



Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! He has risen from the grave and has gotten us the victory! You are reading the Spring 2018 edition of **The Greater First FOCUS**. Customarily, we make the attempt to connect our message for this article to the season we are in or concerning some subject of interest for the times during which we are living. Of course, we must recognize the spiritual implications that God is revealing His purposes as the days of our lives are unfolding.

That being said, we are living in turbulent and stormy times. This is true on many fronts whether it is economics or education; family or political; social or spiritual (just to name a few)! The weather we are experiencing is most unusual for the springtime of the year. Cold and windy days that are more typical of the fall/winter season are what we have been experiencing. It is almost as if "old man" winter has not yet wanted "young" spring to have her turn for her season! And with these turbulent and stormy conditions, the Church needs to know what are the strategies for our survival and how do we navigate on these restless seas of time. There are people that are thinking of taking their lives into their own hands by jumping overboard and abandoning the "Old Ship of Zion." But leaving the Church in times like these (or any time) is really not your best option! Instead, we must "Abide in the Ship!" This declaration was made by the Apostle Paul in Acts 27 as he was voyaging to Rome. It is good advice and makes for a sound and wise counsel in times like these. "Abide in the Ship" — I received this good advice while reading the words of Tommy L. Brooks, Sr. Please let me share this good advice with you. Our text is Acts 27:29-31(NRSV):

"Fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern of the ship and

prayed for day to come. But when the sailors tried to escape the ship and lowered the boat into the sea, on the pretext of putting out anchors from the bow, Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay (abide) in the ship, you cannot be saved."

There are at least three types of storms that come into our lives:

- Storms that we bring on ourselves.
- Storms that are caused by others.
- Storms that are allowed by God.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we always felt as though we were "on top of the world?" That we would always be in a positive mood, with circumstances involving us always to our liking.

That people would always

Pastor's Focal Point

treat us with the respect we feel is due us, and give us all the affirmation and love that we desire and need.

But trouble is something that belongs to the human race. I have yet to meet anyone who can boast of being totally free from it. It is one of those common denominators that links everyone who has lived, who is now living or who will live on this earth. Job, who had his share of troubles, tells us "man is born unto trouble" (Job 5:7) and "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." (Job 14:1) Troubles plague the human race.

Troubles produce "tough days." We have all experienced them and we know that some seem to be worse than others. I've had days "pop up" in my life and no doubt you have too, when you wonder why you ever crawled out of bed that morning, and then you wonder if you're going to

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WEEKLY & MONTHLY SERVICES

Sunday School

9:15 a.m.

Praise & Worship

10:45 a.m.

Church Worship

11:00 a.m.

Communion

1st Sunday

Baptismal

4th Sunday

Bible Study

Tuesday

7:00 p.m.

Wednesday

11:00 a.m.

Prayer Meeting

Tuesday

8:00 p.m.

Mid-Day

Prayer Service

Wednesday

12 noon

Men's Ministry

2nd Saturday

11:00 a.m.

Daughters of Zion—

GFBC Women's Ministry

Saturday before 3rd Sunday

12:30 p.m.

Eliza Smallwood

Missionary Ministry

2nd Sunday

BTU

4th Saturday

Greater First FOCUS

EXEC. EDITOR

Dr. W. C. Ridley, Jr., Pastor

EDITOR

Denise R. Johnson

PHOTOS

Denise Johnson Deidra Johnson
John Richardson Lenita Clark

Meet our New Members



Left to right: Mr. Francis Ware; Mrs. Bonita Ridley; Rev. Dr. Winston Ridley, Jr.; Mr. James Lindsay; Master Melvin Barnes; Mr. Marcel Johnson; Ms. Vonda Lewis; Ms. Joyce McGhee; Ms. Jo'Ann Chukwu; Storee Denson; Rev. Theresa Denson; Rev. Troy Denson and New Members Ministry president, Felicia Few.



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Birthday

Flower

Greater First *FOCUS*

Hospitality

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Mary E. Peyton Nurses

Pastor's Aide

IMP Ministry

(Intercessors Praying Mightily)

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Usher Board—Junior & Youth

Usher Board—Senior

Educational

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Creative Arts

Daughters of Zion

Men's

New Members

Scholarship

Sunday School

Youth & Young Adult

Missionary Ministries

Eliza Smallwood

Outreach

Warriors for Christ (Youth)

Music and Dance Ministries

Fellowship Choir

Gospel Chorus

Judah Worship & Praise

Men's Chorus

Senior Choir

Voices of Praise Dancers

Volunteer Choir

Youth & Young Adult Choir



Above: Kingdom Builders at the Vacation Bible School finale on Friday, July 13, 2018.

Below: Sunday School Superintendent Donna Brooks addresses guest speaker Michael Wilson, former member of the Harlem Globetrotters. Standing at 6'5", Mr. Wilson spoke for the Sunday School African-American History Month program and concluded his message with this statement: "We are all born with two ends. How far we go in life depends on what end you use the most. Heads you win; tails you lose."

make it back to bed that night. In the comic strip “Peanuts”, Charlie Brown is saying to Lucy, “I’ve got so many troubles that if anything happens to me today it will be two weeks before I can worry about it.” Can you identify with Charlie? Here’s a fact about life that you can on happening no matter who you are. Trouble in one or more of its various forms, is going to come knocking at your door one day. Do not spend your time looking for it—for it will find you. Trouble knows your address. Prepare yourself in advance to deal with whatever your “it” may be.

Trouble and the Apostle Paul

Very few people today have experienced as many difficulties in their life as Paul did. He was on a first name basis with trouble. In II Corinthians 11:23-28, Paul shares some of his experiences with trouble. He is not complaining about them, but just letting us know that he understands what trouble is all about. He said: *“Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews forty stripes save one. Three times I have been beaten with rods. Once, I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked. A night and a day I have been adrift at sea. On my journeys, I have often been in danger from rivers, robbers, my own people — the Jews, the Gentiles, false brethren and the sea. I have been in constant toil and hardship with many sleepless nights. Often in hunger and thirst without food. Often in cold and exposure without warm clothes to protect me from the elements, and always upon me there is pressure of the care of the church.”* (Amplified Bible)

But troubles could not put Paul down. He refused to be defeated by them. They failed in detouring him from serving God. II Corinthians 4:8 (KJV), has Paul saying, *“We are **troubled** on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair.”*

In the storms of trouble in our life we must “Abide in the Ship” knowing that our ship is anchored! Remember in our text, Acts 27:29, the sailors dropped four anchors. These anchors are strong and secure our safety in the midst of our

voyage on the troubled sea of life! These are the four strong anchors:

- I. The Strong Anchor of God’s Presence (Acts 27:23)
- II. The Strong Anchor of God’s Promises (Acts 27:24-25)
- III. The Strong Anchor of God’s Plan (Acts 27:31)
- IV. The Strong Anchor of God’s Power (Acts 27:44)

I. The Strong Anchor of God’s Presence (Acts 27:23 KJV)

“For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.”

This verse reveals the presence of God for Paul in the midst of his storm and dangerous life-threatening situation. The angel was the evidence that God was with him. As God’s representatives there is always the guarantee that He will be with us. Even in the darkness of our dark and stormy seasons God stands with us as our protector and life preserver. This strong anchor is the assurance of God’s presence. The manifest presence of the omnipresent Lord is proof of God’s approval of us; of the authenticity of our role as representatives of God; the authority of our ministry in His name; and the authorization to provide leadership in carrying out God’s will in the situations of life. All of this is indicated of God’s presence by the word “serve” that is found in this verse. In the New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible the word “serve” in this verse is translated “worship.” Even in Romans 12:1 Paul writes, *“I appeal to you brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is **your spiritual worship**.”* But the King James Version translates the words “your spiritual worship” as “your reasonable service.” Therefore, as we serve God according to God’s approval, in authenticity, with His authority and authorization as mentioned above, then our service becomes an expression of the worship of God! It is the worship of God in spirit and truth that thus invokes the manifest presence of God (John 4:23-24).

Pastor's Focal Point (continued)

Thus Paul in this verse declares that this strong anchor of God's presence is with those who live their lives worshipping God through their sacrificial service to humanity and to His glory!

II. The Strong Anchor of God's Promises (Acts 27:24-25 KJV)

"Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."

The angel of God speaks to Paul of the promises concerning his mission and all the men travelling on board the ship with him. The anchor of God's promises is connected to God's purpose of the success of Paul's mission to Rome. Because Paul's destiny was to appear before Caesar, it was confirmed by God's promise to keep alive all of the men travelling on board the ship with him. Even though Paul was not the captain of the ship or the centurion of the soldiers, he still was accountable for all that travelled with him. Here is the principle: when the Lord places or positions us among a group of unbelievers (in community, in family, in school, in employment, in travel etc.), we are charged with the stewardship (II Corinthians 5:10) of being effective and excellent ambassadors representing God's Church and Kingdom. As Ambassadors of Christ, He has given us a ministry and message. (II Corinthians 5:17-20).

In verses 24 and 25 Paul models for us how the "believer on board" the ship carries out their duty as an ambassador of faith.

First, in verse 24, Paul hears the word of God as spoken to him by the angel of God. By doing this he shows us that *"Faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God."* (Romans 10:17) Before we can proclaim God's message of promise, we must first hear it ourselves. Next, we see that he personally receives comfort from the Lord: *"Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar."* So before we can comfort others, we

must first be comforted: *"When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us."* (II Corinthians 1:4 ESV)

Then in verse 25, his ministry and message to the men on board are displayed through the combining of his ministry of comfort — *"Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer"* — with his message of confession of his faith — *"For I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me."* With this winning combination (comfort and confession of faith), Paul claims the promises of God by faith knowing that our God would not fail to keep His word. Not only did his words of faith in God inspire the others, but his respectful approach in addressing the men as "sirs" gained their attention to listen with respect.

III. The Strong Anchor of God's Plan (Acts 27:31 KJV)

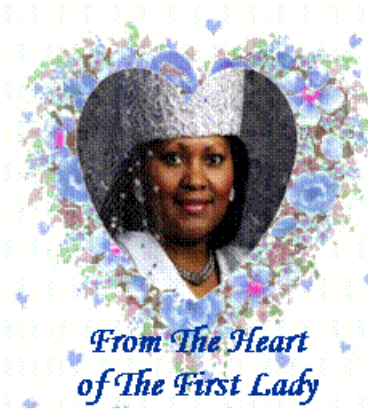
"Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."

In this verse we find the strong anchor of God's plan. Essentially, it is God's Plan of Salvation for the centurion, the soldiers and the sailors on board the ship. For them the ship is their point or place of salvation. Immediately, Paul's declaration of God's plan of salvation reveals that there are no other alternative ways for them to be saved. Acts 4:11-12 (NIV) says, *"Jesus is 'the stone you builders rejected, which is become the cornerstone. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.'"*

This nautical illustration hearkens back to the Old Testament book of Genesis example of Noah and the Ark (Genesis 6-9). Noah and his family were saved by "abiding" in the Ark during the flood caused by a 40-day rainstorm. The New Testament Book of Hebrews, Chapter 11, verse 7 (NRSV) explains Noah's example of salvation by faith when it says, *"By faith Noah, warned of God about things as yet unseen, respected the warning and built an ark to save his household; by faith he condemned the world and became an heir of righteousness that is in accordance with*

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From the Heart



Jesus greetings!
Grace to all and
peace from God
our Father and Lord Jesus
the Christ. I want to
thank the members of
The Greater First Baptist
Church family and
friends and let you know

how greatly you are appreciated for your support, enthusiasm, encouragement and faithful attendance to the Baptist Ministers' Wives and Widows Association (BMWVA) of Washington, DC and Vicinity's Annual Breakfast held at the Camelot. This year one of our Faithful Servant awardees was Trustee Kendall D. Brown II. The Lord truly blessed our fundraising event. The BMWVA also gives out scholarships each year. Our own Kadijah McDowell was one of the recipients just a few years ago.

Our Lord God Jehovah is an awesome God. The more I research and see how He created this universe it makes me worship and praise Him even more! The genius of the Lord God is seen in His step by step method of creating in progressions of sophistication. Within the six days, each day He created was an upgrade of the masterful display of His breathtaking masterpiece called the universe. In years past, our own Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Winston Christopher Ridley, Jr., taught us regarding the creation of man, male and female, on the sixth day God spoke: "Let us make human beings in Our image, make the reflecting Our nature." (Genesis 1:26-27 MSG). He gave us dominion over the earth and everything in it (Genesis 1:28). Pastor referred to the woman as the *refined* version of mankind. He mentioned how the Lord put Adam to sleep before taking a rib and creating Woman (Genesis 2:21-22). This helps us to realize that woman the female was already in man concealed. When the Lord created woman by taking woman out of man she became *totally* revealed. I believe that the Lord God gave Adam all of his assignments before creating Eve because when the Lord presented her to Adam he was engulfed in the splendor of this magnificent creature made like him in the image of God.

WOW! What a mind blowing experience. God presented the woman, His gift to man.

There was no other creature like Adam but the Woman. It takes both male and female to reflect the image of God. (Notice it appears that before the fall of man the male and female were called Adam. In Genesis 3:20, after the fall, Adam named Woman, Eve). Uhm, look at God! By the way, as I recall, an astrophysicist, Neil deGrasse Tyson (a black man), reminded us that the earth like all other planets is a large star; therefore, since we were created by the Lord God from the dust and dirt of the earth we are literally made of "stardust"! Oh, what a wonderful revelation! I recently heard Rabbi Schnieder referring to the female, the woman, as being the most sophisticated created being of all creation. We were the very last. The most sophisticated and complex. Natalie Cole sang a song "Sophisticated Lady." Yes, Saints of God, recognize this! Think about it. That is one of the reasons why men of all walks and ages of life find it hard to understand the way we as women think. Go ahead, women, *rejoice!!!* Male *and* female are the *crown* of creation...that finishing touch if you will. (Psalm 8:4-6) What an honor. "What a marvelous grace on God's part! dominion: what daring faith in humanity by God! What an awesome trust committed to mankind! Whatever honor belongs to humanity is only a reflection of the greater glory of God." (Quote from notes taken from The Open Bible NKJV by Nelson.)

May 7 – 11, 2018, The Baptist Educational Congress of the District of Columbia and Vicinity had its 75th Anniversary Session at the Northwestern High School in Hyattsville, MD. Our Pastor taught on "*The Church and Social Justice*." Social justice is at the very heart of Christian discipleship and faith. This course was very informative and greatly received and appreciated. Its description stated that it will help to equip the students in constructing a biblical framework through which to understand and evaluate how God's righteousness applies to ethical topics important in personal life, family relationships, the Christian community, and contemporary society.

From the Heart (continued)

The course that the Lord led me to attend was entitled “*Women in Ministry*.” This course was taught by Dr. Kecia DeCosta Ford. The explanation of this course was that it would provide an overview of how a woman’s spiritual gifts, personality, experiences, cares/passions, interests, abilities and talents make her special and contribute to her God-given purpose – equipping her to minister. It was off the chain! Dr. Ford began teaching us about “God’s Original Intent for Women.” The Scriptural text was taken from Genesis 1:26-27. We — men, women, boys and girls — must have an understanding of God’s plan. Dr. Ford explained **The Standard of Living That God Expects for His Women** has been counter-intuitive and counter-productive. It has been maligned through the years due to a “Patriarchal Viewpoint”. Dr. Ford states, “Throughout history women have been misunderstood, under-valued and judged according to the certain misconceptions and misinterpretations of God’s original intent for women. We as wives in the family and women in the Church and community are to be as stated in the Bible the “*help meet*”. Someone who props up, helps and supports our husbands and/or our male counterparts. Do you see the power in this? The Church of the Lord God is behind in winning souls, wars and battles due to the misconception of men and women working together side by side in family, ministry and life. A Priestly Viewpoint According to the Priestly Tradition: God is the creator. God who created humankind with equity. All are important, special and have value in God’s view. Here are four points of this view.

God does not have favorites.

Deuteronomy 10:17

God is not partial

Romans 2:11

God sees every person equally

Galatians 3:26-29

God used women to proclaim good news during David’s time

Psalms 68:9-12

The Scriptures tell us that “two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their

labor.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9) Wake up and see the Light of God’s intent for our lives! Hallelujah!!

Pastor Ridley has been teaching Bible Study from Nehemiah regarding building up the walls. Here is some *Food for Thought* concerning **Kingdom Building**.

“Boys and girls **compete** with each other...Men and Women **empower** one another.” The Scriptures tell us that our empowerment was already **PLANNED, PROMISED AND FORETOLD in Joel 2:28**. Our **EMPOWERMENT** was **EVIDENT** in **Acts 2:17** and God spiritually **EMPOWERS** us with **GIFTINGS** in I Corinthians 14:3. **Glory to God in the highest!!! We must believe the promises** of God and stand fast on them! With Love, Agapé, to all. Amen, Amen and Amen.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is

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faith.” Of course, Noah’s Ark is an Old Testament “type” of our Lord Jesus Christ. A “type” is a person or thing symbolizing or exemplifying the ideal or defining characteristics of something. So, Noah’s ark symbolizes how Jesus the Christ fulfills the “type” by saving us from God’s stormy judgement of our sins as we abide by faith in Him. John 3:16 says, “*For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.*”

IV. The Strong Anchor of God’s Power (Acts 27:44)

“...And so it came to pass, that **they escaped all safe to land.**”

Church's 140th Anniversary

Down through the years God has been mighty good to the Greater First Baptist Church, and the members showed their appreciation for His keeping them together for 140 years by having a "Grand Celebration."

On Sunday, May 27, 2018, the Church Anniversary Celebration began with praise and thanksgiving at the morning worship service. Rev. Dr. Ronald K. Miner, Sr., pastor of the First Baptist Church of Deanwood, delivered the message.

Later that afternoon, the celebration continued with an Anniversary Banquet held at Martin's Crosswinds from 3:00 until 7:00 pm. A delicious dinner was served, after which Sister Irma Salley

moderated a segment entitled "Fascinating Tidbits about The Greater First Baptist Church."

The panelists were Sister Gladys Baskett, Brother James Beatty, Sr., Deacon Calvin Johnson and Deaconess Willie M. Osborn.

Later in the program, Dr. Judith Webb, assisted by Master Storee Denson, asked the guests at each table to write an answer to the question "What can we do to help keep the grand legacy at Greater First Baptist Church alive?" A few of the answers are posted below, along with pictures of some of the guests wearing the anniversary colors of red and gold!

Deaconess Magdalene Jackson chaired the 140th Church Anniversary Committee.



1. Through outreach and fellowship.

2. Teaching our youth

3. Encouragement

The legacy of Rev. Daniel Washington continues as we minister to others as Trustees, Deacons and Deaconesses.

The William R. Washington Family

Unity in the Spirit

The legacy will continue by loving each other, loving the community and loving God, and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Also, continue trusting and believing in God and standing on His promises.

Pastor's 17th Anniversary

Greater First Baptist celebrated the 17th anniversary of our pastor, Reverend Dr. Winston Christopher Ridley, Jr., on Sunday May 20, 2018 during the morning service and immediately after with a celebratory luncheon in Fellowship Hall.

The anniversary theme was "Called and Chosen: A Pastor Who Walks by Faith and Not by Sight." (II Corinthians 5:7). The suggested anniversary colors were yellow and white.

The guest preacher for the service was the Reverend William H. Lamar IV, senior pastor of Metropolitan A.M.E. Church, Washington, DC.

The celebratory luncheon included, in addition to delicious food, a short program to express our love and gratitude for Pastor Ridley and First Lady Bonita Ridley.

The Pastor's Anniversary chairpersons were Sister Elizabeth Queen and Sister Della Cobb.



Top (l-r): First Lady Bonita Ridley, Pastor, Rev. Dr. Winston C. Ridley, Jr., Saundra Speaks (cousin to Rev. Ridley) and friend, her sister Kim and daughter and Rev. Ridley's sister Robin. Bottom left: Sister Marvette Stanard and Pastor's nephew Blair. Bottom right: table centerpiece at the luncheon.

Scholarship Ministry

"Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it."
Ezra 10:4 (NIV)

The Scholarship Ministry would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our Youth for their academic accomplishments. **Remember: Jesus + Anything = Success**

Elementary School Graduate

Yassah Pajibo

High School Graduates

Ashley James

Aysha Nunes

Totu Pajibo

Continuing College Students

Crishawn Anderson

Destiny Beatty

Victor Hawkins

Imani Pajibo

Sadatu Pajibo

Taylor Parks



College Graduates

Asia James

Derrick Jackson

Tshala Pajibo

Terrance Parks



Graduates pictured: Sister Destiny Beatty, Sister Taylor Parks, Sister Asia James and Sister Pajibo



New Ministry

CENTERED in Christ

A new youth ministry was launched on March 25, 2018 and it is entitled C.E.N.T.E.R.E.D. Their scriptural reference is “For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:13)

C.E.N.T.E.R.E.D. is an acronym for:

Connected
Empowered
Not Ashamed
Transformed
Engaged in
Religion
Excited
Driven

Their mission is to promote practical/relevant age appropriate ministry for youth ages 12-17 (Phase I) and young adults ages 18-25 (Phase II). The focus of this ministry is living a life that is C.E.N.T.E.R.E.D. in Christ.

Their vision is to (but not limited to):

- enhance Fourth Sunday worship by increasing youth involvement;
- have group chats to discuss relevant issues, sometimes using guest facilitators;
- have overnight huddles to promote bonding, team building and leadership training;
- have retreats;
- encourage God’s purpose;
- promote gifts/talents;
- have Word study;
- Pray; and
- grow spiritually.

C.E.N.T.E.R.E.D. has introduced the “Power Word” segment to the fourth Sunday service. The “Word” has been given by both members and invited guests, including Leon Clark, Jr., Tierra Nanches (Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church) and Carvella D. Giles (The House of Healing DMV).

Sister Lisa Turner is the ministry’s advisor and spiritual leader.



C.E.N.T.E.R.E.D. members (l-r) William Atkins, Kiyaari Wilson, Jaiya Smith, Talia Carter, Zhi Cuz, Melvin Lewis, Neena Felder and Nicholas Felder.

Greater First Baptist in the Community

Greater First Gifted Ladies Speak at the “Y”

Over the past few years, several talented Greater First Baptist women have delivered inspirational and informative speeches at the historic Phyllis Wheatley YWCA (PWYWCA). It was founded in 1905 by a group of women with a vision to start the first YWCA for “Colored” women and girls. Today, in keeping with its mission, PWYWCA provides “affordable housing and programs to women regardless of race, creed or color.” In addition to serving women in transition to prevent homelessness, the PWYMCA provides outreach services to children in the community, mainly literacy activities at the Seaton Elementary After-School Program.

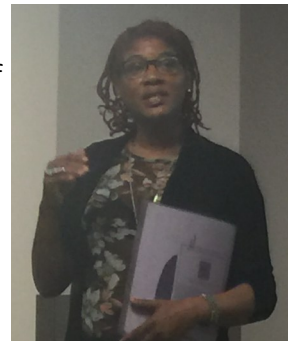
As part of its in-house programs, the Y has invited highly-motivated individuals to speak to the 80+ residents. One tenacious Greater First lady, who is driven by family, church, community and the Creative Arts, served as the keynote speaker for the annual Women’s History Month observance on March 21, 2018. In keeping with the 2018 theme, “Nevertheless, She Persisted,” Ms. Tameka Johnson chose as her topic “Black Women in Hollywood” – a particularly stirring subject today spotlighting African American writers, producers, directors and actresses. She complemented her speech with colorful visuals, music and audience participation. The residents, along with guests and other church members, were greatly impressed with her research and creative format *and* invited her to return.

Several other awesome GFBC ladies appeared at the “Y”. The multi-talented community activist and mistress of ceremonies, Evelyn Rodgers-Washington, shared her recollections and participation in the 1963 March

on Washington during its 50th anniversary in 2016. Prayer warrior Lisa C. Turner of Touch and Agree Ministries encouraged the ladies during the 2016 National Women’s History Month and returned later that year to speak on “The Power of Prayer in the New Millenium” at the fall prayer breakfast. Returning after several presentations at the “Y”, the super-talented Rev. Sunshine, our own Associate Minister, spoke eloquently during this year’s Black History Month celebration with a theme “African-Americans in Times of War.” She closed her speech as only a still well-prepared retired social studies teacher could do. She challenged her participants to find worthy causes to support during today’s very difficult times.

Historian and program co-chair for the PWYMCA, Dr. Judith Webb, who extended the invitations to the ladies, is proud of our church’s ministry to the residents of the “Y”!

*Submitted by the
Creative Arts Ministry*



Above: Tameka Johnson. Below: February 2016 from left to right: Dr. Judith Webb, Evelyn Rodgers-Washington, YWCA Board members Brenda Forteaberry, Program Co-chair, Patricia Plummer, President and former President, Ernestine Lyon.

Sunday School, Member Spotlight & What's New?



The Sunday School held its annual Fathers' Day program on Sunday, June 17, 2018. Sister Patricia Fitchard was the program leader; Sister Annie Travers was the guest speaker and the Mighty Men of Greater First Baptist Church sang. It was an enjoyable program. Sister Fitchard and Sister Travers took many of us back to our childhood days when they spoke about their fathers. Sister Fitchard closed her part of the program with the following poem:

Your Name

You got it from your father
It was all he had to give
So, it's yours to use and cherish
For as long as you may live.

If you lose the watch he gave you
It can always be replaced
But a black mark on your name
Son, can never be erased.

It was clear the day you took it
And a worthy name to bear
When you got it from your father
There was no dishonor there.

So, make sure you guard it wisely
After all is said and done
You'll be glad the name is spotless
When you give it to your son.

Rev. Dr. Edward Thomas, Author

100 Years Old!

Holding a plaque from the July Birthday Ministry, Sister Alma Williams, an inspiring centenarian and long-devoted member of the Greater First Baptist Church, gives hope about keeping the faith and aging today. To God Be the Glory!



Pictured: Margaret (Gerri) Green, current president, July Ministry, Antoinette Jones, July birthday member and Alma Williams (seated), former president.

Originally submitted Summer 2017

We now have Wi-Fi!

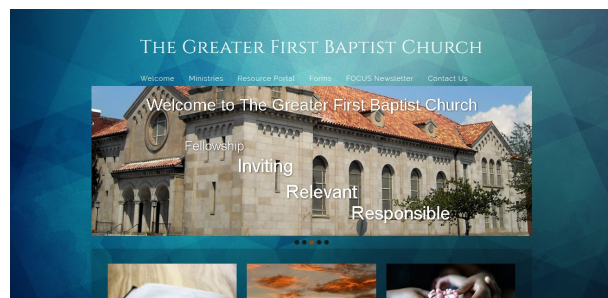
What is WiFi?

Wi-Fi is the name of a popular wireless networking technology that uses radio waves to provide wireless high-speed Internet and network connections. Simply put, it allows you to connect to the Internet without any cables.



We have a new website—www.TheGFB CDC.org!

Please visit and give us your feedback.



Member Spotlight



Renee Patricia Jones, is a Washingtonian born in Foggy Bottom in Georgetown. She attended Stephens Elementary School, Francis Jr. High School and graduated from Cardozo High School in 1977. She worked at the Giant Food Grocery store for seven years and retired after 23 years from George Washington

University. Renee has one living child, Rajon Jones, one deceased child, Deandra Smith, and four grandchildren, one of whom is Jaiya Smith who also is a member of the Greater First Baptist Church.

Renee joined Mt. Calvary Holy Church in 1989; Meridian Baptist Church in 1996; and, The Greater First Baptist Church in February 2015. She made up her mind to join on her first visit after becoming spiritually overwhelmed during the service. She spoke highly of both Pastor Ridley and our First Lady and is so moved by their overall patience and love for the congregation. She also spoke highly of Sister Lisa Turner who never hesitated to return a call. Renee said she is proud to be a member of The Greater First Baptist Church and is currently serving as a member of the Senior Usher Board and the February Birthday Ministry.

Congratulations to Trustee Kendall Brown!



Trustee Brown was recently honored for his service at the Baptist Ministers' Wives and Widows Association of Washington, DC and Vicinity, Inc.'s Annual Breakfast. The breakfast was held at The Camelot of Upper Marlboro on Saturday, April 7, 2018.

Congratulations, Graduate!

Terrence R. Parks graduated December 2017 from West Virginia University Cum Laude (3.5 overall GPA). He majored in criminology with a minor in military science.

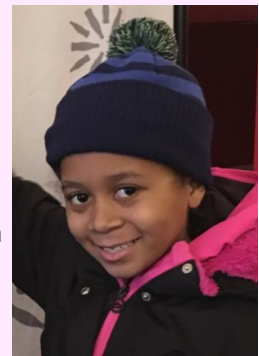


He was commissioned into the U.S. Army as a Second Lieutenant and is currently in officer training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. At the end of August 2018, he will be stationed at Camp Humphreys, South Korea for two years. Please pray for him.

Young Talent

Miss Linaea Moten has been busy. Just look at her schedule over the last nine months to verify that fact.

- September 17, 2017: She participated in the African American parade in New York City.
- October 2017: She performed at the Howard Theatre in D.C.
- December 2017: She performed at the famed Cotton Club and visited the Apollo Theatre.
- February 2018: She won tenth place in the national spelling bee.
- March 2018: She was voted the most improved player at the basketball playoffs.
- May 2018: She returned to the Cotton Club to perform. She has also been recommended to audition for a part in the Lion King in New York.



Member Spotlight

Distinguished Alumni Recognition

Deacon John C. Richardson was honored on Saturday, July 21, 2018 at the Alabama State University National Alumni Association Metropolitan DC Chapter Scholarship & Awards Brunch held at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling. The theme of the Brunch was "Students Walking with a Purpose."

Deacon Richardson was recognized as a Distinguished Alumni, having graduated in 1950 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Studies and Mathematics. He was a long distance runner on the University's track team and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Immediately after graduation, Deacon Richardson enlisted in the United States Army where he served for two years during the Korean War in Germany. After returning to the United States, he attended Howard University and began working for the United States Postal Service where he retired in 1992.

He has been described as being "very meek and humble...and in his meekness he shows strength...He is a man that is an example of goodness in the human flesh as he serves the Lord."



Ordination of Deacons and Deaconess Consecration

On Sunday, April 29, 2018, at 3:00 pm, The Greater First Baptist Church held a special service of celebration—The Ordination of Deacons and The Consecration of a Deaconess. The two deacons ordained were Brother James Pearson and Brother Jesse Harrison; the deaconess consecrated was Sister Doris Pearson.

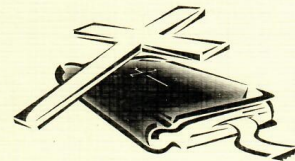
Guests invited to the service were: Reverend Eric Barksdale (Saint Charles Baptist Church), who gave the Charge to the Deacons; Reverend Frankey Grayton (Edgewood Baptist Church), who gave the Charge to the Deaconess; Reverend Vernon Miller (Evergreen Baptist Church), who gave the Prayer of Consecration for the Deaconess; and Reverend Oran Young (First Rising Mount Zion Baptist Church and son of our own Anna Belle Brown), who gave the Prayer of Ordination for Deacons and delivered the Message.

The program concluded with the presentation of the Bibles and hymnals to the deacons, the presentation of the Bible to the deaconess and the presentation of the certificates to all.

Congratulations to our new deacons and deaconess!

A Special Service of Celebration!

The Ordination of Deacons and The Consecration of Deaconesses



*Sunday, April 29, 2018
3:00 P.M.*

Reverend Dr. Winston C. Ridley, Jr., Pastor

Announcements

Did You Know?

There is a library located in the Greater First Baptist Church!

It is found near the Nursery. Everyone is invited to enjoy the books. Taking books from the area will be based on an honor system. Please follow these procedures to check out a book:

There is a box on the desk that contains an index card for each book. The cards are in alphabetical order.

Remove the corresponding card from the box, print your name and the date that you are taking the book from the library.

Return the card to the box.

When you return the book, remove the card from the box, write the date the book was returned and place book back on the shelf.

Thank you and please enjoy the library!!

Sister Gloria Balton



Wedding Announcement

The Greater First Baptist Church Family
is invited to the wedding
of

Roshonda Den'e Campbell

&

Chidiadi Obizie Ugorji

on

Saturday, September 8, 2018

at

3:00 in the afternoon

at

The Greater First Baptist Church



Inclement Weather Call Number

Is the church going to be open this Sunday or for this event?

If you find yourself asking this question, here is where you'll find the answer!

- In case of snow, severe inclement weather, street closings in the area, etc. dial 1-641-715-3900.
- A voice will ask you to enter a pin number. Enter 119010#
- You will hear a prerecorded message that will let you know the status of the services at the Greater First Baptist Church.

