

The Greater First Baptist



Fall 2021

Fellowship of Christ's United Servants

Volume 16 Issue 2

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ! Welcome to the Autumn 2021 Edition of *The Greater First FOCUS!* This edition is being brought to you during the month of October 2021. Many celebrations, commemorations, holidays and observances are occurring during this month and some of them are:

- National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15—October 15);
- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month;
- National Indigenous People's Month (Indigenous People's Day-October 11); and
- National Clergy (Pastors and Ministers) Appreciation Month (Pastors Appreciation Day-October 10).

All of these celebrations and observances gather together different and unique people populations because they share the same experiences, purposes and values. Our nation's months of these celebrations highlight very important information of the heritage and history that is common among those particular people. Also, helpful information is disseminated during these times that aid in the prevention of disease and advocate for the promotion of health and well-being. These different groups of people personally identify with and relate to what's represented by what's being celebrated, commemorated and observed. Hence, the more we identify with what is celebrated or commemorated, the more fervently we participate in their activities and festivities!

While watching an episode of the television program called "Bull" something about our study of the Holy Bible and the characters depicted on its pages occurred to me. To understand my meaning you need to know the premise of this TV program "Bull!" "Bull" stars Michael Weatherly as Dr. Jason Bull in a drama inspired by the early

career of Dr. Phil McGraw (Yes, that Dr. Phil) who established a prolific trial consulting firm. Dr. Bull uses psychology, human intuition and high tech data to learn what makes jurors, attorneys, witnesses and the accused tick. In the episode, he was studying which jurors had the highest possibility of relating to his client who was accused of murdering his girlfriend. And even though he was innocent, he still confessed he committed the crime. His confession came while undergoing eleven hours of nonstop questioning in claustrophobic, warm and stressful conditions. How would the jurors respond if they found themselves under similar circumstances of this nonstop questioning? Well, the answer to that question could give rise to selecting a jury that would give a more favorable verdict to the man being accused of the crime!

After days of nonstop preparations for the celebration, doing ministry and proclaiming messages during National Hispanic Heritage Month at The Greater First Baptist Church, it put me in position to bring this Pastor's Focal Point to you. There was something about the process of those preparations and proclamations that was brought to a crescendo upon watching "Bull" that gave rise to some questions about studying the Holy Bible!

When we read and study the Bible and the characters depicted in their stories:

- Which characters or persons in the Bible do you identify with and relate to in the Scriptures?
- Who do you most identify with that seems to speak to you in a personal way? Is it Adam, Eve, Moses, Joshua, Ruth, Esther, Naomi, David, Jesus, Peter, Paul, Lydia, Timothy, Onesimus or someone else - even a nameless person?
- Why and how do you feel related to them?
- When you hear their stories do you sense they have

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WEEKLY & MONTHLY SERVICES

Note: The below services are now being held via Free Conference Call and Zoom

Sunday School

Saturday
10:00 a.m.

Praise & Worship

Sunday
9:15 a.m.

Church Worship

Sunday
9:30 a.m.

Communion

1st Sunday

Bible Study

Wednesday
11:00 a.m.

Leadership Meeting

Wednesday
12:30 p.m.

Prayer Meeting

Tuesday
6:30 p.m.

Men's Ministry

2nd Saturday
11:00 a.m.

Daughters of Zion

GFBC Women's Ministry

Saturday before 3rd Sunday
2:00 p.m.

Greater First FOCUS

EXEC. EDITOR

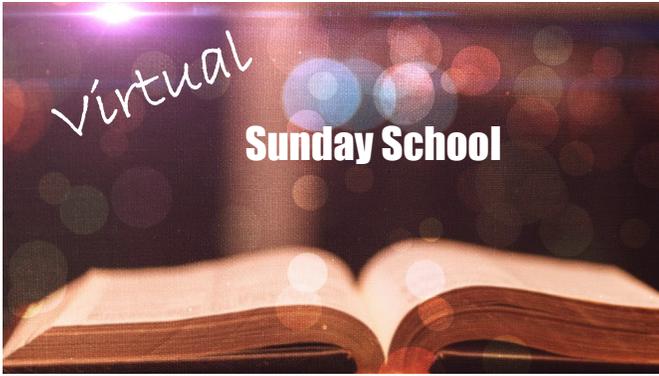
Dr. W. C. Ridley, Jr., Pastor

EDITOR

Denise R. Johnson

PHOTOS

Denise Johnson



Vacation Bible School

The Faces of Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School was held virtually this year during the month of July. The director, Sister Frances Alves, used the younger members of the Church to teach the nightly lessons.

Sunday School classes will continue to be held on Saturdays at 10:00 am on Free Conference Call after the re-opening of the church.



Miss Linaea Moten



Master Christian Arevalo



Master Howard Jackson, Jr.

MINISTRIES

Operational and Support

Ministries

- Audio-Visual
- Bereavement
- Birthday Flower
- Greater First FOCUS
- Hospitality
- Kitchen
- Mary E. Peyton Nurses
- Pastor's Aide
- IPM Ministry
- (Intercessors Praying Mightily)
- Transportation
- Usher Board—Junior & Youth
- Usher Board—Senior

Educational

- Baptist Training Union
- Computer
- Creative Arts
- Daughters of Zion

- Men's Ministry
- 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

From the Heart *of the First Lady*



*Open our eyes Lord, we
want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch
Him, and say that we
love Him.*

*Open our ears Lord, and
help us to listen.*

*Open our eyes, Lord, we
want to see Jesus.*

Maranatha Singers

Jesus greetings! "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 1:2) Praise the Lord for giving our Pastor, Dr. Ridley the vision to circulate this wonderful mode of communication called the "**FOCUS**". As you see on the front of the newspaper the title "**FOCUS**" is an acronym which means "**F**ellowship of **C**hrist's **U**nited **S**ervants". We need to have **focus** in order to be true, committed, destiny driven and divinely determined Disciples of Christ. When we have **focus** we can *inform* people of what the Lord our God has to say through His Word. As we *inform* it becomes information and this information provokes people to *reform* and then becomes an attitude of reformation to make plain what the Word instructs us to become. We become the avenue in which people can resist conforming to this world and experience a transformation to become *transformed* by the '**renewing of their mind**' as related in Romans 12:1-2. As we remain in **focus** we can *enable* others to be *encouraged* to live an *enlightened* life. These *enlightened* lives become *enhanced* by the Light of God which will *energize* all who come in contact with us. Remember Jesus said we are the light of the world. How awesome it will be when we are in **focus** with the Lord. Being in **focus** with the Lord and His illuminating Word is what unifies us to see Him more clearly, love Him more dearly and follow Him more nearly day by day. When we, The Greater First Baptist Church are in **focus**, we can live as our theme proclaims "**2021: The GFBC Year of Victory: Twenty Twenty-One Because of One We Won!**" Romans 5:1-2, 8-19; I Corinthians 15:51-58 (particularly verse 57) Let us remain in **focus** both to will and to do of **His** good pleasure.

In the Old Testament there was a prophetess named **Hulda**. **Hulda** was truly in **focus** to do the will of the Lord. I would like to share this wonderful story about

Hulda with you which is found in II Kings 22:14-20.

Hulda The Prophetess Who Changed a Nation

Hulda played a significant part in the history of Israel, although she appeared only once, during a time of religious defection.

In Jerusalem, King Josiah of Judah initiated renewed interest in the Book of the Law, and Hulda participated in the subsequent spiritual revival. She was the wife of Shallum, who was the "keeper of the wardrobe" (possibly either royal robes and attire or priestly garments and vestments). They lived in the Second Quarter, a newer section of Jerusalem which developed as a westward or northern expansion of the old city (perhaps somewhat like a modern-day suburb).

Hulda, and not Jeremiah or Zephaniah, both of whom were active prophets during this time, was consulted when the king instructed the priests to "inquire of the Lord" as to the meaning of the Book of the Law—a scroll that had been found during the work of restoration and cleaning in the temple. It was significant that with the number of prophets living in Jerusalem at that time, the priest Hilkiah and the rest of the king's advisors, turned to a woman for a word from God. This nullifies the reasoning some use to suggest that God only uses women for ministry when no men are available. Obviously, whether in a private audience or in the presence of the congregation, God used Hulda to bear testimony and deliver a message from Him to the High Priest and to the king (II Kings 22:14-20).

The regard for Huldah's own integrity and authority as a woman of God made her validation of the recently discovered Book of the Law all that was required for immediate action on the part of the king. Her message was not her own, but from the Lord. The fact that the phrase "Thus says the Lord..." is repeated four times in her short prophecy emphasizes that Hulda understood her responsibility and opportunity to be a channel through whom God delivered His Word (II Kings 22:15-17,19).

All reforms set forth by King Josiah were based on the

Word of God as given to this woman. Hulda, was apparently so well known as a woman of God and so highly trusted with regard to her understanding of God's Law, that for a time her nation's whole religious consciousness and practice was re-ignited in faithfulness to God. Hulda, a deeply devout woman, made her God-given spiritual gifts available to God, and she was obedient and faithful to deliver the Word of God from God to her people. ("The Woman's Study Bible" NKJV by Nelson, page 639)

Hulda was a woman in **focus**. Therefore, be encouraged Daughters of Zion. Be confident, exhilarated and expectant as women of the Most High God. As we remain in **focus** we will see and hear the Lord God more clearly. He will use us as a catalyst to rekindle the passions of our Family, friends, school mates, fellow workers, political colleagues, etc. to being fully dedicated and devoted to Him. The Lord will fulfill our divine destiny as we serve Him with an attitude of devotion, gratitude, humility, steadfastness and last, but not least, unconditional love. Rejoice, Saints of God! Our latter days will be even greater than our former days!! After these days of the pandemic, social injustices, political corruption, trials and tribulations, the Apostle Paul says, " But *we are* hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.." (II Corinthians 4:8-9) And yes, The Best Is Yet To Come!!!

I'll Live for Him

Ralph E. Hudson C. R. Dunbar

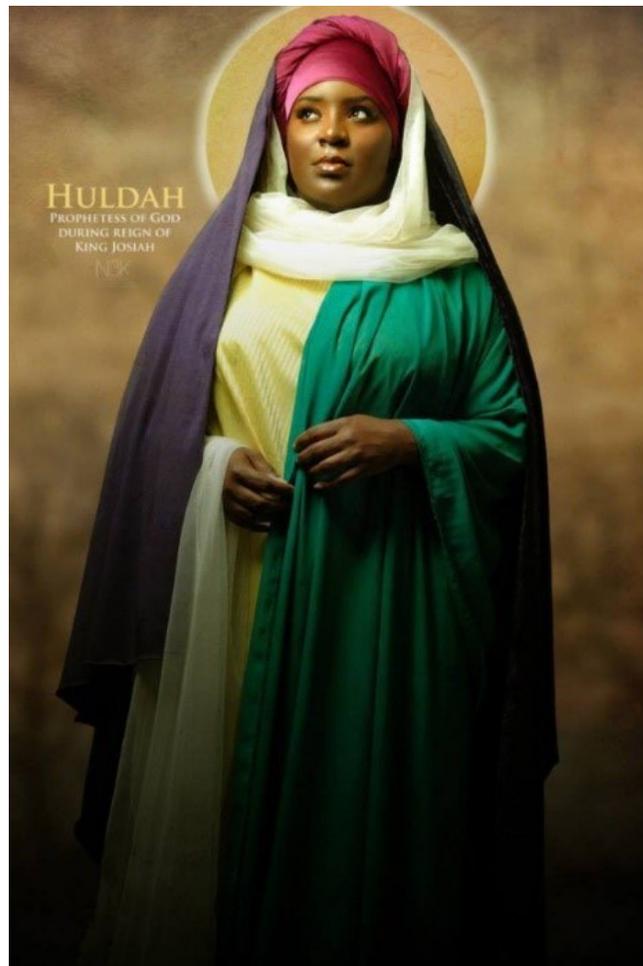
My life, my love I give to thee,
Thou Lamb of God who died for me;
O may I ever faithful be,
My Savior and my God!

I'll live for Him whom died for me,
How happy then my life shall be!
I'll live for Him who died for me,
My Savior and my God!

I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies—presenting all your members and faculties—as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.

Do not be conformed to this world—this age, fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs. But be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind—by its new ideals and its new attitude—so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

Romans 12:1-2 The Amplified Bible



Photograph by James C. Lewis from his "Icons of the Bible" Series.

Pastor's Focal Point (continued)

walked in your shoes and have been reading your mail?

I believe that personally finding the answers to these questions and a changing of our focus while studying the Scriptures can revolutionize your experiences with the word of God! Of course, this idea about this approach to Bible Study is not original to me and there are many others who thought about it long before me.

The Idea of Our Identifying and Relating to the People in the Bible Finds its Origin in the Scriptures.

The Scriptures speak for themselves concerning this emphasis that God calls us to identify with and relate to the people of the Bible: We are to learn from their (good and bad) example of their experiences with God:

I Corinthians 10:1-13 NRSV

¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,
² and all were baptized into **Moses** in the cloud and in the sea,
³ and all ate the same spiritual food,
⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and **the rock was Christ**.
⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.
⁶ **Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did.**
⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play."
⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day.
⁹ We must not put **Christ** to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents.
¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.
¹¹ **These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come.**
¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.

¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Philippians 2:5-11 (NLT New Living Translation)

⁵ **You must have the same ATTITUDE that Christ Jesus had.** ⁶ Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.
⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being.
When he appeared in human form,
⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.
⁹ Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Hebrews 11 (The Entire Chapter): Gives examples of people of faith.

Hebrews 11:5-6 NLT says, "It was by faith that **Enoch** was taken up to heaven without dying—"he disappeared, because God took him." For before he was taken up, **he was known as a person who pleased God.** And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him."

James 5:17-18 (Amplified Bible) says, "**Elijah was a man with a nature like ours** [with the same physical, mental, and spiritual limitations and shortcomings], and he prayed intensely for it not to rain, and it did not rain on earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the land produced its crops [as usual]."

"Give of Your Best to the Master"

Give of your best to the Master
Give of the strength of your youth
Throw your soul's fresh, glowing ardor
Into the battle for truth

**Jesus has set the EXAMPLE—
Dauntless was He, young and brave**

Give Him your loyal devotion,
Give Him the best that you have
Refrain

Give of your best to the Master,
Give of the Strength of your youth

Clad in salvation's full armor, Join in the Battle for truth.

Let's go further with the thoughts generated by the questions above about identifying and relating to the examples of people in the Bible.

Look at the excerpt below from: *31 Days of Deeper Bible Study: Tip #16—Put Yourself in Their Shoes by Asheritah "One Thing Alone Ministries"*

"It's easy to read the Bible as a fairy book even though we don't mean to. **We forget that the characters in the stories were real people—with real struggles, emotions, families, dreams, and failures.** We're quick to judge "bad" people of the Bible and identify ourselves with "good" people of the Bible.

We want to be courageous like David, faithful like Daniel, obedient like Noah, and loyal like Ruth.

But as we dig deeper into Scripture, we'll find that more often than not, **we're more like the less-savory characters of the Bible than we'd like to think.** And the closer we look at even the "heroes" of the Bible, the more we'll see that they were fallen humans in need of God's grace, just like us.

I'm so glad the Bible includes stories of David's adultery, Noah's alcoholism, Abraham's doubt, and Esther's immorality. And then there's Peter's big mouth, Paul's unforgiveness, and James' and John's anger problem. I can identify with messed-up sinners in need of grace. **The Bible isn't a storybook about saints who got it all right. It's a story about a God who is faithful despite His people doing everything wrong.**

When we spend time in our Bible study identifying with the characters in the story, whether they first appear to be "good" or "bad," we'll find that we are more similar to them than we first thought. **This step of identifying with the characters helps us place ourselves in the story and internalize the teaching—because we realize we're no**

better than they are.

Are you ready to dig in? **It's Your Turn!**

Before you begin your study, **spend time preparing your heart in prayer.** Here are some ideas to get you started.

Read John 11. As you read, pay close attention to each character in the story. This may be a good time to read the passage more than once.

3. Make a chart in your notebook and make a column for each character, writing their name (or identifier, like "the disciples") at the top, and fill in each column with their actions, words, reactions, fears, motivations, and anything about their personal history that would be relevant to the story. Try to picture what their life was like, and what all played into their actions during the story described.

4. In your notebook, reflect on what you've compiled in the chart. As you look over each character, how can you identify with each one? In what ways are you similar, and how are you different? Of all the characters, which one do you identify with the most? Why?

5. Take what you've studied to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for graciously providing real-life stories that include the good, the bad, and the ugly. Ask Him to work in your heart the transformation needed to make you more like Jesus, because He is the ultimate Bible Superhero.

**"The Bible is the cradle wherein
Christ is laid."**



Martin Luther

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Honoring Our Heritage. Building Our Future.



Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Buenos Dias Familia,

I bring you greetings from the Gonzalez family and I wish you all Happy Hispanic Heritage month. We celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month each year from September 15 to October 15. During the month, we recognize the many contributions of Hispanic people to this country and throughout the world.

Most people are familiar with the terms Hispanic and Latino – but they might not know the definition of these words. Hispanic and Latino are often used interchangeably though they actually mean two different things. **Hispanic refers to people who speak Spanish or are descended from Spanish-speaking populations,** while **Latino refers to people who are from or descended from people from Latin America.**

Many of you may have heard the term Afro-Latino. Afro Latinos, or black Latin Americans, are **Latin Americans of full or mainly African ancestry.** I am an Afro Latino, as my father is an Afro Latino from Panama. There are a number of Afro Latino people in the arts and who are professional athletes. Some of them are:

- ◆ Mariano Rivera – Panamanian baseball player (pitcher for the Yankees)
- ◆ Carmelo Anthony – Puerto Rican basketball player
- ◆ Victor Cruz – Puerto Rican ex-NY Giants player, now an ESPN analyst
- ◆ David Ortiz – Dominican baseball player
- ◆ Roberto Clemente – Puerto Rican baseball player
- ◆ Celia Cruz, Cuban singer – considered the queen of salsa music
- ◆ Cardi B - Dominican musical/rap artist

We are very fortunate to live in a city where the beauty of the Hispanic/Latino diaspora is on full display. Our Hispanic and Latino neighbors are warm and loving and believers in Christ Jesus. They are anxious to share their culture, traditions, recipes and music. Here, one can enjoy theater, dining, sporting activities and festivals and celebrations with our Latino brothers and sisters.

I encourage you to turn to a Spanish radio station in your car or stop by Los Hermanos in Columbia Heights and taste the best Dominican empanadas in the city. Order a glass of Horchata and a tamale. You can also attend a play at the Gala Theater located at 14th and Park Road. The plays are always in Spanish – but don't worry – subtitles are always used so that you can follow right along.

I could go on and on – but I won't. I leave you a challenge. Challenge yourself to google a new Spanish word on your phone each day. Before you know it – you will be bilingual!

Familia – Les Quiero Mucho. Cuindense y Tenga buen dia!

Submitted by Barclay Gonzalez

Our Beautiful Melanin

Buenos Días mis hermanos en Cristo. Good morning my brothers and sisters in Christ. Good Morning to our illustrious Pastor, Dr. Winston C. Ridley, Jr. and our awesome First Lady, Bonita L. Ridley. Gracias por esta oportunidad hablar con ustedes en celebración del mes de la herencia hispano. Thank you

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

for this opportunity to speak with you in celebration of Hispanic heritage month.

The difference between us and our Hispanic/LatinX brethren is only as big as the division that we allow. The great divide is one that we, as a people, have been taught by our invaders and oppressors because power is in numbers. As long as we allowed division — whether it was based on where we were from, the region, city, state, or neighborhood we called home, social class, the type of “Christian” we identified our-selves as, the texture of our hair or the complexion of our skin — it prevented our progression and satisfied our oppressors’ desires. According to Genesis 1:27—“So God created human beings in his own image” — the oppressed have always been those of a darker skin than their oppressors, which means scientifically that they simply have more melanin than their oppressors.

The word “melanin” is a Greek word for a group of natural pigments found in most organisms. Melanin is produced through a multistage chemical process known as melanogenesis, where the oxidation of the amino acid tyrosine is followed by polymerization. The melanin pigments are produced in a specialized group of cells known as melanocytes. According to Wikipedia, the most common type of melanin is eumelanin, of which there are two types— black eumelanin and brown eumelanin - which determines a person’s skin tone. If we take that a step further, it means that from a science perspective, black and brown people have the same origin. And as our Pastor so eloquently stated yesterday during our Hispanic Heritage Celebration — from a Christian perspective—we all have the same origin since we are all descendants of Adam and Eve.

After having the pleasure of being welcomed into many Hispanic/ LatinX households I have discovered that the dinner table discussions are not that different from my own. The intense desire exists for the next generation to do better than the last, to re-

member, worship and appreciate God, to pray and finally to stay out of trouble. Remember that when you walk out of the house you have to keep your eyes and ears open to stay safe from danger inflicted by your own people and others who simply want to do harm to you because of the color of your skin. Even many of the foods are similar, but I did not realize it until I asked the question “what is that”? After receiving a Spanish description I attempted to translate it to English to find that it was potato salad but with beets for a purplish color or the beloved *sopa de pulla* or *mondongo* is nothing more than soup made of what our culture fondly refers to as chitterlings. When listening to music and watching families dance at social events, the rhythm was reminiscent of the percussion and rhythm that resounds in African American music and the dance steps were very similar to some very popular African American dance styles such as the hand dance, two-step, or the jive. It was amazing to me that all these components of life had so many similarities to facets of my own life, even though their customs originated from across the oceans.

Many of our Hispanic and Latin-X brethren who have had the opportunity of education and empowerment have paid homage to the Black Americans who have fought against social injustice, understanding and attesting to the fact that those warriors also stood for them which, in essence, made their transition to the US a little easier. We are our ancestors greatest dreams. And just like our ancestors, fought for a better existence and future for us, they also fought for all oppressed people. It is our job now to carry the torch forward and lessen the divide. It is now that we must stand together to fight for our rights, to eliminate social and political injustice and to better this world for our future generations. It is our duty as Christians to abide by His Word: “For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace,

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to be-

come a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." Ephesians 2:14-22.

Que Dios te cuida y te proteja - May God take care of you and protect you. Gracias.



Submitted by Sister Nicole Alvez-Arevalo



November is Native American Heritage Month. Did you know these facts about them?

- Most indigenous people in the U.S. use "American Indian," while most indigenous people in Canada use "First Nations." "Native Americans" or "indigenous Americans" are often used for people in both countries.
- Native Americans and First Nations people speaking a language of the Algonquian group were the first to meet English explorers and, consequently, many words from these languages entered English—for example, caribou ("snow-shoveler"), chipmunk ("red squirrel"), moccasin, moose, muskrat, opossum ("white dog"), papoose ("baby"), pecan ("nut"), powwow ("to dream, to have a vision"), raccoon, skunk ("to urinate" + "fox"), squaw, toboggan, totem, wigwam, and woodchuck.
- Even though they were not citizens, over 8,000 Native Americans served during WWI.
- While it is well-known history that slavery was a common practice in the Deep South before the Civil War,

less well known is the fact that it wasn't just white families that were slave owners. Some well-to-do Native Americans also owned slaves. Members of the Five Tribes -- the Chickasaw, Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole -- had been forced out of their homelands in the Deep South, leading to the exodus known as "Trail of Tears." Owning slaves was a part of their strategy to assimilate into American society and it allowed them to be seen as different from other Native people and as more civilized.

- After the Civil War, the Five Tribes signed a treaty with the US government abolishing slavery. Those formerly enslaved by the tribes, known as freedmen or freed people, built churches and schools. They later received land allotments as part of the 1887 Dawes Act, which dismantled indigenous reservations and redistributed the land. Some were granted tribal citizenship but many were not. Even today, slavery still casts a long shadow as the Cherokee Nation Supreme Court, in the last decade, has stripped some slave descendants known as *freedmen* of their Cherokee citizenship.

Sources: Alaina Roberts, University of Pittsburgh; <https://www.factretriever.com/native-american-facts>

GFBC HISPANIC FESTIVAL

On Saturday, October 9, 2021, The Greater First Baptist Church held a Hispanic Festival in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. The Festival was the brainchild of Dr. Blanche Hammond, the Minister of Music, and it was a great success. Listed below is everyone that helped to make the Festival a great success.

REGISTRATION: Antoinette Jones

FOOD GIVEAWAY FACILITATORS:

Marcia Linder Shawn Pearson
Denise Johnson Elizabeth Queen
Rosalyn Gonzales (had 40 pre-packed bags delivered to church on 10/8/21) **SOURCE:** Office of Latino Affairs.

Capital Area Food Bank: Delivered three pallets of potatoes, onions and watermelon on 10/9/21.

GFBC Deaconesses: Water

Outreach Ministry: Potato Chips and cookies

HEALTH SERVICES: FACILITATOR - Gloria Balton

Gloria Balton: COVID -19 Vaccinations
Deaconess-in-training Frances Alves: EPI Pens
Donna Brooks: Informational literature

PPE SUPPLIES: Deacon Anthony Hood and Della Cobb

TRACKS/INVITATIONS: GFBC

Tracks created by Lawrence Turner

RELIGIOUS TRACKS/INFORMATION: Donna Brooks and

Deaconess-in-training Frances Alvez

HOW TO MAKE SOAP DEMO: Tanya Butler Truesdale

FREE CHURCH HATS GIVEAWAYS: Darrell Johnson

CHILDREN GIVEAWAYS: Norma Hood and Nicole Alvez

RAFFLE GIVEAWAYS: Della Cobb and Deaconess-in-training Fran Alves

TENTS: Deacon Gene Mayes and Travis Hammond

LOGISTICS:

Deacon Eugene Scates Deacon Anthony Hood
Deacon Eric Washington Deacon Gene Mayes
Deacon Cannon Huggins Mr. Garcia

PPE SANITATION:

Trustee Kendal Brown
Trustee Michael Benjamin

MUSIC: Marcia Linder and Nicole Alvez-Arevalo

TABLES, CHAIRS, TRASH CANS, TRASH BAGS:

FACILITATOR - Lawrence Turner

7 Tables 20 chairs
4 large trash cans Large trash bags
PPE Cleaning supplies

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS: Stepheinie Taylor (Wilson Senior High School) and Cynthia Molina

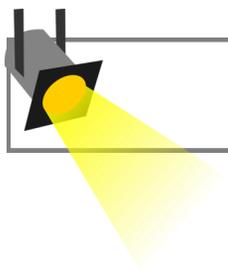
ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS:

Edna Scott Dawn Scott
Esra Simmons Karen Johnson
Jennifer Asante Shebba Stover
Deaconess Dolores Bowman

MONETARY DONATIONS:

Marvette Stanard Frazier O'Leary





Spotlight on our Members

Charisse Carney-Nunes

Sister Charisse Carney-Nunes was elected in May 2021 to serve as the National President of the Alumni Association of Lincoln University, PA. In her new role, which began on July 1, Sister Carney-Nunes leads an almost 1000-member organization, coordinates 10 chapters nationwide, represents the interests of over 10,000 alumni, and manages a six-figure budget. She assumed her position after a successful four-year stint as the president of the DC Metropolitan Chapter of the Alumni Association, where she significantly multiplied membership.

Founded in 1854, Lincoln University is the first degree-granting institution in the United States with outstanding alumni such as Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall; Harlem Renaissance poet, Langston Hughes; first president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah; and the current Lieutenant Governor of New Jersey, Hon. Sheila Oliver. Sister Carney-Nunes graduated in 1988 after majoring in physics, a discipline for which the school was historically known with a department built by renowned physicist Dr. Herman Branson. The school is now led by Dr. Brenda A. Allen, its 14th and first alumna president. Sister Carney-Nunes was inspired by Dr. Allen's vision to build on the university's incredible legacy and to chart a future supporting the upward mobility of students, educating and empowering them to lead their communities and change the world, which is the mission.

The Alumni Association is also auspicious. Next year it will celebrate its Sesquicentennial Anniversary, and at 150 years old, it is believed to be the oldest HBCU alumni association in the nation. Sister Carney-Nunes assumed her leadership role at a time the Association was recovering from operational challenges and the absence of internal controls that led to significant audit issues. She is reimagining the Association with a greater focus on management and operations for its leadership, while increasing the opportunities for fun, engagement, and supporting Lincoln's legacy and mission for the alumni. Her goal is to dramatically increase membership to a greater percent-

age of living alumni and to build a strong cadre of alumni to support the mission and vision of both the Association and Lincoln.

Carney-Nunes recently returned from Lincoln's outdoor, socially distant, in-person 2021 Homecoming celebration. She organized alumni-focused activities, presented two five-figure checks to Lincoln's president and Chairman of the Board, and participated in a Chapel Service and 100-year commemoration of the historic Alumni Memorial Arch, which was a gift from the Association to the University to honor students and alumni who were World War I veterans. These events inspire Carney-Nunes in her efforts to lead her alumni community into the next 100 years, increasing the legacy, and bringing even greater gifts to the University and nation beyond which we can presently imagine.

If you are interested in supporting Lincoln and its students in any way, Sister Carney-Nunes would love your assistance. The students and young alumni are our future. If you know of a graduate of Lincoln or someone who attended for at least one year, please ask them to email Sister Carney-Nunes at President@AALUPA.org or text a message at 202-460-5168.



Sister Charisse Carney-Nunes



Darnell Roulhac

On July 16, I was offered and accepted a position at the University of Arizona as a Voice Professor in the School of Theatre, Film, and Television. My official title is Assistant Professor of Practice in Musical Theatre Voice.

After finishing my undergrad degree at The Boston Conservatory, I was not sure what my next step would be. I knew I wanted to go back to school to get my Master's degree but money was an issue. During this time of discovery and stillness Dr. Hammond said she had a student that she wanted me to teach voice lessons to. As we all know, when Dr. Hammond asks you to do something, YOU DO IT! Even if you do not feel ready or qualified to do so.

She was able to see something in me that I had not yet seen in myself. After that one student, she had another one, and another. Next thing I knew she had a whole roster of students for me to start honing my skills. These students thought they were going to study with the great Dr. Hammond but they got a first time voice teacher who was still figuring things out.

During this time, I started to find my footing. I started to gain a better understanding of how the voice works and found vocabulary to help other people find their voice. I found a true passion in teaching. Just as much as I did from being on the stage. I realized this might be the next step on my journey. I knew I wanted to teach and do so on the collegiate level but to do so I would have to get my Master's degree,

In the Fall of 2019, I started my graduate school journey at Shenandoah Conservatory. I did this while working a full time job, teaching voice part time as well as singing around town. This was not going to be easy but I knew I could do anything through Christ who strengthens me. I was commuting 2 hours to Winchester, VA and back but it had to be done. That soon was cut short do to the Global Pandemic. I was now taking all of my classes online. This turned out to be a small blessing for me as it allowed me to take extra classes and graduate in 2 years.

I graduated with my Master's Degree in Vocal Pedagogy with a concentration in Commercial and Contemporary Music in May of 2021. This is a fairly new degree and is becoming a growing field. With my degree in hand, I took

my chances to apply for some open positions. A former teacher recommended that I apply for a school in Arizona. I wasn't sure about it but I did anyway. I was offered a position as well as another position in Boston. This turned out to me the best option.

I had no idea that I would ever find myself teaching and living in Arizona, but as the song goes, "Children go where I send thee". I could not be happier with what God has done for me. I prayed for years that one day I would make music 100% of my income. Today I can say that the blessing has revealed itself. I have a roster of 28 students that I meet with weekly for individual voice lessons. I am also able to still teach most of my students back home in DC via Zoom lessons. I am also creating a name for myself at the University as well as in Tucson. This coming November I will be a judge for two vocal competitions and will be presenting a concert in February.

I want to take this time to thank my GFBC family for always pouring into me from the time I joined the Children's Choir. Thank you for your constant support and encouragement. You saw something in me that was not yet realized and helped me on my journey to be where I am today. I also want to give a special and public thank you to Dr. Hammond and Marcia for giving me the time, space and opportunity to develop the skills that have ultimately positioned me to be where I am today. I plan to take all the love, support, kindness and knowledge that GFBC has given to me and put it into the students that I now have the privilege to teach.



Submitted by Brother Darnell Roulhac, pictured

Celebrating Our Centenarians

Deaconess Willie Mae Osborn

Born in Hearn, Texas, Mrs. Willie Mae Dailey Osborn considers herself an Oklahoman since she moved to Fame, Oklahoma (OK) before the age of two. She is the youngest daughter in a family of 12 children. She grew up in a Christian home, her mother was a missionary, her father was a deacon and her grandfather was a minister. Deaconess Osborn was baptized at the age of 13 in Oklahoma.

Deaconess Osborn attended school through the seventh grade in Huttonsville, OK and was bused to the Booker T. Washington High School in Eufaula, OK where she graduated as the valedictorian of her class. She received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Langston, University, in Langston, OK. She began her teaching career in Eufaula.

She met her husband, the late Deacon Quentin Osborn, in Eufaula, his hometown. They were married in Independence, Kansas, a marriage that lasted 51 years. After his service in World War II, Deacon Osborn moved to Washington, DC in 1946 and Deaconess Osborn joined him two years later.

Deaconess Osborn joined The Greater First Baptist Church in 1950 and has been an active member ever since. After joining Greater First, she became a member of the Senior Choir and has served longer than any current member of the choir. Her service to the church has been invaluable and reads thusly:

- She is the most senior deaconess in the Deaconess Ministry and serves as the chaplain and the advisor.
- Co-chairman of the Souvenir Program Committee for the dedication services of the church in 1956
- Chairperson of the Anniversary Committee

- for the Centennial celebration in 1978
- Assisted in obtaining a permit to open a Day Care Center
- Chairman of Literacy Program
- Taught Sunday School for 30 years
- Served as Superintendent of the Junior Department
- Active in the BTU
- Served as president of the Eliza Smallwood Missionary Ministry
- Member of the May Birthday Ministry
- Member of the Volunteer Choir for many years
- Sang with the Fellowship Choir
- Worked with the Wednesday midday prayer service that was organized by the Deaconess Ministry
- Member of the Gideons International Bible Group

She is frequently called upon by Pastor Ridley to give prayer at Bible Study and other meetings.

Deaconess Osborn worked in the federal government on the very spot where National Airiport is currently located. She retired in 1988 from the Arlington County Public School System. She recalls that those were some very pleasant years. For four years, she was the only black teacher at Page Elementary School. She taught children whose parents had lived in London, Paris, etc. She obviously did a superb job since the School System paid for her to attend a special study on remedial reading at Howard University. They also financed her attendance to American University for a two-year credit.

Deaconess Osborn is the proud mother of three sons: Oscar, Ronald and Reginald, the grandmother of six and the great-grandmother of eight. She is a modest and humble person who enjoys serving the Lord and would rather not talk much about herself. She says her life has been the church and school. She believes that young people should set their lifetime goals as early as they can and that the church

should provide as many incentives as it can to help our young.

There is more that could be said about Deaconess Osborn but her favorite song captures her spirit-filled life--"I'm Going Through". She started walking with Jesus and she is going through, with the world behind her and heaven in view, she is going through. Praise the Lord!

Deaconess Bernice Williams

Born in Tyler, Texas, Deaconess Bernice Kennedy Williams is the only child of educators Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Kennedy. Early in her life, the family moved to Oklahoma where her father became principal of a school, a position he held for 40 some years.

Deaconess Williams attended elementary and high school in Frederick, OK where her mother was her 3rd grade teacher. An appreciation for teaching was passed on from her parents and after graduating from Spellman College in Atlanta, GA, Deaconess Williams taught one year in Vernon, TX, and later, she taught for seven years at the school where her father was the principal. Her father was privileged to have an elementary and high school named for him in Frederick. After moving to Washington, DC, she taught one year at the John M. Cook Elementary School and more than 25 years at the Van Ness Elementary School. While teaching here, she received her Masters degree from Trinity University. She retired after teaching for more than 35 years.

Through a good friend, Deaconess Williams met Deacon Robert Williams. She corresponded with him – she at Spellman and he in the service. They were married after he was discharged as a 1st lieutenant – a marriage that has lasted for 56 years. They were blessed with two daughters, Frances Williams Alves who was born in Houston, TX, and Deborah Williams, and one granddaughter, Nicole Alves-Arevalo. Deborah was blessed by the late Rev. Edward Thomas

when she was about two months old and later baptized by him. Rev. Thomas officiated at Frances' marriage. Nicole was also blessed and baptized by Rev. Thomas.

Education continues to be vital to this family. Deaconess Williams' father believed in educating girls. Frances and Deborah both graduated from Howard University and Nicole will join them when she graduates from Howard in May. Frances received her Masters from Howard and Deborah received hers from Catholic University.

Deaconess Williams has been a member of Greater First for more than 40 years and has served in many capacities. She has been Superintendent of the Primary Department in Sunday School; taught Sunday School for a few years; served as a captain for Women's Day (her group raised the 2nd or 3rd highest amount of money); was a member of the Pastor's Aide Committee; taught and served in Vacation Bible School; is a past president of the Deaconess Board; served as chaplain of the Deaconess Board; and worked on the Scholarship Committee. She is currently a member of the Deaconess Board and is a past president of the June Birthday Ministry.

Deaconess Williams likes the 27th Psalm, and one of her favorite Bible verses is 1Corinthians 13:13 – "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

She enjoys walking and reading the Bible and gives thanks to God for his many blessings as He has brought her through some serious operations. She really loves her church family. Every time she has had sickness or death in her family, she is thankful for their love and concern.

When asked if she had any advice for today's mothers, her response was for them to stay close to God, depend on Him to lead and guide them, and to keep supporting each other.

*This article is reprinted from the May 2005 FOCUS.
Submitted by Deaconess Jean Johnson.*

Daughters of Zion Ministry

GFBC Women's Ministry Meeting Saturday, Juneteenth 2021

The meeting was filled with poetry and history shared by women of the Greater First Baptist Church. Aysha Nunes read two of her poems. Aysha is a gifted, focused, and Black 21-year old woman who is a third year student at Montgomery College where she is pursuing a degree in Physical Therapy.

Poems

If I become like my mother or even half the woman she is, I'll consider my life a success
Everybody talks about it but I don't think they understand in full detail, that if there was life without a woman's touch .. the world would be a mess

And yeah I know tomorrow's Father's Day and all and with his essence I am blessed
But it's their duo, that molds us
And then the love helps take care of the stress

The role of the women is unlike the rest
And the values can be hard to explain in enough detail
So women like Harriet & Josephine speak on behalf of us as all with their excellence as time reveals their prevail

Us women have trust that's thicker than water
Thicker than hair
Skin tough to raise daughters,
and it's thick enough to care

Melanin deep,
Our spirit has an aura like no other, it's kind
But a woman knows her priorities are a short distance ahead & rarely behind

She knows to carry a little over her limit to increase her chances of success
But never the less, strong women don't carry weights others have set down with time

Aysha Nicole 6/18/2021

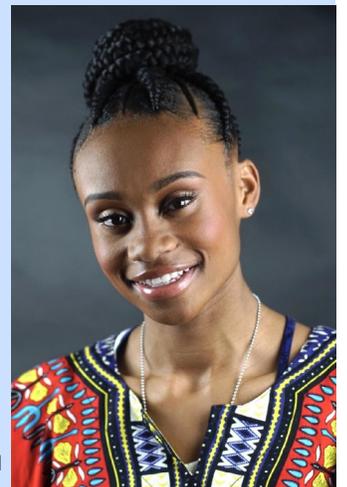
With faith she knows she'll achieve
But with faith it's not always easy to believe.
At first,
But as patience grows
And the path to the goal gets clearer,
The tension starts to ease

I like to think both Mary and Eve were too free of souls to be confined to trying to keep dirt off their sleeves
And still they held it down for the women as the goal would get nearer.

To me , Faith is looking in the mirror
Un-blindly Walking Gods tightrope.
It's a straight line so what would I be scared for
I believe in God because he provides the light on the rope
Some safety for myself and for the world, is what I send prayers for
No I'm never running out of hope
Animals and bugs too , becuz that's who God cares for
He sent a whole pandemic just to show us, we should care more
Clean more
read more
work as a team more
Learn brand new skills so we can be better than before

But there's no way we can do it un-United
People love people, really, don't deny it
We gotta build each other up, and not try to fight it
As us women carry the torch, we must give thank to those who light it

Aysha Nicole 6/18/2021



Aysha Nunes

Dr. Judith A. Webb is a dedicated member of the Greater First Baptist Church. She is a retired educator/administrator of the D.C. Public School system. She loves exploring history, especially black history, and uses her God-given talents to motivate people to always perform at a higher level of service.

Dr. Webb's remarks:

A Juneteenth Celebration

A Daughters of Zion Conference Call Presentation

Saturday, June 19, 2021, 2 PM

Speaker: Dr. Judith A. Webb

At Greater First Baptist Church, history is forever ALIVE! Our Pastor, Rev. Dr. Winston C. Ridley, Jr., continues to remind us that we must keep our eyes on THE MASTER as He grants the light for navigating a greater today and tomorrow and provides new-age platforms for sharing and better understanding important, life-changing history.

This morning as I was reading the New York Times, I was struck by an article providing a valuable sense of purpose for my upcoming talk: "*Polls Find Many Know Little or Nothing About It.*" What was this article referring? It is Juneteenth, a celebration of freedom and family.

Juneteenth as defined in the Washington Post: June 20, 2021. C5: "Juneteenth, an amalgamation of the words June and nineteenth, honors the day 156 years ago when the nation's last group of enslaved people learned they were free. Although many Americans believe President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation-issued January 1, 1863-automatically freed all enslaved people, the truth is more complex. Millions of Black Americans won their freedom over the course of the next several years after the proclamation often by crossing Union lines to emancipate themselves. The last remaining enslaved people, a quarter of a million people living in Galveston, Tex., became free on June 19, 1865, when Union Army Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger stood upon a balcony there and announced their emancipation. Until then, no word had reached Galveston of Lincoln's proclamation."

In time, the freed slaves began celebrating the Emancipation. According to Kennell Jackson in his America is Me, few places celebrated the Emancipation on January 1, the official date of the Emancipation. Most celebrants preferred a warmer date, eventually evolving into a June date. Mr. Jackson cites an example of such celebrations found in Richmond, Virginia in the 1880's:

"Black merchants decorated their storefronts. Dances, such as the stylish 'Freedom Ball' were held. Parades wound through the city streets, with a marching band acting as a Pied Piper to children. Country folks came to town with goods to sell. Tables piled high with food drew hungry buyers. Leading Black citizens-both men and women-recited famous orations and poetry and gave speeches on what the proclamation meant."

As I fast forward to the 20th Century, I imagine that slave narratives on the emancipation that were recorded by members of the Federal Writers Project of the 1930's were shared during such celebrations. From hundreds of such interviews of former slaves, I shall share two from Unchained Memories: Readings From the Slave Narratives with a forward by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Jenny Proctor, Texas, p. 144: When ol master comes down in de cotton patch to tell us 'bout bein' free, he say, "I hates to tell you but I knows I's got to, your is free jes' as free as me or anybody else whats white." We didn' hardly know what he means. We jes' sort of huddle 'round together like scared rabbits, but after we knowed what he mean we didn' many of us go, 'cause we didn' know where to of went.

Felix Haywood, Texas, page 149: Everybody went wild. We all felt like heroes and nobody had made us that way but ourselves. We was free. Just like that, we was free. It didn't seem to make the whites mad, either. They went right on giving us food just the same. Nobody took our homes away, but right off colored folks started on the move. They seemed to want to get closer to freedom, so they didn't know what it was-like it was a place or a city.

As I continue to fast forward our history into the 21st century, may we remember how our brave ancestors left the South and migrated North and West for great opportunities. In her 2011 book The Warmth of Other Suns, Pulitzer Prize Winner Isabel Wilkerson tells the epic story of America's Great Migration. In the chapter, "*The Things They Left Behind*," she tells how the people brought the Old Country with them, including Juneteenth.

She writes, page 240:

In the new world, they surrounded themselves with the people they knew from the next farm over or their Daily Vacation Bible School, from their clapboard Holiness churches, from the colored high school or the corner store back home, and they would keep these ties for as long as they lived.... The people from Texas took

Daughters of Zion Ministry

Juneteenth Day to Los Angeles, Oakland, Seattle, and other places they went. Even now, with barbecues and red soda pop, they celebrate June 19th, 1865....

Ultimately, a historical blessing occurred on June 16, 2021, as Congress voted to establish Juneteenth as an official federal holiday. Upon signing Juneteenth into a federal holiday, President Joe Biden remarked, "Great Nations don't ignore their most painful moments, they embrace them." Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, (D. Texas), who was the lead proponent for making Juneteenth a federal holiday, remarked, "That racial divide has fallen out of the sky and we are crushing it to the earth. This Bill and this day is about freedom."

Washington Post, June 17, 2021 (A1 and A2)

Finally, to encourage further reflection on this newest holiday, I consulted a highly respected colleague of mine, Dr. Elaine Moore, a social studies teacher, a college professor and scholar of African American history. She reminded me to continue speaking passionately to the work undone. She would remind us all to address social issues purposefully, to remain responsibly vigilant, to keep history transparent and to celebrate mindfully.

And, if you have an opportunity to visit Black Lives Matter Plaza in D.C., you may see a message on a posted sign taken from a book in the Bible, Micah 6:8 KJV: He hath showed thee, o man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?



Happy Juneteenth and remember the endearing message from the overseer of the Daughters of Zion, our First Lady Bonita L. Ridley, "GROW AND GLOW!"

First Lady Bonita L. Ridley, Overseer
Rev. France E. Williams, Assistant Overseer

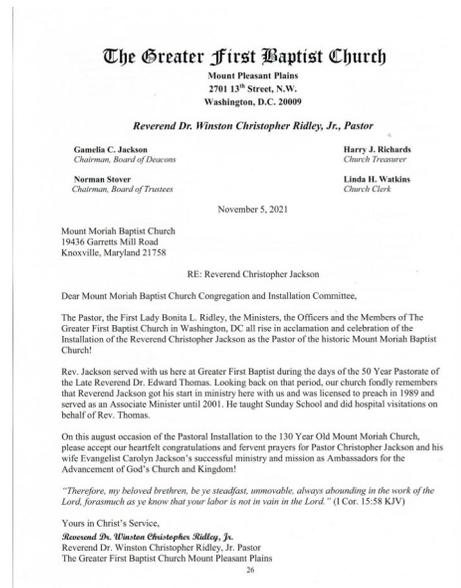
Submitted by Deaconess Margaret (Gerri) Green, Advisor

Moving Forward



Reverend Christopher L. Jackson

Rev. Christopher Jackson, a son of our church and licensed to preach by the late Rev. Dr. Edward Thomas in 1989, was installed as Pastor of the historic Mount Moriah Baptist Church of Knoxville, Maryland, on November 13, 2021 at a ceremony held at the Clarion Inn in Frederick, Maryland. He had been serving as Pastor since October 2020. Rev. Ridley served as worship leader on the program and the New Testament reading (1st Timothy 3:1-7) was read by Deacon Calvin Johnson. Also in attendance from Greater First Baptist Church were First Lady Bonita Ridley, and Deaconesses Margaret "Gerri" Green and Jean Johnson. A delicious buffet meal was served after the installation service.



Submitted by Deaconess Jean W. Johnson



Honoring Our Veterans

As we reflect on former Secretary of State Colin Powell's* legacy, we are reminded of his thirteen rules of leadership which have guided so many of our colleagues and principals. We are grateful for his love of the State Department and his legacy that we still feel in the workplace (www.state.gov).

Secretary Powell's 13 Rules:

- ◆ It ain't as bad as you think! It will look better in the morning.
- ◆ Get mad then get over it.
- ◆ Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it.
- ◆ It can be done.
- ◆ Be careful what you choose. You may get it.
- ◆ Don't let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision.
- ◆ You can't make someone else's choices. You shouldn't let someone else make yours.
- ◆ Check small things.
- ◆ Share credit.
- ◆ Remain calm. Be kind.
- ◆ Have a vision. Be demanding.
- ◆ Don't take counsel of your fears or naysayers.
- ◆ Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.



*Colin Powell was the first Black US Secretary of State whose leadership in several Republican administrations helped shape American foreign policy in the last years of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st. He died from complications from Covid-19 on October 18, 2021. He was 84.

6 Guiding Principles of the Tuskegee Airman

- Aim High
- Believe in Yourself
- Use Your Brain
- Be Reay to Go
- Never Quit
- Expect to Win





IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Return to In-Person Worship Services

The Greater First Baptist Church
2701 Thirteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
Reverend Dr. Winston C. Ridley, Jr., Pastor

WE ARE EXCITED TO WELCOME YOU BACK TO OUR IN-PERSON SERVICES!

In-Person Sunday Worship Services at The Greater First Baptist Church will begin on:

Sunday, January 2, 2022
Worship Service Time
10:00 to 11:00 AM

What's Required of All GFBC In-Person Worship Service Attendees?

- **Pre-Registration to Reserve Your Seating—For Every Sunday Service**

Please call the GFBC office at:
 (202) 462-6127 or (202) 462-1730
 Monday – Friday
 Office hours are 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Only those who speak directly with Sister Linda Watkins will be registered for service attendance.
(Do Not Leave a Voice Message)

- **On Sunday mornings, your early arrival is suggested!**

Entrance for worshippers is at the Thirteenth Street front entrance on the Fairmont Street side.

- **Temperature Readings through Contact-Free Devices** will be performed for each person entering the GFBC vestibule. (Any person with a reading of 100 degrees or higher will not be permitted entrance.)

- **Hand Sanitizing and Wet Wipe Stations** are available in the building.
- **Personal Protective Equipment**—Everyone in attendance **Must Properly Wear a Face Mask at ALL TIMES** inside the building at GFBC. If you don't have one GFBC will supply it.
- **Practice Proper Spacing and Social Distancing**—Attendees will be required to be seated six feet apart from persons who are not your family members. The seat spacing is marked.
- **Giving Stations for Tithes and Offerings** will be received in the Tithe boxes in the Sanctuary. The Ushers will direct you.
- **Communion Kits (First Sunday Only)** will be distributed by the GFBC Deacons upon entry to the Sanctuary.
- **The Exit of Worshippers after service** will be through the Thirteenth Street front entrance on the Girard Street side.

NOTE: Sunday School on Saturday, weekly Bible Study and Prayer Services will continue on our FreeConferenceCall.com platform until further notice.

GFBC VIRTUAL SERVICES:

We will still have ZOOM and call-in capabilities for those who are not ready to return to In-Person Services. The services will also be available on Facebook and YouTube by logging onto our Website: TheGFBCDC.org

We are looking forward to seeing you on the First Sunday of January, 2022!

