27

Devotional Songs: #355, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

In this lesson, Apostle John reveals God's plan and promise to live among man. For those who made it through the period of trials and tribulations, the defeat of Satan and the day of Judgement, God plans for the present earthly world and heavens are then completed.

In chapter 21, John described in his vision a new heaven and new earth. It was relayed that God would send down a Holy City, a new Jerusalem where God Himself would dwell. John described this city as being like a bride adorned for her husband. The vision also describes a perfect world where God consoles the individual by wiping tears away and assuring man that there will be no more sorrow, pain, or death. God will provide water from the spring of life to those that made it through the judgement as victorious and to those that did not make it, God will banish them to a second death in the lake of fire and sulfur.

The Living Application Study Bible summarizes this lesson as follows: "...Just as God finished the works of creation (Genesis 2:1-3) and Jesus completed the works of redemption (John 19:30), so the Trinity will complete the entire plan of salvation by inviting the redeemed into the new creation..."

November 13, 2016

Lesson Title: I See a New Jerusalem

Lesson Scripture: Revelation 21:9-27

Print: Revelation 21:9-14, 22-27

Devotional Songs: This Little Light of Mine, #251, and #243

Key Verse: "I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb." (Revelation 21:22-23).

Apostle John continued to describe the Holy City as shown to him by an angel in a vision. The Holy City is seen descending from heaven. The Holy City was described as being clear bright jasper. The wall of the city was surrounded by a wall; great and high. The wall contained twelve gates guarded by an angel at each gate. A name was inscribed on each gate. The names were those of the twelve tribes of Israel. The scripture also noted that the wall was built on twelve foundations. Each foundation contained one of the names of the twelve disciples.

John continued by indicating that although expected, there was no temple in the middle of the Holy City. The city did not have need of sun or moon for God Almighty and the Lamb would be the temple and the light source for the Holy City. Nations will walk by its light and there will be no night. Kings of nations as well as people will bring their praises into the Holy City by the gates that will never be closed. It is noted that only those in the Book of Life may enter into the city.

The Living Application Study Bible commented that the description of the Holy City defies description and that believers will not be disappointed. It also noted that the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve disciples, noted in the vision, represented the faithful from the old testament and the church of the new testament; both, believing Jews and Gentiles living a faithful life will live together in the new earth. It is also noted that in the new Holy City, a temple (primary place of worship) is not needed due to the physical presence of God living amongst His people. Finally, the only stipulation for entering into the city is that one must be listed in the Book of Life.

November 20, 2016

Lesson Title: Life and Healing

Lesson Scripture: Revelation 22:1-7

Print: Revelation 22:1-7

Devotional Songs: #412; #77; and #243

Key Verses: "Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Revelation 22:1).

Apostle John relayed the vision of seeing what is in the new city through the eyes of an angel. The reviewer noted a summary documented in Matthew Henry's Commentary. The writer gives a descriptive narrative of how the new Holy City, a New Garden of Eden, contrasts to the former Garden

(Continued on page 6)

Church School Lesson Overview – November 2016

(Continued from page 5)

of Eden (Genesis). Some of the points noted below offer a view that God again out-performed Himself (which is hard to comprehend since GOD is perfection). One may speculate that the determining factor for the success of the new Garden is that of God's presence.

- God and the Lamb are the fountain head for the river of water of life. All springs of grace, comfort, and glory, are in God; and all that streams from Him is through the mediation of the Lamb.
- This tree of life is fed by the pure waters of the river that comes from the throne of God. The presence and perfections of God furnish all the glory and blessedness of heaven.
- The fruitfulness of Tree of Life- The Tree of Life brings forth many sorts of fruit—twelve, suited to the refined taste of all the saints. This tree is never empty, never barren; there is always fruit upon it. In heaven there is not only a variety of pure and satisfying pleasures, but a continuance of them, and always fresh. The fruit is not only pleasant, but wholesome.
- God appoints the leaves of the Tree of life with health sustaining power - The presence of God in the new city will ensure the health and happiness of the saints; there they will find in Him a remedy for all their former maladies, and are preserved by Him in the most healthful and vigorous state.
- The perfect freedom of this paradise from everything that is evil - *There shall be no more curse*; no accursed one (no serpent as there was in the earthly paradise). The devil has nothing to do there; he cannot draw the saints from serving God to be subject to himself, as he did our first parents, nor can he so much as disturb them in the service of God.
- The supreme happiness of this paradisiacal state - There the saints shall see the face of God; there they shall enjoy the beautiful vision. God will own them, as having His seal and name on their foreheads. They shall reign with Him forever; their service shall not only be freedom, but honor and dominion.
- All this shall be with perfect knowledge and joy - They shall be full of wisdom and comfort, continually walking

in the light of the Lord; and this not for a time, but forever and ever.

November 27, 2016

Lesson Title: From Beginning to End

Lesson Scripture: Revelation 22:8-21

Print: Revelation 22:12-21

Tentative Devotional Songs: #364; #258; and #243

Key Verse: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Revelation 22:13).

Apostle John reiterated, in verses 12-15, who God is and the purpose of His coming—to swiftly bring reward to those who have been faithful as well as to the non-believers. To the faithful, whose names are in the Book of Life, God will welcome each individual into the Holy City by the gates to dwell and to eat of the Tree of Life. To the unbelievers, God's reward to those will be outside of the Holy City and has been noted as the second death in Revelation 21:8.

In verses 16 and 17, Jesus identified Himself to the nations as being the root and offspring of David and with that introduction, the Holy Spirit and the church extend an invitation to those who hear His voice, to those who are thirsty and to those who wish to take the water of life as a gift to come and receive eternal salvation.

Verses 18 and 19 provided warnings to anyone who embellishes or detracts from what is written in the scriptures for their own benefit. To the former, God will send plagues as punishment and to the latter, God will take away that person's share of the Tree of Life.

John closed this book of prophecy by attesting to what he had witnessed by inviting God's plan to come to pass and extended the benediction; that may the grace of Jesus Christ be with us all.

Church School meets each Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

There are classes for all ages. Church School provides a solid biblical foundation for children and adults. Include attending Church School as part of your Sunday worship experience. Mr. Willie Sandifer is the Church School Superintendent. Contact him for more information about Church School.

Health Corner: Sugary Drinks Impact Health

By Martha Smith, R.N.

The World Health Organization recommends consuming no more than six (6) teaspoons of sugar per day. One single can of cola exceeds this recommendation because it contains ten (10) teaspoons of sugar. The nutritional facts on the can of soda list the sugar in grams. The translation of six (6) teaspoons of sugar to grams is 24 grams. One can of Coca-Cola is 39 grams.

Research by the Harvard School of Public Health concluded consumption of sugary beverages (1-2 cans per day) increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

The article "How Coca Cola affects your body when you drink it," <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/297600.php> (October 9, 2016) provided the above statistics and provides a detailed analysis of the negative health effects of sugary drinks, with emphasis on Coca-Cola.



Pastor's Aid Bake Sale Planned

Sunday, November 20, 2016
after 8 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. services

This is an excellent time to get your
Thanksgiving baked goods.



AME Proud

The new editor of *The Christian Recorder*, Mr. John Thomas III, announced the revised email digest of *The Christian Recorder* (TCR). Since 1852, TCR has served as the official newspaper of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Biweekly emails will be sent to subscribers with selected articles from *The Christian Recorder*.

"Breaking News" bulletins will be issued in consultation with the Office of the General Secretary/CIO.

Complete the subscription form at <http://thechristianrecorder.us5.list-manage1.com/subscribe?u=8253b0952c51f2b3dcb331ea6&id=1b584cea2a> to receive the electronic version of *The Christian Recorder*.

For the complete paper, please purchase a print subscription from the AMECSunday School Union.



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams

Understanding Device Extended Warranty

As people use some form of electronic device on a daily basis whether it be a laptop, smartphone, desktop, or some form of a tablet, they often do not keep up with the warranties. Nowadays, every device that is purchased comes with some type of manufacturer's warranty or the option to buy an extended warranty. When a shopper purchases a new smartphone, TV or laptop there is a high chance that the sales person will offer an extended warranty. Be aware of the pressure that the sales person may be under to sell you a warranty. Before deciding to purchase an extended warranty, it is highly recommended to check whether the device is already covered or not within the manufacturer's warranty. Although most products have a manufacturer's warranty, the reliability of a product lasting a long time is higher than normal due to product competitiveness. However, it is widely known that most people feel more comfortable knowing that they are covered with an extended warranty. The question at hand is whether it is worth it to have an extended warranty.

When it comes to an extended warranty, an issue to keep in mind is even though the purchaser may have an extended warranty, the warranty may not cover the issue encountered with the device. It is important to be extremely careful and read exactly what is covered within the extended warranty. It has been a known fact that after a device is repaired, most people are not satisfied with the experience of the extended warranty. Also, most people who have tried to use their extended warranty, often express how they may have had to wait on hold for long periods of time to be told by a tech rep that there may be no trace of their contract. After the waiting period, many people are told that the damage described in the claim is from the user or owner the device. Again, it is another pain point of an extended warranty.

We can all get around buying an extended warranty by researching the device prior to purchasing. Always check the reviews of the product before purchasing. Most people that have had a bad experience with a product will most likely leave a review. In conclusion, it is highly recommended to establish an emergency savings for a faulty device and not purchase an overpriced extended warranty.

Several Online Giving Options are Available

PayPal™, Givelify and Pop Money are three options that are available to donate electronically to St. John.



You may use the PayPal Mobile App or desktop version of PayPal™ to make donations. By entering stjohnameh@aol.com in the "TO:" field. If the PayPal™ account is linked to your bank account, specify "Family and Friends" as the type of donation. This results in no fees being charged for the donation.



A recent addition to the online giving options is Givelify Mobile Giving. Install this App on your smart phone and select St. John's

AME Church as the organization to which you desire to donate. For faster access for future contributions, mark St. John as your "Home Church."

Both PayPal™ and Givelify can be accessed from the St. John website, stjohnamehsv.org.

Most banking institutions offer the PopMoney option to customers who use their online banking feature. PopMoney transfers funds directly from one bank/bank account to another. In the PopMoney setup, specify you are sending funds to stjohnameh@aol.com. This is an excellent way to contribute if your tithe/offering is the same each month because this can be set up as a recurring transaction.

Talk to the treasurer if you have questions. Online giving is easy!

2017 Prison Ministry Volunteer Training Schedule

DATE

LOCATION

Nov. 5, 2016, 9:00 a.m.	Hartselle Church of Christ 700 S. Sparkman St. / Hartselle, AL 35640
Dec. 3, 2016, 9:00 a.m.	Bridge Builders Church International 1801 Behline Road / Decatur, AL 35601
Jan. 3, 2017, 9:00 a.m.	Lindsay Lane Baptist 1300 Lindsay Lane / Athens, AL 35613

Church School Book Club

October 2016

Discussion Date: October 15, 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Stand Your Ground, Victoria Christopher Murray, 2015

November 2016

Discussion Date: November, 19 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Queen of Katwe: One Girl's Triumphant Path to Becoming a Chess Champion, Tim Crothers, September 2016

The "astonishing" (*The New York Times Book Review*) and "inspirational" (*Shelf Awareness*) true story of Phiona Mutesi—a teenage chess prodigy from the slums of Uganda.

One day in 2005 while searching for food, nine-year-old Ugandan Phiona Mutesi followed her brother to a dusty verandah where she met Robert Katende.

Katende, a war refugee turned missionary, had an improbable dream: to empower kids in the Katwe slum through chess—a game so foreign there is no word for it in their native language. Laying a chess board in the dirt, Robert began to teach. At first children came for a free bowl of porridge, but many grew to love the game that—like their daily lives—requires persevering against great obstacles. Of these kids, one girl stood out as an immense talent: Phiona.

By the age of eleven Phiona was her country's junior champion, and at fifteen, the national champion. Now a Woman Candidate Master—the first female titled player in her country's history—Phiona dreams of becoming a Grandmaster, the most elite level in chess. But to reach that goal, she must grapple with everyday life in one of the world's most unstable countries. *The Queen of Katwe* is a "remarkable" (NPR) and "riveting" (*New York Post*) book that shows how "Phiona's story transcends the limitations of the chess board" (Robert Hess, US Grandmaster).

- Amazon



your VOTE
is your VOICE

November 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	3	4	5 8:00 a.m. Love Feast Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
	6 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Communion Sunday AMEN DEADLINE Daylight Savings Time Ends	7 9:30 a.m. Fifty Plus Meeting 6:00 p.m. Official Board	 Tuesday November 9 2016 Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Stewardship Board Mtg.	9 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	10 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	12 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Start Meeting
Month District Planning Meeting—Birmingham, AL						
13 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship 50+ Harvest Service	14	15 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	16 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	17 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	18 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	19 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
20 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	21	22 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call	23	24 	25	26 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
27 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	28	29 Noon Prayer Call	30 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study			

PRAYER for the MONTH Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us so much that You gave Your only Son that we might have eternal life. Use us in Your service each day such that You might be glorified. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture for the Month— "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." John 3:16 (NPSV)



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(256) 534-3265

Return Service Requested

E-mail: stjohnameh@aol.com

Website: stjohname-hsv.org



The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright, Bishop
The Reverend Sherita Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor
The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
The Reverend Maurice Wright II, Pastor

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Important Dates to Remember

October 17, 2016	Lay Organization Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
October 18, 2016	Southwest Alabama Annual Conference WMS Convention
October 19-22, 2016	7th Session of the Southwest Alabama Annual Conference St. Paul AME Church, Mobile, Alabama
October 31, 2016	Fall Festival, 5 pm -7 pm
November 5, 2016	LOVE FEAST, 8 am.
November 6, 2016	Daylight Savings Time ends, fall back one hour.
November 8, 2016	Election Day
November 9, 2016	Ninth District Pre-plenary Meeting, Daniel Payne Community Plaza
November 10-12, 2016	Ninth District Plenary Meeting, Daniel Payne Community Plaza
November 13, 2016	50+ Auxiliary Harvest Service

*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*

INDNJC

ST. JOHN A.M.E.N NEWSLETTER



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 21 Issue 11

November 2016

Greetings, My Beloved St. John Family:

Once again it is a pleasure to greet you in the Joy of Jesus!

This is the season of thanks. During this season, a day called Thanksgiving is set aside where families and friends gather to give thanks, to reflect over the past year, to express love and care for each other, and to share a meal. But more importantly, this is a day where we remember how great our God is and thank Him for His continued protection and provision.

For those who have been blessed to know that all we are and all we have is because of the generosity of God, every day is a day of thanksgiving. Each day we must give God thanks for grace and mercy which He gives us new every morning. Within His grace and mercy is everything we need for life and living. So, thanks be to our God for who He is, and for what He is doing in our lives right now. Because we trust Him, we thank Him for what He is going to do.

Now as we prepare to enter into this Advent season, the time of year when we focus on the coming of Christ into the world, let us be so thankful for His coming. The Bible expresses that Jesus came to save His people from their sins. Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, who came to pay the sin debt for all of us.

St. John, I am grateful to God for you and for this partnership that God created between us. Let us honor this partnership with a spirit of thanksgiving. I truly thank God for each of you and for the gifts and talents with which He has blessed you. I look forward to us working together to be that church that the world looks at and says, "that is who I want to be." With a spirit of thanks and expectancy, let us work diligently to be that church.

Again, thanks to all of you for your gifts of love and support to my family and me and for your commitment and dedication to St. John Church.

With a Spirit of Gratitude,

Rev. Maurice Wright II,
Servant Pastor



Veterans Day Honors Those Who Served Their Country

by Clifton Miller, MAJOR, QM U.S. Army Retired

For over 240 years a grateful nation has sent out the cry for armed assistance in times of war and peace. "Whom shall we send and who will go for us," Veterans would always answer the cry, "send me, I will go". Veterans are those men and women who have served and those currently serving in the armed forces of the United States of America - Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guard personnel. The word "veteran" comes from the Old English language and means "old experienced soldier." The first use of the word was documented in 1789. Therefore, America honors Veterans on a special day every year.

Veterans Day is an official United States public holiday, observed annually on November 11, that honors military veterans. It coincides with other holidays, including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, celebrated in other countries that mark the anniversary of the end of World War I. Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. The United States previously observed Armistice Day. This U.S. holiday was renamed Veterans Day in 1954. It is not to be confused with Memorial Day: Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans; while Memorial Day honors those who died while in military service.

Between 1971 and 1977, Veterans Day was celebrated on the fourth Monday in October. It was changed back to its original date, November 11, in 1975 when President Gerald Ford signed bill S 331 into law. The change went into effect beginning in 1978.

According to the American Community Survey, there were 19.3 million military veterans in the United States in 2014. Of those 1.6 million were female. California, Texas and Florida comprise the states with the largest number of veterans, equaling one million or more.



Brother Clifton Miller

On Veterans Day and every day, hug a veteran and thank them for their service. We veterans would appreciate it more than you will ever know.

A Thanksgiving Meditation Unexpected*

By The Reverend Deborah Peppers,
Pastor, Greater St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church
Scottsboro, Alabama

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

(Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NRSV))

Families and friends set aside their differences to intentionally come together to share during the Thanksgiving holiday. Everyone will meet at a certain location to share food, laughs, stories, and television (football or movies). Within the past, the day after Thanksgiving has become the biggest shopping day of the year. This is day a used by retailers to gauge holiday spending and the economist determines the health of the economy.

It is safe to say that the activities for Thanksgiving have become routine. In other words, everything is pretty much expected. We tend to go through the motions. Unfortunately, this attitude tends to lull us to sleep, which causes us to become complacent with life.

Let us think back for a moment to the time that you received the unexpected gift, or the unexpected call, or heard the unexpected report? Do you remember how you felt at that moment? You either had a newfound joy or momentary pain. Nevertheless, the situation caused you to take another look at your life.

Let us look to 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 with so many unexpected situations facing us today. This text admonishes us to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing and to give thanks in all circumstances. These three we must do continually ** rejoice, pray and give thanks. We are to rejoice in the LORD who is constant and not in our circumstances, which change constantly. Pray continually because prayer changes things. Prayers can be as simple as one sentence or word. It can be done quietly or aloud. Even when we do not know what we ought to pray for because the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Lastly, be thankful because it will keep you going, keep you humble, and bring you peace. Thankfulness helps you to see the good.

So, let us do the unexpected during this Thanksgiving season. Let us show others that we know Christ by sharing Him throughout this holiday season. Let us surprise our neighbors, friends, families and especially our enemies by doing the unexpected.

O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good; yes, He is good;
O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good; yes, He is good;
For he is worthy, worthy; for He is good; yes, He is good.



The Reverend
Deborah Powers

*This article was first published in the St. John AMEN in November 2008.

What is the Naomi Council?

By Barbara Johnson

When one mentions the name Naomi, people think of Ruth having been the main character of the story, when the focus should be on Naomi, the mother-in-law. For it was Naomi, who, after the loss of her sons and husband, decided to return to her own country and her own people. Yet, while her daughter-in-law Ruth could have chosen to go her separate way, she chose to remain with her mother-in-law and hence, fulfill her destiny.

Ruth journeyed on with Naomi, not only because she loved her, but also because she was a strong, wise, obedient and faithful believer. She knew her mother-in-law would provide her with wise council. We have Naomis among us; among this congregation, who provide wise council every day to anyone who's receptive and open to listen.

St. John AME's establishment of The Naomi Council grew out of the need to continue to engage and keep the Naomis of the Stewardess Board actively involved in Christian service. The Naomi Council is comprised of senior members of the Stewardess Board who have served faithfully and dutifully, for many, many years, and who wish to continue doing so; however, are unable to fulfill the physical requirements of being a Stewardess. But just like Naomi, these sisters have provided and will continue to provide wise council to all who would seek council.

Naomi Council members dress in white and can be recognized by the bronze colored flower they wear. Just like bronze, they have been strong, have persevered, endured and withstood the test of time. They have seen the best and the worst of life. They have celebrated the highs and provided comfort during those times of loss. These great women have held the hands of the weary, wiped away the tears, stood in the gap, interceded on member's behalf and comforted them. Yet, here they stand, still willing, still desiring to continue to serve this congregation and community in Christian service.

Naomi Council members have been charged with a specific task in ministering to the congregation. They pray and send cards to sick and shut in members each month. They encourage the caregivers in the congregation through prayer and by sending them a card monthly. They meet the needs of bereaved families by staying in touch with them for at least three months after a loss. They bridge the distance between students who are away at college and St. John.

(Continued on page 8)

Embracing the Advent Season



One beautiful tradition of Advent is lighting the candles of the Advent wreath. The purpose of the wreath is to deepen our understanding of Christmas. From the first Sunday in Advent to Christmas morning, the wreath grows in beauty and light as we wait in anticipation of the celebration of the birth of Christ.

Historically, the Advent wreath is traced to pagan sources. Some believe the wreath originated in Scandinavia. The custom was adapted by the Christian church to demonstrate how the people dwelling in darkness were so magnificently given light by the Son of God. Since Advent sets a mood of waiting in the dark, and because light began to gain ascendancy over the darkness when Christ was born, lighting the Advent wreath is a most appropriate and meaningful custom. Later, the practice spread to Central and Western Europe.

The wreath of live greenery symbolizes the everlasting life found in Christ. It reminds us of the eternal, unchanging love of God, made evident to us through His Son. The candles in the wreath signify God's Son as the light of the world. Customarily, there are four candles for the four weeks of Advent. The three purple candles represent hope, love and peace. The pink candle represents joy. The Advent candles are lighted throughout Advent, but the Christ candle, the center candle, is lighted on Christmas morning.

The purpose of Advent is to prepare our hearts and minds for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. St. John embraces the Advent Season with the weekly lighting of the Advent candles, special songs and scripture readings. Members may also observe the season with advent wreaths in their homes. This year communion will be served each Sunday during Advent.

"A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD." (Isaiah 11:1-5)

FALL FESTIVAL

by Shannon Lott

The Church School and the Koinonia Ministry were in partnership once again for the Fall Festival on Monday October 31st for the children of St. John A.M.E. and the community. The Fall Festival consisted of many fun activities such as a bouncy house, Trunk or Treat, bobbing for apples, piñata and much more. Pictures below are an indication of the fun enjoyed by those in attendance.

This year was another success and we look forward to having another Fall Festival next year with more exciting activities for all ages.



November-National Caregivers' Appreciation Month

By Barbara Johnson



November is **National Family Caregivers Month**, a time to recognize the **40 million** Americans who take care of loved ones – helping them live independently at home where they want to be. What family caregivers do is extraordinary – adult children taking care of parents, husbands and wives caring for their spouses, mothers and fathers caring for adult children. They deserve our gratitude and support throughout the year and most especially during this month when we traditionally give thanks.

Together – family caregivers spend **37 billion hours** each year providing unpaid assistance to their loved ones – a contribution valued at **\$470 billion**. They help with bathing and dressing, driving to appointments, preparing meals, managing medications, handling finances and so much more. Many are also juggling full-time and part-time jobs and some are still raising their families. Without a doubt, **family caregivers are the backbone of our care system.**

The CPR (Caregivers, Prayer and Respite) Ministry at St. John was established three years ago to support members of our congregation who are caregivers, and their families. For the past two years, the CPR Ministry, has organized Saturday workshops to provide requested information. This year the ministry wanted to expand its outreach to the entire congregation. A different topic of interest for caregivers was highlighted for three Sundays during the month of November. An information table was stationed in the lobby of the church on the first Sunday. Congregants could pick up pamphlets and flyers on various subjects regarding caregiving. The second and third Sunday, *How to Manage Stress* as a caregiver and *Healthy Eating and Nutrition* for caregivers was emphasized. Mrs. Donna Gullatte, Agent, with the Madison County Cooperative Extension was the facilitator. A wellness clinic, where blood pressure and blood sugar checks were conducted, was held on the fourth Sunday. Medical professionals from the congregation facilitated this initiative. The CPR Ministry worked collaboratively with the St. John Soup Kitchen to provide a hot, delicious Thanksgiving meal to the caregivers and their loved ones. A card of Thanks and Appreciation was attached to each meal. Sometimes, it's just the little things that go a long way.

The CPR Ministry, just wanted the caregivers to know that what they do on a daily basis, is greatly appreciated.

The CPR Ministry usually meets at the church on the fourth Monday of each month at 6:00 pm. New members are welcome. If you have a need as a caregiver for assistance, feel free to contact Sister Abbiegail Hugine who serves as the chairperson for the CPR Ministry or one of the following members:

Sister Charlsie Brooks
Sister Patricia Grier
Brother Clifton Miller
Sister Martha Smith

Sister Agnes Gilmore
Sister Donna Gullatte
Sister Lorraine Parham
Brother Hodges Washington

Brother Rufus Gilmore
Sister Barbara Johnson
Brother Eddie Sherrod
Sister Rosa Walker

Other Caregiver resources:
TARCOG-Area Agency on Aging
(Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments)
256-716-2455

aarp.org/iheartcaregivers

Give Thanks and Praise

By Paulette Bargon

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations. Psalm 100

Psalm 100 is one of the most popular scriptures about giving thanks to God for the blessings He provides. Thanksgiving is a day of reflection about all things for which people are thankful. The day after, people go on to plan for Christmas: shopping, planning parties, rehearsals for children's Christmas programs and all the many other things that they think they need to do. It is so easy to become overwhelmed during the holiday season. Take a little extra time during morning reflection and meditate on all the ways God blesses.

Here are a few bible verses about all the ways God blesses His people. Share them with friends and family over Thanksgiving dinner.

2 Corinthians 4:15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God

2 Corinthians 9:11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

1 Timothy 4:4-5 For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

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

Psalm 138:1-2 I will give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise; I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.

2 Corinthians 9:15 Psalm 30:12 Colossians 3:15-17
Please add your favorite one to the list. May our hearts forever honor and glorify God as we give thanks.

"Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; His love endures forever." *Psalm 106:1*



What Is Yours and Mine?

By Christie Broeze

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein."

- Psalm 24:1

A high school teacher shared in "Devotions from the Heart."¹ "When dealing with adolescent tribulation, high-school girls are masters of innuendo and subtlety. But continually move on." She continued, "When volunteering with kindergarten the world is completely divided into two camps. What's yours and what's mine?" She heard, "Your ball rolled into our game, so it's ours... you said I could use it, so now it's mine." They spend so much time arguing, she said, recess is over.

Wouldn't people all be better off if they had the same attitude as David? David was a king who had land, wealth, military success and the praises of his people; yet he recognized that everything he had, belonged to the Lord.

Let us also have grateful hearts, not just during the Thanksgiving season, but all year long. Please help the Soup Kitchen extend generosity and grace to others by supporting the Kitchen/Soup Ministry on the 3rd and 4th Tuesday of each month. Those who come will thank you.

Dear Father, we appreciate Your ownership of all things, and Your love that allows us to share in Your abundance. Help us to reflect our gratitude through acts of generosity this Thanksgiving. Amen

¹ Devotions from the Heart, [David's Thanksgiving](#), Vol 59 No 5 pg. 33

Be in the Know

Make sure you know what is happening at St. John. Join the TEXT alert system and receive updates on church activities. To join, text the word **STJOHNHSV** to 55469.

For more information about this text alert system or to update your contact information, contact the church office between 10:00 am and 4:30 pm on Monday through Friday.

Officers Elected for Conference Year

On Monday, November 7, the Official Board elected officers for this conference year.



Sister Pamela Whitehead was elected Church Secretary. Sister Whitehead has served for several years in this capacity and is a member of the Steward Board.



Brother Willie Bradford was elected Church Treasurer. Brother Bradford has served as a member of the finance committee and is a member of the Steward Board.

Congratulations Sister Whitehead and Brother Bradford!

Holiday Food Boxes to Be Provided for Those in Need



Again this year St. John will prepare food boxes for families in need at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The food items will include ingredients for a typical Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas Dinner. The quantities are determined by the number of people in the family.

Members are urged to support this benevolent outreach with financial support. The approximate cost of a basket is \$50. Members are asked to donate to this outreach.

What is the Naomi Council?

By Barbara Johnson

(Continued from page 4)

There is no mention of The Naomi Council among the other auxiliaries and groups in the AME Discipline, because it is an initiative which was specifically birthed at St. John AME Church. There was a desire on behalf of several Stewardesses to remain actively engaged in Christian service. And with the blessing of the Reverend Clayborn, they came together and created a program to meet that need. As with all Stewardess Board appointments, Naomi Council members serve for one year and are approved by the Steward Board.

St. John AME's Naomi Council, strong women, still serving.

Prostate Cancer Awareness Can Save Lives

By Bridget J. Floyd



Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers in American men. The development of prostate cancer is influenced by genetics (family history) and age. Other factors such as race, diet, and lack of exercise can play a role in increased risk. While prostate cancer is generally a "slow growing" cancer; in some cases, black males have a more aggressive form of the disease that makes it challenging to treat.

Because of the slow growth, one of the options for "treatment" is "watchful waiting". That is, the person is monitored regularly and if/when warranted treatment or interventions such as radiation and/or surgery can occur. The decision is driven by the test results that provide information for "staging" the cancer. That is, the scale / stage indicates to the treatment team and patient whether the cancer is localized (has not spread beyond the prostate) or whether it has metastasized ("spread") beyond the prostate, into lymph nodes or other organs/parts of the body.

There are no early warning signs. Therefore being proactive with regular screenings/testing is recommended. An area of debate/controversy is whether screenings/blood tests (PSA) result in unnecessary treatment and side effects. There also has been debate regarding whether more aggressive treatment such as surgery, is more effective than watchful waiting. This typically is an individual decision on the part of the patient and his loved-ones.

Interestingly, there was a report in the September 14, 2016 issue of the *New York Times* noting that results of a ten-year study suggest that there is no difference in the death rates in patients in three randomly - assigned (by chance) treatment groups. These were 1) Surgery, 2) Radiation, 3) "Active monitoring" - treatment if progression occurs.

Due to the slow growth of the cancer, most men who are diagnosed with prostate cancer do not succumb to the disease. Physicians frequently tell patients that they are more likely to "die with" prostate cancer rather than "die from" cancer. They are more likely to live a long life and expire from some other condition.

Church School Lesson Overview – December 2016

The lesson reviews were written by Brother Willie Sandifer.

December 4, 2016

Lesson Title: God Promises a Savior

Lesson Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

Print: Luke 1:26-38

Devotional Songs: #112, #272, and #111

Key Verse: "You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus" (Luke 1:31).

Mary learned in this lesson that God had chosen her to be part of a plan to bring salvation to the world. Her portion of this plan changed what she and Joseph were planning for their lives together. They found their plans changed, as each was visited by an angel, by God's plan to become flesh and dwell among His people.

This lesson looks at an important part in a string of larger stories. It is Mary's story. She was a virgin and betrothed to Joseph when Gabriel visited. The time in history that Gabriel visited Mary was one of suppression for the Jews. The Romans were in power at the time Jesus was born. That oppression fired hope and expectation that God would free and lead His people by sending a Messiah.

December 11, 2016

Lesson Title: The Affirmation of the Promise

Lesson Scripture: Luke 1:39-56

Print: Luke 1:39-56

Key Verse: "Mary said, 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.'" (Luke 1:46, 47).

In last week's lesson Gabriel told Mary that she was chosen to give birth to the Messiah and that message brings together the direct background for this week's lesson. The unexpected pregnancies of Mary and Elizabeth showed that they stood on the verge of prophetic fulfillment against the wider backdrop of salvation-history.

December 18, 2016

Lesson Title: The Forerunner of the Savior

Lesson Scripture: Luke 1:1-25, 57-80

Print: Luke 1:18-20

Key Verses: "The angel said to him: 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth.'" (Luke 1:13, 14).

The first chapter of Luke gives the only in-depth record of the Origins of John the Baptist by showing the astonishing circumstances of his birth. Both the story of Jesus' life and the beginning of the church, start with John the Baptist, who was foretold to be a voice calling in the wilderness.

December 25, 2016

Lesson Title: The Savior Has Arrived

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:1-21

Print: Luke 2:8-20

Key Verse: "Today in the town of David a savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

This lesson shows how the news of Christ's birth spread. It considers the responses and reactions on that night long ago. The timing of Jesus' birth was brought about by God in an ideal place with perfect and complete timing. It crossed during Caesar Augustus' reign. He was emperor from 27 BC to 14 AD. His reign began the Roman Peace as the Roman Empire was not involved in military conflict at this time, thus allowing the good news of Jesus to spread more quickly.

Jesus' arrival is one of the most humble possible. Mary was a young woman who gave birth in an environment that was less than ideal.

Weekly Bible Study Wednesday, 12 pm and 6 pm



Pastor Wright leads Bible Study each Wednesday at noon and 6 pm (unless otherwise noted on the church calendar).

Members are urged to grow spiritually through this weekly study. Currently the lessons are based on the book Connected: My Life in the Church by Thom S. Rainer. You may purchase the book from Lifeway or other local and online bookstores. There is also an APP available on this bible study series.



Here We Grow Again!

St. John welcomes the persons who have joined this conference year.

Donald Goode

John Boston

Jailyn Grandberry

DeCarlos Braxton

Rev. Gloria Madison

David Norwood

Katrisa Norwood

Cara Leigh Davis

Arlena M. Brown

London Briggs

Welcome to the St. John family!



Pastor's Aid Bake Sale Planned

Sunday, November 20, 2016
after 8 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. services



Churchwide Cleanup Planned

Saturday, December 10

Calling all members! It is time to clean our church. Please plan to participate in the churchwide cleanup on Saturday, December 10. The Trustees will lead this effort; however, everyone working along with the trustees will make the job easier. Contact the church office for more details on the time and to find out how you can assist.



Technology Tip

By Ricardo Williams



Many people use a laptop on a daily basis for work and/or personal use. Often time they never stop to think about the condition of the laptop battery. When purchasing a laptop, it is often known that most consumers never pay attention to the quality of the battery that is included with the laptop. If they did pay attention to the quality of the battery, this could prevent unexpected long term battery issues with laptops. However, there are some key things one should be aware of with the battery that is included with the laptop that they purchase.

Laptops are usually purchased with a lithium-ion battery that has a life span based on the number of charge cycles versus the number of years you may use the laptop. The amount of charge cycles depends highly on the battery that is included. Most laptops should get around 300 to 1000 charge cycles. Usually most battery issues will start to occur between 500 charge cycles and 1,000 charge cycles. This could occur for frequent laptop users around the second year of using the laptop.

To keep up with the health and status of the batteries on the laptop, the diagnostic tool on the laptop can be used. If the laptop does not have a diagnostic tool for the battery, the customer can contact the manufacturer for tips on how to check the health status of the battery. The most widely used laptops such as ASUS, Dell, Lenovo or Sony usually offer tools to monitor the health status of batteries. After completing a diagnostic on the battery and receiving negative information, it may be time to replace the battery. If unsure of what type of battery is required, always contact the laptop manufacturer to get the recommended battery before purchasing.

Owners can remove the battery to get the specific battery specifications that are sometimes listed on the outside of the battery. Also, once the battery has been replaced, be sure to properly recycle the old battery rather than allowing it to be stored in unsafe places.

In summary, always be aware of the type of laptop battery, the life expectancy of the battery, and how to properly recycle the battery.



Saint John AME Church

Music & Christian Arts Ministry Presents

Miracle On Church Street

Sunday December 18, 2016; 10:50 AM

229 Church Street NW Huntsville, AL 35801

All Are Welcome!

For more information contact or visit us on Facebook at
STJOHNHSV or call 256-534-3265.

Rev. Maurice Wright, II
Servant Pastor



WMS District Meeting to be Held at Alabama A&M University

The 32nd Annual Ninth Episcopal District Women's Missionary Society (WMS) Convention will be held December 2-3, 2016 at the Earnest L. Knight Center on the historical campus of Alabama A&M University in Huntsville, AL. The Episcopal WMS Supervisor is the Reverend Sherita M. Seawright and the Episcopal WMS President is Mrs. Susie Bonner. The Northwest Alabama Conference WMS will host the convention. Sister Patricia R. Smith is the Conference WMS President and Sister Ann Sharp is the Conference YPD Director. Bishop Harry L. Seawright is the Presiding Prelate.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

(Registration is required)

Friday, December 2, 2016

Registration: 3pm – 5pm

Reception: 6pm-7pm

Play "Flight 309": 7:30pm

Attire: Sunday's Best

"Flight 309" is a play depicting the conversations between the Lord's angel of Death and the people the Angel has been sent to retrieve.

Saturday, December 3, 2016

Registration 7:30 am – 8:30 am

Day of Ministry: 9:00 am

Day of Ministry relative to Service and Witnessing.

Reporting of Missionary Walk, Workshops, Compassionate Care, WMS Business and Awards Luncheon.

Attire for Saturday: Northwest Conference WMS is casual (RED) Christmas.

Church School Book Club

November 2016

Discussion Date: November, 19 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Queen of Katwe: One Girl's Triumphant Path to Becoming a Chess Champion. Tim Crothers, September 2016

December 2016

Discussion Date: December 17, 2016

10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

And the Shofar Blew. Francine Rivers, 2013

In the Old Testament, God called His people to action with the blast of the shofar, a ram's horn. He still calls His people today.

In this relevant and timely novel, dynamic young preacher Paul Hudson is committed to building his church—but at what cost? When Paul accepted the call to pastor the struggling church, he had no idea what to expect. But it did not take long for Paul to turn Centerville Christian Church around. Attendance is up, way up, and everything is going so well. If only his wife, Eunice, could see it that way. Still, he tries not to let her quiet presence distract him. But Eunice knows that something is not right . . . and it has not been for a long time.

The more Paul's zeal and ambition builds, the more he loses sight of the One who called him. As Paul and those around him struggle to discern what it truly means to live out their faith, they must ultimately choose between their own will and God's plan.

2017 Prison Ministry Volunteer Training Schedule

DATE

LOCATION

Dec. 3, 2016, 9:00 a.m. Bridge Builders Church International
1801 Beltline Road / Decatur, AL 35601

Jan. 3, 2017, 9:00 a.m. Lindsay Lane Baptist
1300 Lindsay Lane / Athens, AL 35613



December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
					11th Episcopal District Africa • Methodist Episcopal Church 32ND ANNUAL WMS CONVENTION	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship Communion Sunday AMEN DEADLINE	9:30 a.m. Fifty-Fours Meeting 6:00 p.m. Office/Board	Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Mtg.	12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal		9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting Churchwide Cleaning Day
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship		11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN Noon Prayer Call 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	6:00 p.m. VPC Choir Rehearsal	6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry CHILDREN'S Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
8:00 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Christmas Program			12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study			7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
8:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship						10:00 p.m. Watch Night Service

PRAYER for the MONTH Dear heavenly Father, we thank you for your bountiful blessings. During this Thanksgiving Season and throughout the year, we acknowledge your faithfulness and your blessings. Help us to always be thankful. Help us to bless others as you have blessed us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture for the Month— "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever." Psalm 136:1



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

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 The Reverend Sherita Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor
 The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
 The Reverend Maurice Wright II, Pastor

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Important Dates to Remember

November 24, 2016	Happy Thanksgiving
November 28, 2016	Church Conference, 6:00 p.m.
December 2-3, 2016	Ninth District WMS Convention, Huntsville, Alabama
December 10, 2016	Churchwide Clean-up Day
December 18, 2016	Christmas Program 10:50 a.m., Early Worship Service, 8:00 a.m.
December 24, 2016	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:00 p.m.
December 25, 2016	Christmas Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m.
December 31, 2016	Watch Night Service 10:00 p.m. Breakfast will be served afterwards
January 1, 2017	New Year's Day, 10:00 am Worship

*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 21 Issue 12

December 2016

Merry Christmas!



Join us for worship!

Sunday, December 18	8:00 a.m. Worship
	10:50 a.m. Christmas Program
Saturday, December 24	7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service
Sunday, December 25	10:00 a.m. Christmas Morning Worship

Pastor Wright, Reverend Rita and the St. John family pray that this Christmas will be a time of rejoicing for each of you as you celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Be blessed this Christmas and be a blessing to others.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

- Luke 2:14



Special Services Express Thanks during the Thanksgiving Season

Thankful People Service

By Tami McGhee

On Wednesday, November 16, at 6:00 p.m., St John members gathered for a special service of Thanksgiving. The Praise Team Choir opened with "I Wanna Say Thank You," and provided songs of thanksgiving throughout the service. First Lady, the Reverend Joretha Wright, offered a prayer of thanks, and Pastor Maurice Wright read the scripture for the evening, Psalm 100. Following the call for personal testimonies, the congregation was blessed with spirit-filled "Tag Team" messages from the Reverend Meriam Garrett, Sister Lillie Rivers, the Reverend Gloria Madison, and Brother Justin York.

The Reverend Garrett's subject was "Harvesting the Bounty." She reminded all of the bounty they do not have to plant or harvest but receive freely and generously from God, gifts such as wisdom, peace, grace and mercy, and love.

Sister Rivers' topic was the "3 Phrases of Praise: Hallelujah, Thank You Jesus, and Praise God." Hallelujah is the highest praise and one should enter into God's presence with singing and shouting, thanking Him for everything, and praising Him, simply because of His goodness, His faithfulness, and His everlasting mercy.

The Reverend Madison spoke of God's steadfast love that endures forever. She encouraged everyone to tell their children how good God has been, and to worship and praise God when life becomes overwhelming. Reverend Madison closed with the song, "I'm a Soldier in the Army of the Lord."

Brother York's message, "When Believing Ain't Enough," reminded everyone that individuals must not only hope and believe something will happen when they pray, but must also have faith, which requires putting in the work, playing their part, and asking for help.

Pastor Wright reminded the congregation that one should come to worship with a spirit of thanksgiving. After the altar call to prayer, everyone departed, thankful for God's goodness and blessings not just during the holiday season but each day of the year.

Fifty-Plus Auxiliary Celebrates Harvest Sunday

By Agnes Gilmore

"He said to his disciples, the harvest is great, but the workers are few". Matthew 9:37

On Sunday November 13, 2016, the Fifty-Plus Auxiliary celebrated Harvest Sunday at the 10:50 worship service. It was a spirit-filled celebration with members of the Auxiliary performing worship tasks throughout the service. Music was led by the Gospel Choir, the dance ministry ministered in dance and St John's new pastor, the Reverend Maurice Wright II delivered a challenging message. The sermon was entitled "Overcoming Limitations: Part II" and the text was Luke 19:5.

The Fifty-Plus Auxiliary was the brainchild of the late Mrs. Marie Cobb. Her goal was to start a ministry that would promote a positive image of the aging process. Mrs. Cobb felt that a harvest worship service would allow seniors to express the great need for a new generation of harvest workers. It is also a time to focus on our commitment to God. The harvest celebration would be a time to focus on God's wonderful blessings of family, friends, shelter, provision, fruitful ministry, and the many opportunities to serve.

Luke 10:2 reads: "Therefore said he unto them, the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

God needs us to make ourselves available for kingdom work. My Christian brothers and sisters – it's harvest time. Begin planting the seeds of God's word in your heart and mind today and you will begin producing a harvest of righteousness in your life.

The Fifty-Plus Auxiliary normally meets the first Monday of each month at 9:30 a.m. Check the monthly calendar in the newsletter for any changes to this schedule. All interested members are invited to join this ministry.

Rev. Rita Wright

Moments Like This

Things to Remember



"There have been moments in my life when I fantasized the opportunity to erase all the sadness and pain in my life, but if I had the power to defeat such a task, my inability to sort through the meaning of it all would also remove all the good moments as well."

The mind has a way of hiding life's happenings in places still not discovered by man. It is this same mind that draws us into places of our past and often give sight to ventures in our future. Our hearts cling to memories, both broken ones and exceptional ones.

Christmas for me was a strange time. All the holiday zeal and expressions of Christmas Joy seemed to be a foreign language. Sometimes with thoughts of my own holiday memories, many of which have not always been the happiest of times, I can still remember how those moments changed my life. Holidays in my childhood home were filled with dysfunctional distractions and poverty plagued subtleties; as my sisters and I often frowned at the Christmas dinner table filled with oddities from the kitchen cabinets. But for some reason my sisters and I always managed to laugh after we have cried, hug after we fought, and share when there was little to go around. There is one fond memory I cherish. Although I grew up around church and not in church, no matter what, my father always prayed Christmas morning. He always made us get on our knees to show and learn respect and humbleness towards God. I guess in all honesty, those things that I choose to remember both good and not so pleasant have inspired me to remember these important things about the holiday season.



Remember to make time for people. Love people by treating them with respect and dignity; even if you don't understand their cause and effect. God is commanding us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31). We often take for granted that we will always have one more moment with a person. Life is short, don't procrastinate about making that phone call or sending a handwritten card. Create an opportunity to demonstrate the highest form of God's honor, and that is Love.

Remember to show Grace and Mercy. In Matthew 7:12 God is instructing us to treat others with kindness just as we would like to be treated. None of us is exempt from faults, so in this season remember that someone did it for you when you needed it the most.

Remember to eat all you want, don't feel lonely and blue and please don't be bothered. So what if you gain a few pounds, that Christmas sweater will be a sure distraction from everything else that does not matter. We all can find a reason to be sad and lonely, DON'T! Life is full of wonderful people waiting for you to share your life with. Make yourself available. If you are reading this article then you have another opportunity to smile and laugh. So, throw your head back and laugh, it will soon pass.

Don't be bothered by all the hustle and bustle of the holidays. Don't be bothered by all that you don't have and would like to give. Don't be bothered by the illusion of other people's happiness. Don't miss the moment by engulfing your thoughts elsewhere, by exiting the moment before its time. Enjoy the moment and let the rest become a memory to share at your choosing.

Most of all Pray. It really does change things.



Saint John AME Church
Music & Christian Arts Ministry Presents

Miracle On Church Street

Sunday December 18, 2016; 10:50 AM

229 Church Street NW Huntsville, AL 35801

All Are Welcome!

For more information contact or visit us on Facebook at
STJOHNHSV or call 256-534-3265.

Rev. Maurice Wright, II
Servant Pastor

IN ONE ACCORD

CHRISTMAS IS HERE

JOIN US AT **ST. JOHN AME**
DECEMBER 23RD 7PM

229 CHURCH STREET **HUNTSVILLE, AL 35810**

SERVANT PASTOR **REV. MAURICE WRIGHT**

ROBERTO BURTON FOUNDER + ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

In Memory of Jason Brown



On Saturday, November 20, 2016, St. John celebrated the life of a faithful member of the church family.

Brother Brown was a loving person. He loved the Lord, his family and his church family. He was always a pleasant person and was a willing worker. He served on the Trustee Board, sang in the Male Chorus, regularly attended Church School, volunteered with Habitat for Humanity,

was photographer and contributor for the St. John AMEN and assisted in any way that he could with whatever was needed at the church. Jason ensured his children were also involved in the church and set a perfect example for other fathers of the church. He was also active in community service oriented organizations.

Even after his health prevented regular attendance, it was evident that he was present in spirit. He continued to tithe. He made a special effort to be present for special occasions, especially the Christmas Eve/Christmas Morning Worship Services. Jason kept in touch with members via e-mail and Facebook. He set up a special Facebook group where he monthly posted the list of member's birthdays for that month.

The St. John family thanks God for the life of Jason Brown. Expressions of sympathy are extended to his wife, Dr. Thalia Love-Brown, and children Kimberly, Breona, Geoffery and Michaela.

To God be the Glory!



*I am the resurrection, and the life:
he that believeth in me,
though he were dead, yet shall he live.*

John 11:25

Officers Nominated and Elected

At the first Church Conference of the conference year, Pastor Wright nominated the following persons to serve as Stewards. They will be confirmed by the Quarterly Conference.

Roselyn Akines
Willie Bradford
Guy Ginn
James Heyward
Marcus Hill
Abbiegail Hugine
Barbara Johnson
Jeanette Jones

Nedra McDaniel
Clifton Miller
Mary Rankin
Eddie Sherrod
Lauretta Teague
Sam Walton
Pamela Whitehead

The following members were elected to serve as Trustees for the 2016-2017 conference year.

Lars Avery
Thalia Love-Brown
Claudnette Purifoy Fears
Bridget Floyd
Celeste Gilmore
Karl Gullatte
Erica Harbin
Jesse Johnson
Carl Lewis
Randy Love

Curtis Mayes
Glenn Phippen
Ray Sconiers
Eva Smith
Terry Speight
Gerald Teague
Darwin Washington
Bill Williams
Justin York

The members of the **Stewardship and Finance Commission** were also elected.

Willie Bradford – Steward (Treasurer)
James Heyward - Steward
Marcus Hill - Steward
Carl Lewis - Trustee
Bill Williams - Trustee
Eva Smith - Trustee
Rufus Gilmore – Member-at-large
Bobby Adkins – Member-at-large

Congratulations to these members who have accepted the responsibilities of service as Stewards, Trustees and Stewardship and Finance Commission members.

A list of ministry leaders and board and auxiliary presidents will be printed in a future issue of the AMEN, along with the calendar of events for 2017.

THE ANNUAL
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
Emancipation Proclamation
CELEBRATION

Sunday
JANUARY 15, 2017
@ 7:00 PM.

PROGRESSIVE UNION
MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
1909 BLANDTOWN ROAD
PRINCETON, AL 35806

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CHINESE AREA WITH WASH-GON
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PRESIDENT, CHINESE
REVEREND DR. WAYNE F. JONES
FIRST PASTOR

GUEST MESSENGER
THE REVEREND DR.
Ronda J. Rivers
PASTOR, JAY OF HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
NASHVILLE, TN

www.ETHME.org

Church School Book Club

December 2016 Discussion Date: **December 17, 2016**
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.
***And the Shofar Blew*, Francine Rivers, 2013**

January 2017 Discussion Date: **January 21, 2017**
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

***Red Hats*, Damon Wayans, 2010**

Meet Alma, a mother and wife, who is brutally honest and bitter. Disappointment and heartbreak have left the once vital and joyful woman so cynical and self-protecting that she has forgotten how to love anyone, including herself.

She has become so accustomed to being resentful of her husband, James, that even when she wants to show him love she does not know how. He made some mistakes over the course of their decades-long marriage, but she made some mistakes, too, which alienated not only her husband but friends and neighbors as well. Deep down she is sorry for what happened and still loves Harold, but stubborn pride eats away the short time they have left to make amends.

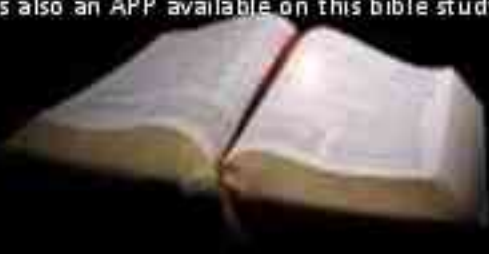
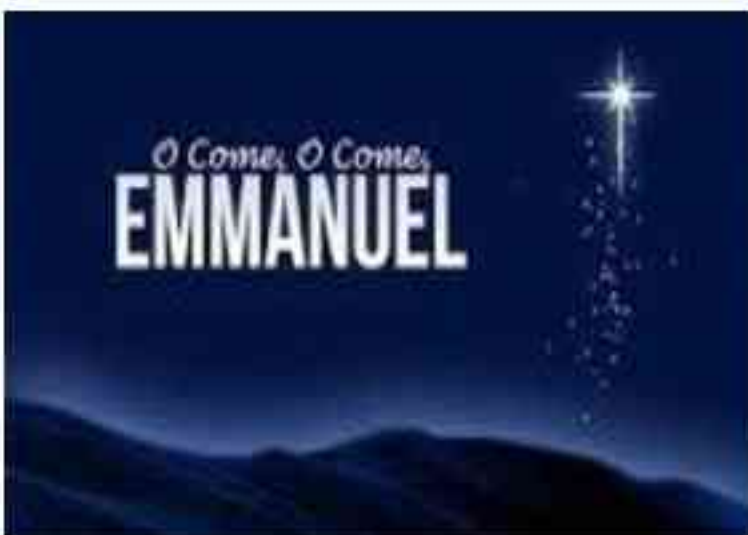
When she finds herself widowed with grown children in far-off places, a deep loneliness sets in and she starts to give up on life. That is until a group of red hat ladies—whom she once thought of as belonging to a cult—extend hands of friendship and reintroduce her to herself and, possibly, a new love.

In this debut novel, Wayans has crafted unforgettable characters in Alma, her family, and friends, and a charming story that stays with the reader long after the last page is read and reminds us of the enduring power of love and friendship. —Amazon

Weekly Bible Study
Wednesday,
12 pm and 6 pm

Pastor Wright leads Bible Study each Wednesday at noon and 6 pm (unless otherwise noted on the church calendar).

Members are urged to grow spiritually through this weekly study. Currently the lessons are based on the book Connected: My Life in the Church by Thom S. Rainer. You may purchase the book from Lifeway or other local and online bookstores. There is also an APP available on this bible study series.

The Light of Christmas

By Paulette Bargon

Light

Christ Is The Light Of Christmas

Christmas joy and light's aglow;
Christmas songs to warm and cheer
Excitement is on the children's faces
As anticipation fills the air.

But for some it can be lonely
When loved ones have passed away,
Memories are all that linger
As the years begin to fade.

But Christ's light should never dim;
It should ever shine out bright
Our ray of hope in this troubled world
Is our joy of eternal light.

Christmas, when spent with Jesus,
Can warm our hurting hearts
For as His light shines within us,
Its glow warms our deepest parts.

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For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given
And the government will be on his shoulders
And He will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this

Isaiah 9:6-7

May peace and happiness be your true gift at Christmas, and
may the New Year be filled with blessings, grace, mercy, faith
and praise for you and your family.



Soup Kitchen Corner

By Charlie Brooks

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.

-Luke 2:10-14

Little Child of Bethlehem,
May you be born again in people's hearts every day.
Grant that Your Holy Spirit will infuse us
with pure love and that we will share it with others
so that it will be Christmas in our lives every day of the year.
We thank You for the privilege of celebrating this day
and for what it means to us.
That You came to this evil world as the Son of God
and became part of the humble household;
that You were raised and grew up just like any other child;
that You grew to adulthood and worked in a carpenter's
shop;
that You became hungry and thirsty like we do.
Thank you that You knew temptation and sorrow;
that You were like us in everything but sin;
and struggled to make a living like we do.
We praise You for Your life and work, for Your love
until death and for the power of Your resurrection.
We share in Your transfiguration
and rejoice in Your divine intervention in our lives.
We make space for You in our hearts this festive season.
Let us rejoice all year round because we have found life in
You.
We worship You, Lord Jesus, as our greatest gift from God.
Amen

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

FROM ST. JOHN'S SOUP KITCHEN
AND
FOOD SERVICES MINISTRIES!!

An Advent Devotional*

By Lady Hereford

Writer, International Relations and Marketing at Palm Beach Atlantic University

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his
glory in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19 (NIV)



I'm a child of the '80s, but some of my favorite childhood memories are of watching the black-and-white movies and TV programs of my parents' generation together with my family. To this day I am a huge fan of the sci-fi series "The Twilight Zone" hosted by Rod Serling. One of my favorite episodes, titled "What You Need," first aired on Christmas Day in 1959. In it, an elderly street vendor named Pedott played by Ernest Truex peddles inexpensive items like matches and shoelaces. It soon becomes apparent that the man isn't just a small-time entrepreneur; he has the gift of prophecy. By looking in a person's eyes, he can see into his or her immediate future. He then hands the person an object that seems like a random gift at the moment: a bottle of fabric cleaning fluid, a bus ticket to Pennsylvania, a leaky fountain pen. As the story unfolds, each of those objects ultimately plays a pivotal role for the characters the man meets. By the time each recipient realizes that the item was indeed exactly what he or she needed, the man has vanished.

The Bible tells us that the world was in dire need of the Messiah. At the time the Christ child was born, only a limited number of people, including King Herod, knew of his true identity as the Son of God. Most ordinary citizens had no clue of the precious gift in their midst. Their salvation had been handed to them, and they weren't sure what to make of it.

God knew what His people needed then, and He knows what we need now. He sends people into our lives, carries us to distant places and delivers us into unexpected situations that we later learn were precisely whom, where and what we needed. This Advent season, may we fully and willingly accept the gift of Jesus knowing that no matter how our story unfolds, He is all we will ever need.



Lady Hereford
Writer, University Relations and
Marketing
Palm Beach Atlantic University

*This devotional was published in the Advent Devotional 2016, December 2,
Palm Beach Atlantic University.



The Church Can Play a Major Role in Shaping Political Policies

By Eric L. McDaniel



Many in the Black community fear that a Trump presidency will erode gains made over the past eight years. However, what those grieving over the election forget is that even though their party may not be in power, an active constituency can constrain the ability for national, state and local officials to create and implement policies that may harm their community. The below points briefly discuss the various ways citizens can protect and advance their interests and I call on the church to play a key role in accomplishing these goals.

One of the major problems in the American electorate is that people are not consistently engaged and lack sufficient information about candidates and policies.

Because of this, policies that negatively affect their lives come as a surprise and they are unaware of policies that benefit them. I understand that paying attention to the multitude of political issues that occur is overwhelming. However, individuals and communities must find ways to acquire and disseminate important information. This is extremely important at the local level where policies have the greatest impact on people's quality of life. The majority of policies that plague Black communities are created by local and state governments. Given this, it is imperative that Blacks remain vigilant in being aware of local issues, communicating with local officials and voting in local and state elections.

One method to help stay informed and get the attention of government officials is to work with local civic organizations. Groups such as the NAACP, Urban League, and Black Lives Matter are organizations that can help keep people informed and provide a vehicle for communicating with elected officials. They are in desperate need of support and they can only achieve their goals to protect the Black community if the Black community is committed to them.

Finally, Black churches should facilitate these activities. Churches can offer places to meet and help citizens develop political knowledge and skills. Pastors must remind their members to vote. The Sunday bulletin should inform the congregation about upcoming elections and places to learn about the issues. Beyond the walls of the church, Blacks must engage their communities and be the "Balm in Gilead." While the churches soothe the injustices of life, they must also empower the communities to create a just society.



Eric McDaniel is professor of government at the University of Texas, Austin and author of *Politics in the Pew*.

Accomplishing this will not be easy, but Blacks must learn how the political system works and how to use it to their advantage. They must not allow themselves to be slowed by those who say their work is futile or calmed by those who just say "wait." The Black community, male and female, rich and poor and urban, and rural must stay engaged. In the darkest hour when the exploited cry for help, the church must provide a light so bright that no injustice can hide in the shadows and no injured soul be overlooked. When the Black church does this, they will set those who wish to do communities harm on notice and the Black community will be triumphant.

Church School Lesson Overview – January 2017

The lesson reviews were written by Willie Sandifer and Claudinette Purifoy-Fears (January 15).

January 1, 2017

Lesson Title: Praising God the Creator

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 33:1-9

Print: Psalm 33:1-9

Devotional Songs: #68, #345, and #243

Key Verse: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth" (Psalm 33:6).

Many believe this to be one of David's psalms about creation. David was a king, a writer, and musician. With instruments and voice he asks that we praise God our creator and deliverer. Looking at the God that David knew, He is faithful, His promises are kept, and He speaks what is true and honest.

January 8, 2017

Lesson Title: A Creation Overflows with Praise

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 96

Print: Psalm 96

Devotional Songs: #97, #272, and #243

Key Verse: "O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth." (Psalm 96:1).

In this lesson we look at a psalm that was written by David and is very similar to the one in 1 Chronicles 16:23-36. It was given to the leader of the Jerusalem temple musicians, Asaph, and was played in the thanksgiving celebration that took place after the Ark of the Covenant returned to Jerusalem.

January 15, 2017

Lesson Title: Praise God the Provider

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 65; 67:6-7

Print: Psalm 65:1-2, 9-13

Devotional Songs: #424; #258; and #243

Key Verses: "By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and off the farthest seas." (Psalm 65:5).

This psalm is composed both of petition and thanksgiving. The primary focus is praising God for the fatherly care which He exercises over His Church (His people), and the Earth as well as the benefits which flow from the Earth. The Earth and its abundance are a testimony of God's power

and His grace. He is worthy of all praise and worship. There are three natural divisions of this psalm.

1. God is praised for His moral qualities - He saves. (Psalm 65:1-5).
2. God is praised for His preparation of the earth as a dwelling place for humankind - He is most powerful (Psalm 65:6-9).
3. God is praised for an abundant harvest - He is a provider (Psalm 65:10-13).

January 22, 2017

Lesson Title: Praise God the Creator

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 104

Print: Psalm 104:1-4, 24-30

Tentative Devotional Songs: #450; #251; and #243

Key Verse: "O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures" (Psalm 104:24).

This lesson shows that God, the creator, to be powerful and merciful. God's people, the Israelites, are principal to this psalm. The psalm describes creation as coming from belief in Abraham's God, who is described as being kind and loyal.

The writer of the AME Adult Sunday School Quarterly describes how God is seen in this way. "God is seen as a royal creator who dispenses nourishment, is the master of seasons, Lord of earth and seas, and controller of life and death."

January 29, 2017

Lesson Title: All Creation Praises God

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 148

Print: Psalm 148

Tentative Devotional Songs: #97; #77; and #243

Key Verse: "Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created" (Psalm 148:5).

In this lesson, everything in the heavens and on the earth is invited to praise God. God's purpose will join things like sea monsters, wild beasts, erupting mountains, loud-mouthed kings with young men and women into a choir that will sing praises to God. The psalm considers all God has done, is currently doing, and will do in the future for His people.

Health Corner

By Rosemary Wells, RN

"12 Ways to Have a Healthy Holiday Season"*

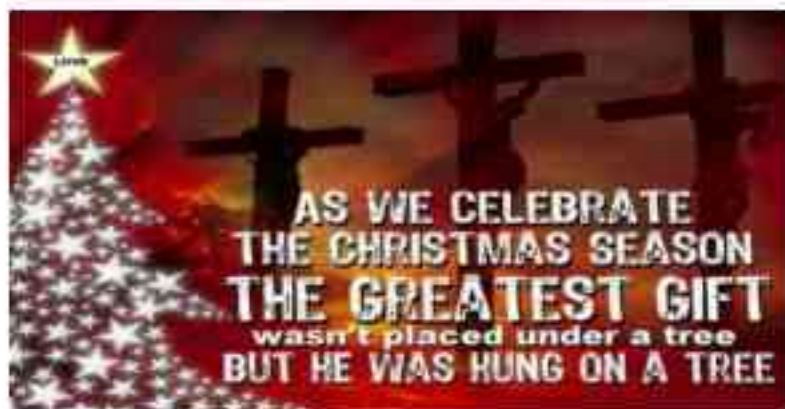
According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) there are ways to brighten the holidays by making your health and safety a priority. Take the following steps to keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy-and ready to enjoy the holidays.



1. Wash hands often to help prevent the spread of germs. It is flu season. Wash your hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Manage stress. Give yourself a break if you feel stressed out, overwhelmed, and out of control. Some of the best ways to manage stress are to find support, connect socially, and get plenty of sleep.
3. Do not drink and drive or let others drink and drive. Whenever anyone drives drunk, they put everyone on the road in danger. Choose to not drink and drive and help others do the same.
4. Bundle up to stay dry and warm. Wear appropriate outdoor clothing: light, warm layers, gloves, hats, scarves and water-proof boots.
5. Be smoke-free. Avoid smoking and second-hand smoke. Smokers have greater health risks because of their tobacco use, but non-smokers also are at risk when exposed to tobacco smoke.
6. Fasten seat belts while driving or riding in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your children in the car using child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to their height, weight and age. Buckle every time, no matter how short the trip and encourage passengers to do the same.
7. Get exams and screenings. Ask your health care provider what exams you need and when to get them. Update your personal and family history. Get insurance from the Health Insurance Marketplace if you are not insured.
8. Get your vaccinations. Vaccinations help prevent disease and save lives. Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine every year.
9. Monitor children. Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items and other objects out of children's reach. Protect them from drowning, burns, falls and other potential accidents.
10. Practice fire safety. Most residential fires occur during the winter months, so don't leave fireplaces, space heaters, food cooking on the stoves or candles unattended. Have an emergency plan and practice regularly.
11. Prepare food safely. Remember these simple steps: wash hands and surfaces often, avoid cross-contamination, cook foods to proper temperatures and refrigerate foods promptly.
12. Eat healthy, stay active. Eat fruits and vegetables which pack nutrients and help lower the risk for certain diseases. Limit your portion sizes and foods high in fat, salt and sugar. Also, be active for at least 2 ½ hours a week and help kids and teens to be active for at least 1 hour a day.



Remember ____



* www.cdc.gov/features/healthytips/index.html , December 2016

January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 a.m. Worship Communion Sunday AMEN DEADLINE	2	3 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Mtg	4 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	5 6:00 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	6	7 9:30 a.m. Steward Board Meeting
8 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	9 9:30 a.m. Fifty-Firs Meeting 6:00 p.m. Office / Board	10 6:00 p.m. Stewardess Board Mtg. 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	11 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	12 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	13 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	14 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry 10:30 AMEN Staff Meeting
15 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship GHIMF MLK Service 7:00 pm Progressive Union	16  Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. SOUP KITCHEN	18 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	19 6:00 p.m. VIP Choir Rehearsal	20 6:00 p.m. Male Chorus Rehearsal	21 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 a.m.
22 8:00 a.m. Worship 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:50 a.m. Worship	23	24	25 12:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Bible Study	26	27	28 9:30 a.m. Dance Ministry
29 9:45 a.m. Church School 10:00 a.m. Worship	30	31				

PRAYER for the MONTH— Dear God, Thank you for Jesus. As we celebrate His birth, use us in your service to meet the needs of others and to share the Good News of Jesus' birth. May we be a friend to the friendless and a comfort to those who may not feel the joy of the season. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture for the Month— "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14



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

Return Service Requested

E-mail: stjohname@ecol.com

Website: stjohname-hsv.org



The Right Reverend Harry L. Seawright, Bishop
 The Reverend Sherita Seawright, Episcopal Supervisor
 The Reverend Oliver Allen, Jr., Presiding Elder
 The Reverend Maurice Wright II, Pastor

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Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| December 17, 2016 | SBHB Planning Meeting, Bethel, Homewood, The Reverend Oliver Allen, Presiding Elder |
| December 18, 2016 | Christmas Program 10:50 a.m., Early Worship Service, 8:00 a.m. |
| December 24, 2016 | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:00 p.m. |
| December 25, 2016 | Christmas Morning Worship, 10:00 a.m. |
| December 31, 2016 | Watch Night Service 10:00 p.m.
Breakfast will be served afterwards |
| January 1, 2017 | New Year's Day, 10:00 am Worship |

*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*

