

SPRING 2019

TRUMPET

M A G A Z I N E

THE
ALL IN!
E D I T I O N

BISHOP AND DR. WALKER
CELEBRATE

27
YEARS

A photograph of a man and a woman standing in front of a large, ornate clock. The man is wearing a grey suit and glasses, and the woman is wearing a grey dress and a pearl necklace. They are both smiling. A large, stylized 'Walker' is written across the image in a light grey script font.

CELEBRATING

BISHOP JOSEPH W. WALKER & DR. STEPHAINE WALKER

THANK YOU
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YEARS
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FROM THE MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH FAMILY

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Spiritually



Relationally



Socially

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CORRECTIONS

1. In the article "Freely Given, Willingly Shared" (page 13, Fall 2018 edition), the correct spelling of writer's name is Otis Robertson.
2. In the article "The Passion for Education" (page 17, Fall 2018 edition), it was incorrectly printed that Lori Rucker works as a mentor for teachers at Belmont University. It was also incorrectly printed that Amber Conway received her master's degree from the University of Memphis. Lori does not serve as mentor for teachers at Belmont, and Amber Conway received her master's degree from Trevecca Nazarene University.



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TRUMPET MAGAZINE MISSION STATEMENT

To provide and equip readers with vital, current, and relevant information that is applicable to their daily lives as Christians in the Nashville community and the world.



Financially



Physically



ALL IN!

page 6

ALL IN

by BISHOP JOSEPH WARREN WALKER III

PASTOR, MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

The great mystic and theologian Howard Thurman asserts, "Commitment means that it is possible for a man to yield the nerve center of his consent to a purpose or cause, a movement or ideal, which may be more important to him than whether he lives or dies." Think about that for a moment. What in your life is so important that its prospering or actualization transcends your very existence? This is the "why" of your commitment.

This yielding that Thurman is referring to is the act of—what the old saints would describe as—your soul saying, "Yes!" It is a decisive claim to unwavering devotion, meaning that come what may, you're going to stick with God. This yes has depth and is sourced in the desire for God and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Indeed, this way of being is much more than making a list and checking it twice. Instead, it is rooted in your purpose in life.

Too often, we do not commit because of fear—fear of failure, fear of disappointment, or fear of hurt. But fear-based commitment is harmful and has never yielded anything worthwhile. In order to be fully engaged with your commitments, first, you have to be "all out" of anything that serves as a hindrance to your success.

What do you mean, Bishop? I'm happy you asked! When a person decides to be "all in," that means that he or she has also decided to be all out of at least these three things: excuses, exit strategies, and ego.

The first thing to get rid of is excuses because they fuel procrastination and shift your focus to why you can't do what is necessary rather than help you focus on how you can achieve it. When you give excuses, you attempt to absolve yourself of responsibility, which

ultimately places a choke hold on progress. This is not fair to your family; your ministry; yourself; and, most importantly, God. You are called to be productive! You are visionary, fruitful, dependable, and capable of doing and being all that God has called you to. No more excuses!

Next, stop giving yourself permission to give up on anything that challenges you. Beginning an endeavor with your contingency plan in mind will cause you to undermine the demands of commitment. Having something else, or even someone else, lined up in the event you do not get your way is manipulative and selfish. Hold yourself to a higher standard. Do not allow fear to make you miss the rewards reaped through diligence and endurance. Commit and let patience have her perfect work!

Finally, get out of your own way. To say you are *all in* means it is no longer about you. You begin to see the bigger picture of your life. You also gain a broader understanding of how the work you do, the gifts you have, and the trials you're enduring (and *will* overcome) are working in more than just your interest. When you're all in, you exchange your ways for God's way, your plans for His plan, and His vision for your life over your own.

God calls us blessed, and we have been blessed to be a blessing to others. As a blessing, we can no longer be indifferent to the well-being of those around us. We start to think about how our actions, or lack thereof, impacts those closest to us. I'm not suggesting we neglect self-care; but in this way, we keep the prosperity of the collective at the center.

People who have ever done anything life-changing or noteworthy had to decide for themselves whether

...get out of your own way.

they would be *all in*. When Esther realized her palace promotion was not for the sake of attaining privilege but was part of God's divine providence to partake in the saving of her people, she called a fast and decided to go see the king. This was not an act of defiance, but an act that demonstrated skin in the game. At that point, Esther was *all in*!

The three Hebrew boys remained true to their commitment to God, though they were facing the threat of death by fire for not bowing to the king's golden image. They were *all in*! The mother who came to Jesus on behalf of her daughter who was being tormented by demons would not be denied the healing blessing her daughter so desperately needed (Matthew 15). She persisted. She got the victory. She was *all in*!

Even Jesus, facing the cross, never gave way for excuses, exit strategies, or his ego. Instead, He declared, "Nevertheless, not my will but thy will be done." In spite of the pain, in spite of the difficulty, regardless of whether I live or die, I still say, yes, I'm *all in*!

What do you call this shift from declaration to demonstration? People of God, that's called being *all in*! It is our pledge to offer 110 percent effort toward what we said we would do. When your determination is no longer predicated on your circumstances, you've reached a place of commitment.

The vision belongs to each of us, and we all have a responsibility to see to it that it comes to pass. This is why we share the faith stories of our brothers and sisters so you can see and be amazed at what God is doing in our midst. This is why I encourage you to get involved, to join a ministry so your gifts can manifest and impact the world. This is how we continue to be great! I want to see each of you grow spiritually, become health conscious and physically whole, and live free of debt and financial hardship. I want you to win in every area of your life.

So, I ask again, what in your life is so important that its prospering or actualization transcends your very existence? This is how deep your commitment has to go. Love is what motivates commitment. Love disallows fear to have the final say. People of God, do not allow fear to sabotage your life. It's time to be *all in*!



To say you are *all in* means it is no longer about you. You begin to see the bigger picture of your life.

Vision OF THE

CONNECT • COMMIT • CHANGE

"Accountability without exception is key to the success of this vision."

MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH • NASHVILLE, TN

BISHOP JOSEPH W. WALKER III



"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5, NIV).

The vision the Lord has given me for 2019 is a continuation of what we began in 2018. "Connect, Commit, and Change" is progressive and does not happen overnight. It is a goal in which we have placed great investment. We were able to onboard effective tools and ministry platforms where persons could experience an easier connection to ministry resources; volunteer opportunities; and, ultimately, a relationship with Jesus Christ. This work continues through our office of assimilation and department of Christian education, as we focus on making disciples of Jesus Christ.

This year, our primary focus will be on commitment. When the word of the Lord was given to the children of Israel in Deuteronomy, it was given as a reminder of the importance of their commitment to God and the work they would need to do to achieve the promise.

Commitment is defined as the state of or quality of being dedicated to a cause or an activity. There are three degrees of commitment. First, there is casual commitment, when people are sporadic and unreliable at best. Second, there is coerced commitment, when people are led by the decisions of others but don't have real emotional investment. Third, there is complete commitment. This is the degree where persons are "all in" and demonstrate their love for God by loving Him with all their heart, soul, and strength.

Where God is taking us in 2019 will require complete commitment. Now that people are connecting, it will require a greater level of commitment from our staff, ministry leaders, and volunteers to sustain the growth. When we are committed to God, remaining committed to His work happens organically. In order to accomplish this vision, we will be strategic in assuring everything that we do administratively, educationally, ministerially, and programmatically moves us all to another level of commitment. In the end, we want to see each of you have a more committed relationship with Jesus Christ, as well as be more committed to the resources and ministry opportunities that are available at Mount Zion.

This year, Mount Zion will be the host church for the International Conference of the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship, and delegates from around the world will converge on Nashville in July. In order for this incredibly anointed conference to happen, it will require a mass volunteer effort from Mount Zion. We are excited about this historic event, and we will be ready.

Our areas of focus in 2019 will be Christian education, family ministries (children, youth, college, young adults, seniors), and overall stewardship (time, talent, and treasure). The primary goal this year is to make sure every person who is part of our ministry is not only connected to a ministry or volunteering in some capacity, but is also committed fully to the work of ministry that will make a difference in the lives of other people.

House

"I believe we will see **unprecedented manifestation** in 2019. When people commit, **they won't quit.**"

All leaders of this ministry will set the example in their level of commitment. There will be systems implemented to assure that all of our leaders are compliant in their responsibilities as they lead you. Accountability without exception is key to the success of this vision.

This year, we will host a series of training sessions for our volunteers. We will also provide mini-sessions for leaders to assure that they are effectively trained in the work of ministry. Last year, we hosted several ministries from across the country that shadowed our team in order to learn best practices. We plan to be intentional about inviting ministries to Mount Zion to learn from our team. We want to make sure our team remains sharp and on the cutting edge so that we can assist ministries around the world in Kingdom efficiency and expansion.

Our Christian Education Department will work to onboard a variety of new course offerings. We want to create ways to onboard these classes virtually. It is the intent of this vision to bring greater awareness to the class offerings at Mount Zion. In July, we will have another symposium. This was hugely successful for us, and it is our goal to double the size this year.

We will increase participation in our children and youth ministries. Every fourth Sunday, we will highlight the gifts of our young people and showcase the various ministry offerings we have, so that we can garner more support and participation.

We will host a Children and Youth Summit this year that will engage young people from all over the city. This will be a unique summit that

will bring together panelists to address pressing topics young people deal with on a daily basis. Our marriage, single, young adult, and college ministries will continue to develop ministry programs that promote greater commitment. The summit format will be used in each of these ministries as a creative way to meet the needs of God's people.

2018 propelled our giving to higher heights, and 2019 will continue to take us higher. We remain committed to being a debt-free ministry; but in order for that to happen, we must have 100 percent commitment. Everything we need is in the house. God has blessed and continues to bless His people. When our commitment increases, so does our giving. We want to increase our philanthropic and outreach efforts in the community and the world. We will seek those who are credible and partner with them to make an impact in the lives of God's people.

The Lord spoke to me and said that if this vision is going to come to pass, it must be undergirded by an intentional culture of love, engagement, and collaboration. Once a quarter, I plan to call a gathering of all our leadership to train them on the Mount Zion culture. The culture of our church is one of excellence without excuse, engagement through expediency, and love without limits. Unless there is a clear understanding throughout the ministry at all touch points, those who serve in ministry will run the risk of misrepresenting us and, more important, Christ when working with others.

As we connect, commit, and change, we must realize that it takes an intentional effort to

make it happen. I believe we will see unprecedented manifestation in 2019. When people commit, they won't quit. There is a mantle upon this ministry to be a paradigm for Kingdom advancement in the world.

I'm excited about the future and have complete confidence in the amazing people God has connected to this ministry. As we move forward, let us focus on our total commitment to Jesus Christ. When we are better Christians, we are better—period. Let's commit to be committed!



Someone once said, “Jesus on his knees is the greatest argument we have for prayer.” God had one Son who lived without sin, but He has no sons or daughters who can live without prayer. Prayer can reach where nothing else can reach. Prayer can build you up where you’re torn down and prop you up on every leaning side. Prayer can remind you that God is over your head like a mighty shelter, under your feet like a sure foundation, and all around you like a wall around Jerusalem. It can remind you that your painful past is not as important as your powerful pilgrimage.

Prayer is not a spare tire that you pull out when you’re in trouble. Instead, it’s a steering wheel that directs you through your troubles. Prayer is what brings balance to your life.

When I talk about prayer, I’m not talking about going through the motions, repeating words, or stringing together a lot of prayer clichés. I’m not talking about bowing down during commercials, trying to get God’s attention during a time-out or at halftime. I’m talking about praying with your whole heart—open, transparent, and pure before God.

You can’t fool God with a uniform or an usher’s badge. You can’t fool God with a choir robe or a clergy collar. You have to come before God with a pure heart. That’s why the old saints used to say, “Lord, we stand before You today as an empty pitcher before a full fountain. We come knee-bent and body-bowed before Your throne of grace. So, Lord, while I’m down here praying, search my heart, and turn the light from the lighthouse on my soul. And if You find anything that shouldn’t be, take it out and straighten me, strengthen me, fill me, fix me, free me, and then use me for Your glory.”

Jesus was constantly in prayer. The disciples watched Jesus, and they were impressed with His prayer life. They said, “Lord, teach us how to pray.” They had heard Him preach eloquent sermons, but they didn’t say, “Lord, teach us how to preach.” They had seen Him heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out devils; but they didn’t ask Jesus for those gifts. The disciples didn’t even ask Him to teach them how to speak in tongues because they realized that the secret to Jesus’ life was

His communion with His Father.

The Jewish people in the first century were a praying people, so the disciples had been taught many prayers since childhood. They already knew the ritual of prayer, but they wanted to experience the power of prayer.

On this journey, you must have power when you pray. How did the old saints put it? “A little prayer, a little power; no prayer, no power; much prayer, much power.” There are mountains that need moving, marriages that need mending, churches that need reviving, problems that need solving, crosses that need bearing, burdens that need lifting, and lives that need changing!

Lord, teach us how to pray. The needs are demanding, circumstances are critical, situations are desperate, doors are closing, and the future is uncertain. Lord, teach us to pray!

The Lord’s Prayer

The prayer that Jesus prayed in Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV) is also known as “The Model Prayer.” It was given as a model or an example to teach the disciples (and us) how to pray. The Lord’s Prayer was not necessarily meant to be recited verbatim but was meant to illustrate how to include the following four key elements in our prayers:

- Adoration – praising God
- Contrition – asking for forgiveness
- Thanksgiving – showing God gratitude
- Petition – asking God for favors

A Closer Look at The Model Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV)

Verse 9

“Our Father which art in heaven.” In the first line of The Model Prayer, we are reminded that no matter what we face in this world, we have Someone to turn to Who is big enough, wise enough, and strong enough to help us face and conquer anything. **“Hallowed be thy name.”** Don’t say God’s name out of habit, formality, custom, or fashion. Say His name with reverence, sincerity, humility, and commitment.

Verse 10

“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” These words were uttered expecting God’s rule to take place in the earth. When God’s rule happens in the earth, change happens in our personal lives but also in the lives of those

in our communities and our country.

Verse 11

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

Jesus spoke this prayer to a crowd of people who were gathered on a hillside in Galilee. Most of them did not have much in the way of economic resources. Jesus was calling them to put their trust in God, who would provide for them every day.

Verse 12

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” When we listen to The Model Prayer, we discover that forgiveness is a two-directional transaction. God is willing to forgive us of our sins but only when He sees that we are willing to forgive the sins, debts, and trespasses that others have done against us. All of us want God to forgive us—and let there be no doubt that God is able and willing to do so—however, that forgiveness is conditional, not automatic.

Verse 13

“And lead us not into temptation.”

We are asking God to keep us from falling prey to the temptations of this world that we in our sinful weakness cannot resist by ourselves. **“But deliver us from evil.”** God can break the grip that sin and temptation have over our lives. God can protect us regardless of the situations we face that put our lives at risk. There are battles we cannot fight by ourselves, and there are foes that we cannot face alone. But the God we serve invites us to turn to Him in times when we feel overwhelmed and out-matched, and He will be our strength.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.” God’s kingdom will last forever. His reign and rule in the hearts of people all over the world will never end. The power of great military forces or giant industrial or technological corporations will inevitably wane, but the word of the Lord will stand forever. **“Amen.”** *Amen* is a Hebrew word. It’s a corroborative witness, an affirmative testimony, a supportive confirmation. It means, “So let it be.” It means, “I know it’s true.” It means, “God is dependable.” God’s word is reliable. God’s truth is unstoppable. God’s fire is unquenchable. So, let the church say amen. God has spoken so, let the church say amen.



Lord, Teach us how to pray

.....

“When I talk about prayer, **I’m not talking about going through the motions, repeating words, or stringing together a lot of prayer clichés...** I’m talking about praying with your whole heart—open, transparent, and pure before God.”



.....

by Reverend Raymond Bowman

God's Grace THROUGH GRIEF

by TIFINI P. WILLAMS

Only God knew the beautiful creation that would result from mixing my DNA with my husband's, along with our dissimilar upbringings. Immediately after we saw our son Tyson for the first time, God's splendor was clear. Everything about Tyson—his entrance into the world, his life, and his person—was worthy of the big screen. For example, my first contraction began during a come-from-behind football victory at Purdue University against the University of Michigan. Being inexperienced in childbirth, I hadn't realized that I was in labor until our doula heard me groaning over the phone.

The contractions leading up to Tyson's arrival were filled with activity. I kept myself busy by packing for my hospital stay and watching a television newsmagazine story about the man who was to become our country's first African American president. A few hours after reaching the hospital, Tyson was born—epidural-free, simultaneous to the ending of daylight savings time. His complicated entry into the world served as a foreshadowing of the God-given strength that our family has needed since then to cope with life's complexities.

Tyson fell sick the day after Halloween in 2012. At the time, I thought he had food poisoning from a Halloween party or a stomach virus, and I'd planned for him to heal in time for his birthday party the following day. I took him to the hospital before his party started, ignoring the fact that his classmates and their parents were to meet us at the party venue. He spent a week in the pediatric intensive care unit before he passed away and joined Jesus in heaven.

Tyson taught me so much during his life and after he

passed in November 2012. I thought grief and sadness would be the only result of his death, but blessings have come as well. Shortly after our tragic loss, God constantly reminded me of two important exercises of faith. First, "trust in the Lord with all [my] heart, and lean not on [my] own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5, NKJV). Second, "in every situation [I had to] . . . be thankful and continually give thanks to God" (1 Thessalonians 5:18, AMP).

As one can imagine, thankfully trusting God seemed nearly impossible. However, after committing to thankful trust in God, I started to discover the obvious blessings. I was able to acknowledge that God chose my husband, my son, and me to be Tyson's family for his short four years of life. It was, and is still, such an honor to be the ones God chose to love, know, and nurture him the most with his precious time on earth. That was where I started. After every guilty, negative, depressed feeling crept into my spirit, every day I'd remind myself of that.

In the midst of grief was our other son, who was not quite a year old when Tyson passed. My younger son's mere existence was such a blessing to me. He protected me from life's monotony and seemingly endless sadness with his joy. Nurturing him led me to the strength that I would need to survive the sadness. If I couldn't thankfully trust God for myself, I could do it for him. Daily, I thanked God for him. Mothering him kept me out of the bed; kept me out in the world, busy with errands and playdates; kept me healthy by exercising and eating nutritiously; kept me from sadness throughout the day, distracted from grief; and kept me from so many other things, for which I'm still thankful.

I never anticipated the blessings and goodness that God would send through community. With thankful trust in Him, I had help from support groups and Bible studies for grieving mothers, as well as church members, neighbors, and the parents of Tyson's friends. We received love and care from people all across the country as well. Unexpectedly, friendships evolved from hearing the stories of others in my grief groups; and some of my existing friendships were reinforced as my friends were able to identify with the pain that I was experiencing, as well as listen to me express my pain.

Such empathy in our communities helped me realize that I wasn't alone in grief. Others have hardships, whether they are grieving, depressed, abused, or addicted. I learned that others are hurting, too, not just me and my family. Thus, God led me to internalize overt compassion for others.

Another's strong exterior may be a façade, just as mine had been, so I began to expose my vulnerabilities. Rather than hide the fact that Tyson was here, with faithful trust I continue to tell people about him when I'm asked if our younger son is our only child. Encouragingly, in most instances the responses are heart-warming.

Thankful trust has deepened my bond with God as well. It was challenging losing Tyson. Involuntarily and painfully, we watched Tyson bear his illness from beginning to his end. I think about how unselfishly God intentionally sent His only Son to earth and proudly watched Jesus encompass all that we strive to be, knowing that He would observe Him suffering and dying violently for humanity. My husband and I would never intentionally send Tyson to endure his last days in the hospital as he did, but God intentionally sacrificed Jesus—our best reminder of the magnitude of God's deep love for us.

We read in Romans that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." I'm prayerful that our story of God's grace uplifting us through the grief of losing Tyson is a testimony. I pray that it works for good for those who love God, are growing to love God, and those who question God's love, especially during tumultuous times.

By no means has losing Tyson been easy. However, the blessing in grief is that God's omnipotent power and deep love can lead us from one morning to the next, with the pain lessening as the days pass. It's great to express compassion for people around us who may be experiencing pain from life's complex struggles. Such compassion is beneficial, but there is no love that is as unfathomably deep as the love that we receive from God. I'm certain that being rooted in God's love allowed me to thankfully trust Him and see the blessings through the pain. Whether I experience anger, guilt, fear, or depression from grief now or in the future, I know that God's love triumphs.

Praise God!



tifinipwilliams



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Photo of Tifini P. Williams taken by Abraham
"Iamhaym" Toms.

“...I wasn't alone”



FAITH IS EVERYTHING

BY RODNEY BALDWIN

It's 2019, and it is still rare to see young, African American men who are well-rounded, articulate, well-dressed, and on track with profitable careers. Why? Why are we still bound by systematics and statistics? Why is it still strange to see a black man wearing a tailored suit and eating at Morton's Steakhouse?

Being raised by a single mother helped form my life's perspectives. My mother's struggles taught me not to look for a handout, but simply a hand-up. She raised me to know Jesus and the power of His might. She taught me to handle my business, and I honor her for that.

I now work as a level-two account manager for a billion-dollar tech company, and I'm the owner

of Rodney Baldwin Solutions. I did all of this without finishing my degree because I had my first child at the age of 22 and a second child shortly after. I was raised without my father, so I know how it feels to be a fatherless child. I promised myself that I would not repeat the traumatic experience I encountered as a child. So after my children were born, I pursued legal joint custody. I have my children with me weekly because I don't like the idea of having just visitation rights.

A lot of people wonder how I do it and why I do it. My answer is simple: It's because of God's grace, mercy, and unwavering love for me. Several people told me that life would slow down after I had children. I disagree! Actually, my life sped up, and I made twice as much income as I had made before I had my children. That's God, not me!

My faith in God has been everything to me. In other words, I can have faith in what God said, but the faith of God is when I say what He said. When I say what God said, it's going to happen. Numbers 23:19 says, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" I have always decreed better in the face of worse! I am crazy enough to believe God for my "next" in my "now"!

I am not where I am because of a degree, because my family was rich, or because someone gave it to me. I am where I am because God loves me, and He continues to look beyond my faults and exceed my needs. I'd like to encourage every young person in their faith and their walk with the Lord. If God can favor this country-boy from Lumberton, North Carolina, who only had faith and hope, He can do it for you! Make Him your center, and make Him you're all in all. That's all He wants!



Photo of Rodney Baldwin taken by Anthony Beasley.

THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE

Salvation is a gift that is made available to anyone, but first we must repent and believe and confess that Jesus is Lord and that He died and rose from the dead (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9-10). This gift is not earned through good deeds or even by being a good person (Ephesians 2:8; 1 Timothy 1:9). It is a matter of faith. Faith is acting out on what you believe according to God's Word concerning salvation.

Salvation comes from the Greek word *soteria*, which means "deliverance, preservation, and safety." It primarily involves deliverance from the bondage of sin (Romans 9:20-23; Galatians 5:1). Salvation also includes deliverance from enemies (Luke 1:71) and sickness and disease (Isaiah 53:4, The Amplified Bible; Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24).

The following steps will help you obtain and maintain the salvation experience. It involves a process that will not only guarantee you entrance to heaven, but it will also position you to experience the benefits of heaven on earth.

5 Steps to Salvation

1. **Recognize and admit that you are a sinner (Romans 5:12-14).** Because of Adam's sin of disobedience in the garden of Eden, all of humanity was affected by and infected with sin. Mankind took on the nature of sin. Therefore, everyone who was born after Adam was born into a life of sin and death (Psalm 51:5).
2. **Repent of your sins (1 John 1:9).** To repent simply means to "change one's mind; to change one's direction: to have a change of heart." It involves making a 180-degree turn away from sin and heading in the right direction toward God. Repentance does not mean "I'm sorry." It is a quality decision to ask forgiveness of your sins, turning away from ungodly living and submitting to God's will for your life.

3. **Confess Jesus as Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9).** Confession affirms Jesus' lordship (place of authority) over your life. Confess that He is your Lord, and believe that He lived, died, and was raised from the dead for the forgiveness of your sins.
4. **Be baptized in water (Matthew 3:6).** Water baptism is a symbolic representation of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Just as He was baptized, so must you be baptized. You go down into the water, carrying your old man (lifestyle) with you, and die to yourself and your old way of living (Romans 6:3-11). When you come up out of the water, you are a "new" person. When you become born again, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in your heart to become your Teacher, Comforter, and Guide through life (John 14:15-17, 23, 26).
5. **Obey the Word of God (1 John 5:3).** Maintaining your salvation and enjoying its benefits is done by living according to God's Word (Proverbs 3:1-4; 1 John 5:3). Make His Word the final authority by which you live. Make sure every decision you make in life is biblically based. The Word must be your foundation.

Next Steps

1. **Build your faith.**
 - Attend worship services and Bible study.
 - Read the Word every day.
 - Pray without ceasing.
2. **Build your community.**
 - Become a member.
 - Join a small group.
 - Serve in ministry.
 - Attend Discipleship Institute.



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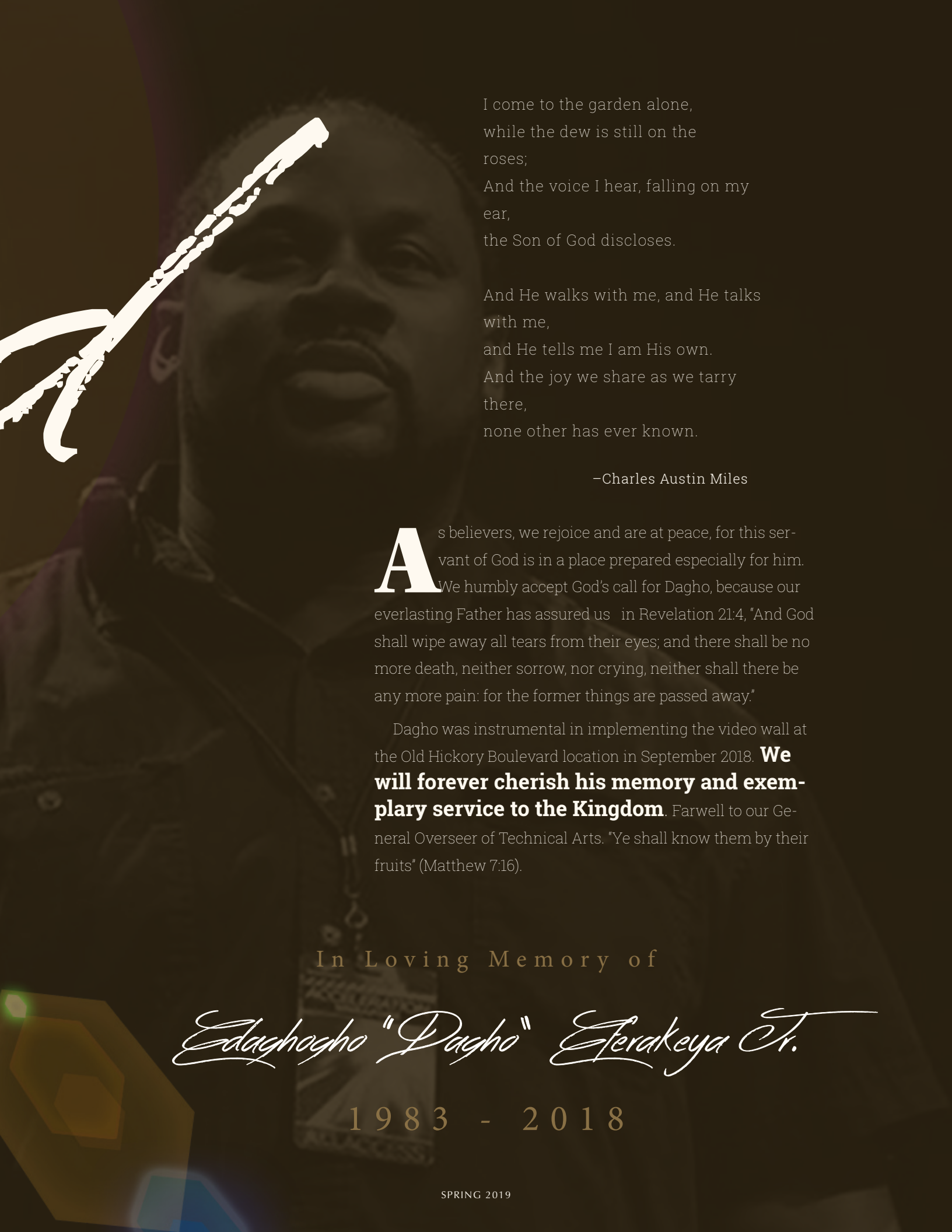


F R O M L A B O R T O

reward

REVELATION 21:4

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”



I come to the garden alone,
while the dew is still on the
roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my
ear,
the Son of God discloses.

And He walks with me, and He talks
with me,
and He tells me I am His own.
And the joy we share as we tarry
there,
none other has ever known.

—Charles Austin Miles

As believers, we rejoice and are at peace, for this servant of God is in a place prepared especially for him. We humbly accept God's call for Dagho, because our everlasting Father has assured us in Revelation 21:4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

Dagho was instrumental in implementing the video wall at the Old Hickory Boulevard location in September 2018. **We will forever cherish his memory and exemplary service to the Kingdom.** Farwell to our General Overseer of Technical Arts. "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16).

In Loving Memory of

Edaghoghho "Dagho" Eferakeya Jr.

1983 - 2018

THE JOURNEY BACK FROM TRAGEDY

LIFE AFTER THE DEATH OF A LEADER

A collective gasp suspended time during the Sunday service Bishop Walker announced the sudden death of Dagho, former overseer of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church Technical Arts Department. A treasured leader and the visionary behind the new visual upgrades to the sanctuary was now gone, leaving behind a stunned team now tasked with carrying out the mission of the ministry, which was, as Dagho put it, *spreading the mission of Jesus Christ*.

But as the Bible says in Psalm 137:4, "how can we sing a song of the Lord in a foreign land?" For the members of the technical arts team, the ministry without Dagho was unknown to them. "Dagho was a well-loved and well-liked individual who truly embodied the essence of leadership," remembers Elder Darryl Taliaferro, Interim General Overseer of the Technical Arts Department. "He trained everyone to be independent workers and encouraged them always to hone the gifts that God has given them even if he was not there." Despite his efforts to prepare the team, the silence of Dagho's voice was extremely loud.

But today, months after Dagho's death, multiple services, and thousands of hours of video footage, the technical team is expertly executing Dagho's vision for the ministry. Technically, church services are both visually and audibly stunning, magnifying the sights and sounds of saints worshipping the one true God in technicolor. "This is a resilient group. Despite the tragedy and loss they feel, the tech team has not missed a beat. If Dagho were here, he would be proud of his team, as I am," says Elder Taliaferro.

While serving as interim overseer, Elder Taliaferro's primary role has been to help facilitate healing and implement Dagho's vision. "Dagho was my brother. He was more than a colleague, more than a friend. He was a brother to me. During our many conversations, he shared with me his heart about the ministry and what he desired. So, in the months to come, I want to try and implement the things he didn't have the opportunity to do and to continue to encourage the team to live up to their potential."

"This is a resilient group..."

Elder Taliaferro also wants to ensure that the ministry has a broad volunteer base. "Dagho was adamant about training the next generation. Some leaders are very territorial and refuse to share their gifts with others in fear of being replaced, but Dagho was quite the opposite," says Elder Taliaferro. "He would voluntarily show anyone what he knew." The goal is to continue to spread that knowledge and expertise to the next generation of sound engineers and computer technicians so that they can take the baton and move it forward.

But above all else, the greatest need for the Mt. Zion Technical Arts Team is prayer. "My concern for the team is beyond what they do as it relates to their contribution to the ministry," says Elder Taliaferro. "My concern is for their personal spiritual and emotional well-being after such a great loss. Often we walk pass them, very dismissively. But we must remember that the members of the tech team are doing more than just controlling the cameras and the sound. Right now, they are individuals still struggling and trying to make sense of such a tremendous loss. Dagho's obituary is a constant companion in the pit. I ask that the church keep them lifted in prayer as they journey through the grieving process."

Kay and Ric, sound engineers, have been essential to the tech team's ability to support all eight services, not to mention the services and events that take place in between Sundays. "I am very proud of them. They have stepped up to the plate. When Dagho passed away, both immediately took on leadership roles and keep the teams at both locations focused. All team members stepped up, but Kay and Ric played a big role in encouraging everyone to do that."

If you would like to volunteer for the Mt. Zion Technical Arts Ministry, please contact: TechTeam@mtzionnashville.org



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Jacqueline Hayes, MBA is chief marketing strategist and principal of Crayons & Marketers, a full-service marketing communications company located in Nashville, TN. Under her leadership, Crayons & Marketers uses data-driven marketing strategies and expert execution to help organizations build marketing and media campaigns that support business growth. Crayons & Marketers is a certified woman-owned, minority, and disadvantaged business enterprise (WBE, MBE, DBE). For more information, please visit www.crayonsandmarketers.com. Follow her on Twitter: @JacquiHayesMBA.



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TUESDAYS
7AM CST

Periscope (follow @josephwalker3)

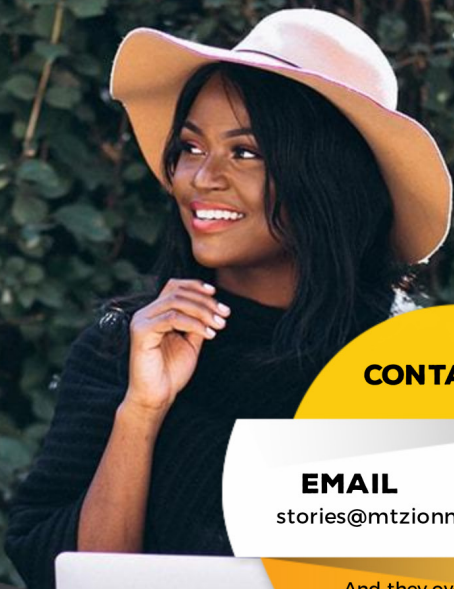
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Access codes | 601287, 621407, or 986713

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stories@mtzionnashville.org

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by the blood of the Lamb,
and by the word of their

TESTIMONY.

REVELATION

12:11

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Antioch location in the
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8:15AM:

OTH location in the Prek
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THE NETWORK MINISTRY REINTRODUCTION

We have all heard the cliché “Strength comes in numbers.” It’s true! When we use available tools as resources, we are relying on our network; and we are more well-rounded when we know we can rely on the network around us to help move us forward.

Mt. Zion is intentional about bringing people together to create a strong network, which is why the Network Ministry was put in place. This ministry exists to equip and empower aspiring and existing business owners by creating networking opportunities. It also provides the knowledge and the management skills needed to start or to grow to the next level of entrepreneurship. The ministry is spearheaded by Jacqueline Rowe, and she and her team has continued to develop new ways to better serve our congregation through events hosted by the Network Ministry.

The ministry has hosted events such as the Launching Pad Mixer, where aspiring and existing business owners came together to combine experience, impart knowledge in one another, and develop and create new ideas regarding entrepreneurship. According to Rowe, the Network Ministry is currently planning to host an EntreSchool.

“The EntreSchool will help guide entrepreneurs to the next level by equipping them with all the necessary tools and knowledge needed to gain advantage in our world of business,” says Rowe.

The EntreSchool will provide a track series of courses for business owners that will provide education on start-up businesses or taking existing businesses to the next level. After

completing the classes, business owners will be celebrated with a graduation ceremony.

The Network Ministry will also host the Second Annual Launching Pad Mixer. This is a wonderful time to be part of opportunities if you are seeking to start your own business or looking for new ways to grow your current business. Partnering with like minds can allow business owners to share experiences and ideas and help them become the entrepreneurs they have always envisioned.

Strength comes in numbers, and numbers create networks. Let Mt. Zion’s Network Ministry help you move forward to the next level. If you’re interested in connecting with the Network Ministry as a group member, mentor, or mentee, email thenetworkministry@mtzionnashville.org.

THE NETWORK MINISTRY COMMUNITY PAGE OF THE MT. ZION FACEBOOK PAGE COMING SOON!

by **Amy D. Simmons**



@TheVoiceofAmy

Photo of the Network Ministry, by
Melodye Jenkins.



THEATER ARTS MINISTRY

The Theater Arts Ministry (MTAM) had its explosive debut during Black History Month with a tribute to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King and Fannie Lou Hamer. MTAM, long a vision of Barry Scott, is focused on drawing people to Christ by staging professionally produced theatrical dramatizations.

Scott started his career as a theatre artist and is an actor, writer, director, and producer. He has also done voiceover work for HBO, ESPN, the Super Bowl, and the NBA finals. Since starting his career at the American Negro Playwright Theater, Scott has written and published 15 plays, and he believes that he is called to share his gifts in a way that spark difficult conversations surrounding topics that need a voice within the body of Christ.

MTAM seeks to bridge gaps between where we have been as a people and where we are now through dramatic expression of issues that impact our communities, such as police brutality, homelessness, domestic violence, gender identity, LGBTQ issues, black identity, the Black Lives Matter movement, and social and political racism.

Scott says, "Everyone has a story, but not everyone knows who to tell it to. Our story must be told, but we are not always sure how to go about it."

The vision is to focus on live and recorded performances at Mt. Zion, around the world, and in cyberspace as a powerful extension of praise and worship, bringing biblical manna and promoting a deeper understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. MTAM is aligned with the mission to evangelize the lost at any cost and strives to advance the great commission. The ministry hopes to empower people to reach their full potential through Christ and will offer theatrical workshops and programs aimed to build Kingdom skills and encourage an authentic relationship with God.

We look through the lens of history and look forward to the present at the things we see. But we must seek to view life through the lens of God, the lens of understanding, and the lens of love. Theater becomes the parable opportunity to walk out our desires to discover our purpose. The plan of action is already inside of us. When we tap into that, we tap into joy—no matter what crosses we have to bear.

People can participate in MTAM by attending the monthly workshops and training held every second Tuesday, starting in April.

Workshops will take place at the Old Hickory Boulevard and Antioch locations and will alternate monthly. All meetings will be on the church calendar.

Those who participate will vet themselves as stewards for on-stage and behind-the-scenes roles. MTAM will present three major productions throughout the year; and the ministry leadership hopes there will be a place for many in our congregation to weigh in through music, dance, acting, research, writing, and equipment specialties. All ages, including children and seniors, are encouraged to join. This is a place for everyone to come together, for the whole Kingdom to reflect on how we feel, and to be a mirror for Christ's message to come through.




by **Tiffany Davenport**

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🐦 **@tiffanysolves**

Photo of Tiffany Davenport taken by Austin Wright.

Photo credits: Dallas Albritton, De'mond Eason, and Barry Scott.



Judah Generation Youth Choir

by CaNesha Gordon

Judah Generation Youth Choir embraces three core values: discipline, pride in church and organization, and self-control. The current leaders are Steffenie Smith, coordinator; Jamar Esaw, overseer; and Deborah Chisom, advisor.

Judah Generation was relaunched in September 2018. "We took the summer off in 2018 to strategize/regroup and see where we wanted to take the choir. When we came back in September, we had about 100 kids. It has fluctuated since then. We are working tirelessly to keep the numbers up, work hard, and serve in excellence," said Steffanie Smith, choir coordinator.

Joining the choir is easy. If you're between the ages of 7-18, willing to work hard, and attend rehearsals, you can be part of Judah Generation. Currently, the choir only mi-

nisters at Mt. Zion, but Smith said the choir is looking for other places to minister.

Judah Generation has had some unique accomplishments. In 2012, they sang the National Anthem at a Tennessee State University game at Nissan Stadium. They have also recorded an album. But Smith said their most unique accomplishment is having so many faithful and consistent members, which is a big deal.

Kinate and Felecia Harris say that the choir has been a blessing for their children: Tamia, Timberly, and Josia.

"Both of our daughters started at age seven, and their younger brother was counting the days for him to be able to sing. He knew all his sisters' songs. Now he will have been in Judah for three years in April. It is a total ministry experience. They learn how to pray among their peers and share

ideas. I love Judah Generation, and I wish more parents would allow their kids to experience it."

Kesha Jones says, "Judah Generation means a lot to us because it has helped my family to bond closer together. My children enjoy fellowshiping with other children, ministering and learning the Word of God on their level. Judah Generation has played a major role in helping them move in the right direction with God."

The choir is looking for new members and parent volunteers. "We are excited about 2019 and all the awesome things God is going to do through them," says Smith.

To sign up your child or to volunteer, send an email to youthchoir@mtzionnashville.org.



Photo of Judah Generation Youth Choir taken by Rodney McKinnon.
Photo of CaNesha Gordon taken by Carmen Davis.

DIVORCE CARE

MT. ZION'S RESPONSE TO DIVORCE AND THE NEED FOR HEALING

by Ce'Dra Rogers



Divorce, the decision to end a marriage, has always been a looming and uneasy topic for many couples. According to *Time* magazine, since the 1980s, 50 percent of marriages in the United States have ended in divorce; but recent statistics show that divorce rates have slowed to 39 percent. Even though the percentages are declining, the effects of separation take a toll on the parties involved, including children.

The DivorceCare Ministry is a 13-week program that offers several layers of support for participants. Couples who are thinking of divorcing, are currently in the process, or have ended their marriage can sign up for sessions and classes that incorporate biblically based materials to help them deal with issues and emotions from a Christian point of view.

Dr. Jalila Hudson and Jessica Thomas started the ministry in 2017 due to the overwhelming need of members experiencing divorce or separation. She and Thomas Farmer are the facilitators for the DivorceCare sessions.

Hudson says that church members felt that there was a "hole in the ministry that we didn't have." She agrees that many marriages end in divorce and that it's not limited to couples outside the church. "It's happening in the church." The DivorceCare Ministry was born so that Mt. Zion could offer support and healing to its members who are experiencing separation and divorce.

According to Farmer, participants "go through a healing process where they share their story. They lean on each other through the journey." They form strong bonds that help them get through the process.

Hudson states that the goal of the ministry is to get participants to a point where they can see if their relationships are open to reconciliation. But the ministry also wants to help them heal so "they can better listen to God to find out what they need to do next."

Though many people going through divorce say they want to be healed, the ministry helps them discover if they're ready for healing. After going through the process, many find that they aren't ready. "They're still holding on to things, and they still need to cast blame on someone for why they're not moving forward," says Hudson.

DivorceCare also helps participants to obtain financial assistance and professional counseling by sharing community resources for those who need additional help and information, including counseling for children. Many of the participants now have a single income, and they're not sure how to navigate the world with a reduced income. They face the possibility of not being able to pay their bills or even homelessness.

DivorceCare will begin a new round of sessions in August, but it's not too early to sign up. If you are interested in attending the sessions, please email divorcecare@mtzionnashville.org, or register online at mtzionnashville.org.



.....
@cebo_____ (4 underscores)
cebojac@gmail.com

Photo of Ce'Dra Rogers taken by
Dr. Axe/Ancient Nutrition.

Congregational Care

Baptisms

Water baptism is an outward declaration of the decision to follow Jesus. It is offered once a month. Inquire at any of our services on how to be part of our next baptism ceremony. Children under 12 may be signed up for baptism by their parents via JUMPSTART classes. All JUMPSTART classes begin at 9:30 AM. Registration for JUMPSTART is available on the Mt. Zion App or at www.mtzionnashville.org/jumpstart.

Baby Dedications

Mt. Zion provides baby dedications once a month. If you are interested in having your child dedicated to the Lord, please register on the Mt. Zion App or online at www.mtzionnashville.org/babydedications, or contact us directly at (615) 254-7296.

Weddings

Mt. Zion Baptist Church is delighted to provide the facilities for your wedding. For information, please contact the Wedding Ministry (615) 254-7296, Ext. 1222. You may also email us at weddings@mtzionnashville.org.

Premarital Counseling

The Covenant Marriage Ministry offers free, eight-week premarital counseling courses throughout the year. Engaged and seriously dating couples are encouraged to attend these group counseling sessions.

April 30–June 18 (OHB Location)

July 9–August 27 (Antioch Location)

September 17–November 5 (OHB Location)

Classes convene on Tuesdays from 6:30–8:30 PM. Registration is available on the Mt. Zion App or at www.mtzionnashville.org/premarital.

Funerals

One of the mandates of being a child of God is being prepared for the unexpected. As Christians, it is important for us to hold fast to our faith during difficult times and know that the Word of God holds true. In the event of the death of a loved one, please call the church office at (615) 254-7296, Ext. 5.

Flock Leaders

Flock leaders consists of deacons, deaconesses, and elders who serve the growing membership by providing ministry to each family and member, which includes hospital visitation, bereavement support, baby dedications, and house blessings. Members may contact their flock simply by calling the church office at (615) 254-7296, Tuesday through Friday, between 9 AM–6 PM.



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@ydholt2012



Food Pantry Refill Campaign

by Yvonne Holt

Imagine waking up in the middle of the night, not by a crying baby or a loud noise outside, but by the growling of your stomach because you've gone several days without eating. You weren't fasting. You simply had no food to eat. According to Feeding America, in Tennessee alone, 967,430 people are struggling with hunger. Out of that number, 295,570 are children.

The mission of the Food Pantry Refill Campaign is to contribute to the overall wellness of the Mt. Zion family and our community, by providing free supplemental food for families in need of assistance.

Shannon Fitzpatrick is the overseer for the food pantry and shares with us that all three Mt. Zion locations (Old Hickory Boulevard, Antioch, and Jefferson Street) service our community. All locations are open Tuesday through Friday from 9 AM until 6 PM, except holidays and when the administrative offices are closed. Anyone needing assistance outside of these hours is directed to nearby agencies that can further assist.

Fitzpatrick says, "The first immediate need for the food pantry is consistent and dedicated volunteers." If you or someone you know can donate up to two hours of your time each week, email foodpantry@mtzionnashville.org with your availability and contact information. Once received, Fitzpatrick will contact you to discuss how you can play an intricate role with the food pantry.

Mt. Zion is urging all members, as well as members of our community, to be part of our Food Pantry Refill Campaign. This campaign will aid many in our church family and our community.

Fitzpatrick says that one of the most frequently asked questions about the food pantry is, "What is the criteria that allows families to receive food?" Anyone can receive food from the pantry by completing a short form (which is good for one year), presenting a valid form of ID, and being a Davidson County resident.

You can receive food from the pantry once a month. If for any reason you or someone you know needs help beyond the once-a-month assistance, there are other agencies that can help.

Listen for announcements on where to bring your nonperishable items. Some of the most desired items include, but are not limited to, the following: canned fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, canned tuna and chicken, dry pasta, boxed macaroni and cheese, and canned soups.

Food Pantry Ministry volunteers (L-R) Courtney Gray, Shannon Fitzpatrick, Karen Washington.

Photo of the Food Pantry Ministry volunteers taken by Eric Jackson.



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#MTZGIVES



Mt. Zion welcomes outreach coordinators Cassandra Gray and Corey Gray to the newly created Mt. Zion Gives (#MTZGIVES) Community Outreach Ministry! The coordinators have begun laying out plans for two new initiatives: the Easter Children's Clothing Drive and the Adopt-an-Agency Project.

Easter Children's Clothing Drive

This initiative is an assistance program for families needing help providing clothing to their children (up to age 12) at Easter. Families were identified through a combination of community and in-house sources, and congregants were invited to register to sponsor the children. The clothing drive received an overwhelming response. All donations were distributed to parents and the happy children during a special event held at the Antioch location on April 18, 2019.

Adopt-an-Agency Project

Ministries were recently challenged to select an area nonprofit agency with which to partner throughout the year. Through each partnership, ministries will coordinate quarterly/biannual service projects in an effort to provide greater outreach to the local community and to offer support to Mt. Zion's in-reach ministries, such as the Food Pantry, Room in the Inn, Meals on Wheels, and the Lord's Kitchen.

For more information, email communityoutreach@mtzionnashville.org.

"Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us."
(Psalm 90:17, ESV)

JOIN THE MT. ZION

Facebook Community Group

Step 1

Log in to your Facebook page, search for Mt. Zion Baptist Church, and "LIKE" the page.

Step 2

After liking the page, find the MTZ Community Group "JOIN" button, and click "JOIN."

Step 3

Once in the group, check notifications for group activity, and feel free to post and engage with the group.







THE MT. ZION FAMILY IS ALL IN

The Mt. Zion Baptist Church is a Word-centered ministry designed to evangelize the lost at any cost, equip and empower the people of God, and provide holistic ministry to our community as well as to the world. Seeking to minister to the total person, we are a multiethnic, multicultural ministry, impacting the world in which we live with the uncompromising message of Jesus Christ. Committed to the spirit of excellence, we are striving to become an oasis of hope within the Nashville community by promoting and providing education, awareness, and financial independence. We believe that God must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. We embrace freedom in worship because the Word says, "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Our foundation is the Word of God, and we believe It in Its entirety. We believe we can do what It says we can do, be who It says we can be, and have what It says we can have.



MINISTRIES

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Community Outreach
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Covenant Matters Marriage Ministry
Daughters of the Promise Women's Ministry
Daughters of the Promise Women's Choir
Deaf
DivorceCare
Evangelism
Financial Peace University
Finance
Food Pantry
Foreign Missions
GriefShare
Guest Services
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Intake
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Judah Generation Youth Dance
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Momentum Men's Ministry
Momentum Men's Choir
Business Network
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Nursery
Pace Matrons Senior Missions
Parking
Political and Social Action Leadership Ministry (P.S.A.L.M.)
Praise and Worship Dance
Prayer
Prison
Project Purpose College Program
Room in the Inn
Sanctuary Choir
Saving Our Daughters Mentoring
Saving Our Sons Mentoring
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Single Parent
Singles
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Technical Arts
The Lord's Kitchen
The Xperience High School Ministry
Theater Arts
Training Ground Middle School Ministry
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Widows and Widowers
Young Adult
Young Adult and College Choir

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kingdomkidscm@mtzionnashville.org
pacematron@mtzionnashville.org
dtaliaferro@mtzionnashville.org
socialaction@mtzionnashville.org
dance@mtzionnashville.org
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widowed@mtzionnashville.org
youngadultministry@mtzionnashville.org
yacchoir@mtzionnashville.org

Rich & Renita Garrett Know Real Estate



With over 35 years of real estate experience, Rich and Renita are ready to assist you in selling your current home, purchasing a new home, or building your dream home. Clarksville has been their home since 1992, and Mt. Zion has been their church home since 2007. These two army veterans are experienced in military relocation and Rich is licensed to practice in Tennessee as well as Kentucky.

"We are making a difference one household at a time."



Richard Garrett, Broker, ABR, CRS

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MY MT ZION

AN UPDATE ON MT. ZION'S NEW MEMBERSHIP DATABASE SYSTEM

Did you know that Mt. Zion offers a vast variety of ministries to fulfill the mission of becoming an oasis of hope? It takes commitment to keep these ministries active, so we need your help. If you are a member of Mt. Zion, we encourage you to commit to serve in ministry. There are hundreds of lives you can touch by simply volunteering in ministry. With ministry groups ranging from

- the café to Christian education
- mime to missions
- food pantry to mental health
- fitness to financial peace
- social action to senior saints

With so much variety, you are sure to find a group that fits you.

Are you all in?

Here's how to find a ministry to join.

1. Go to www.mtzionnashville.org or the Mt. Zion app, and select "My Mt. Zion."
2. Ministries are titled as groups in this program, so select "Group Finder" under "Church Life."
3. Use any of the filters under "Find a Group" that most interests you.
4. Here you can sign up for a ministry group or simply get more information.
5. A group representative will contact you to help answer your questions, connect you to serving opportunities, and commit you to a ministry!

Giving Channels

There are several ways to sow seed!

1. Membership Portal – Make a one-time or a recurring donation by logging in to the membership portal at <https://my.mtzionnashville.org/portal>.
2. Mt. Zion App – Look for the GIVE button on the CONNECT tab on the Mt. Zion app.
3. Text-to-Give – Text a keyword and amount to 267-689-7333 (267-MTZ-SEED). (*See below for specific steps.)
4. Atrium Kiosk – Kiosks are available in the atriums at the Old Hickory Boulevard and Antioch locations.
5. Offering Envelope – Give by check or cash during worship services.
6. Mail-In – Digital giving is secure, but mail works, too.

Text-to-Give Steps

1. Open a new text message.
2. In the "To" field, type 267-689-7333 (267-MTZ-SEED).
3. In the message area, type a keyword along with your desired giving amount. For example, to tithe \$20, type *tithe\$20*. Available giving keywords are *tithe*, *offering*, *vision*, *tv partner*, *other*. Note: The first time a person sends a text message for giving, he or she will receive back a reply text asking the person to create an account. This is to ensure accuracy of the giving history.

For questions, please visit www.mtzionnashville.org/give, or call the church at 615-254-7296.

Mental Health Resources in Nashville and Middle Tennessee

Immediate Crisis Assistance

1. For a life-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1, or visit nearest emergency room.
2. For a mental health emergency, call TN Statewide Crisis Line at 1-855-CRISIS1 (1-855-274-7471).
3. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)
4. If you prefer to text with a trained counselor about any type of crisis, text "HOME" to the Crisis Text Line at 741741 counselor.

Counseling and Psychiatric Services

1. Contact your primary care provider for a referral.
2. Call the customer care/resource line listed on the back of your insurance card.
3. Does your employer offer an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)? You may be eligible to receive free individual and family sessions.
4. Contact a counselor at your school or your child's school.
5. If you are a college student, contact your student health center or college counseling center.

6. Explore websites to find a therapist who might be a good fit for you and your family:

- www.psychologytoday.com/us
- www.goodtherapy.org/
- www.nashvillepsychotherapyinstitute.org/directory

Counseling and Psychiatric Services

(uninsured or limited financial resources)

1. Centerstone (multiple locations): 1-888-291-HELP (1-888-291-4357)
2. Mental Health Cooperative (multiple locations): 615-743-1555 or 1-866-816-0433
3. Meharry Medical College, Elam Mental Health Center: 615-327-6495 (www.mmc.edu/patient-care/school-of-medicine/locations/elamcenter.html)
4. Open Path Psychotherapy Collective: openpath-collective.org

For further questions or assistance locating mental health resources, contact the Mt. Zion Mental Health Ministry at mentalhealth@mtzionnashville.org.



"I am not going to stand up
to show pride in a flag for a
country that **oppresses black
people and people of color.**"

COLIN Kaepernick



BLACK HISTORY ESSAYS

Honorable Mention: Sunti'a Allison • Honorable Mention: Anniyah Collier • Honorable Mention: Lorenzo Hawkins IV • Honorable Mention: Madisyn Hughes • 3rd Place: Ciniya Waters | 2nd Place: Larenz Hawkins

FREE TO TAKE A KNEE

by DIONNE MITCHELL • 1ST PLACE

I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color." This is a quote from former NFL quarterback athlete Colin Kaepernick explaining his reason for not standing but going down on one knee during the national anthem. Kaepernick, who last played for the San Francisco 49ers back in 2016, chose to take a knee while most of the other players stood. It was a brave move, regardless of whether you agree or disagree with his action. I believe that Kaepernick has the right to peaceful protests and he should be allowed to play in the NFL. The First Amendment and the Eighth Amendment both support Kaepernick's action and my position.

The First Amendment states that he has the "freedom of religion, speech, and press." This means that Congress is not allowed to make a law prohibiting anything around those things listed. Kaepernick has the right to say what's on his mind or how he feels about something without being punished for it. Next, the Eighth Amendment says "excessive bail, fines, and punishments are forbidden." This means that people do not have to pay for an unusual or cruel crime as a punishment, such as what Kaepernick is doing.

Our current President stated that the "NFL players who kneel during the national anthem should be fined, maybe even deported." He also believes that it is "disgraceful." I would really like to know what part of voicing your opinion and standing up for something or taking a knee for something is being disgraceful.

Finally, the words in the national anthem support the point about what we say and believe about what type of country we live in. At the end of the national anthem, the words say, "O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave." Maybe Kaepernick doesn't feel he wants to show pride in the flag because he doesn't feel free or brave in

this home we call America. "On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep, where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes, what is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep, as it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?" That is another verse from "The Star-Spangled Banner," and what most people don't know is that there are three other verses to it that are never sung.

And if we are saying that not standing for the flag or "The Star-Spangled Banner" is disrespectful, what about not even singing the whole song. What would that be called then? In my opinion and in the opinion of a lot of others who have spoken publicly about this, Kaepernick did nothing wrong. For example, athletes Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf and Carlos Delgado refuse to participate during patriotic American songs. Abdul-Rauf was suspended for one game by the NBA in 1996 for not standing during the national anthem for his Islamist beliefs, so this is not the first time an athlete has been suspended or penalized for taking a stance. In Abdul-Rauf's case, it was religion. He then later agreed to pray in silence during the song. Delgado would leave the field in 2004 during "God Bless America" in protest of the war in Iraq.

In conclusion, Kaepernick has the right to a non-violent protest and should be allowed to play in the NFL again because he simply did nothing wrong, and the law says he has a right to express his opinion. Some might disagree, but until they tell me how he is wrong for standing up and setting an example for others, I will agree with him. Kaepernick once said, "I have great respect for people's right to believe what they want to believe. And I don't think anybody should be prosecuted or judged based on what their beliefs are." If Kaepernick accepted the fact that others have different ways of thinking and that not everyone will agree with him, then why can't he have the same acceptance? I stand with Colin Kaepernick! He is free to take a knee.



From left to right:
Ciniya Waters (2nd place), Dionne Mitchell (1st Place),
Larenz Hawkins (3rd place), Honorable Mention: Lorenzo Hawkins IV

PSALM.

Political and Social Action Leadership Ministry

Raising awareness. Empowering citizens. Making a difference.



In 2017, a community court records expungement clinic was held at the Mt. Zion Antioch location. Almost 200 local citizens had \$351,000 in fines, fees, and court costs waived; and 1,309 records were expunged. This life-changing initiative was led by PSALM, the Political and Social Action Leadership Ministry at Mt. Zion, in collaboration with the Davidson County General Session Court Division VIII. As Nashville rapidly changes, PSALM is positioning its ministry to make an even greater impact with those who need its services.

Created in December 2009, PSALM aims to educate local citizens on laws, policy changes, social justice concerns, and other related issues that impact the community. This ministry also helps people advocate within their spheres of influence. The new leadership team is composed of five individuals who serve our city in various capacities:

- Ashford Hughes, chief diversity and inclusion officer for Mayor David Briley

- James Davis, attorney and president and CEO of JaPaul Publishing, Inc.
- Dan Clemmons, retired employee of Ford Motor Company and retired member of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Union
- Odessa Kelly, chair of Nashville Organized for Action and Hope (NOAH) and co-chair for Stand Up Nashville
- Candis White, communications coordinator for the Metro Nashville Public Defender's Office

These leaders bring different perspectives from their professional backgrounds, and all are heavily involved in the community.

From town hall meetings to voter registration/restoration drives and community education sessions on topics such as gerrymandering, PSALM has consistently been a source of information. So far in 2019, PSALM has a candida-

te forum underway for the upcoming mayoral election in Nashville and will launch new platforms that provide real-time information. They also want to increase interaction with people in the community to answer questions and to obtain suggestions for future events.

"We are always looking to hear from the congregation and the community as to what would be helpful," Candis White says. "We want to make sure we are plugging in with people, and we want to make sure that we're staying relevant to meet their needs."

All are welcomed to join the ministry, regardless of your knowledge about politics or social justice. As this ministry works diligently to keep their fingers on Nashville's political pulse, they also encourage everyone to join their email list at socialaction@mtzionnashville.org for notifications about upcoming events and community news.



by **LATRESA WITHERSPOON**

@lwitherspoon

Photo of Latresa Witherspoon
taken by Darren B. Rankins.

Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success in school and in life. When you make school attendance a priority, you help your child get better grades, develop healthy life habits, avoid dangerous behavior, and have a better chance of graduating from high school.

When students are absent for fewer days, their grades and reading skills often improve, even among those students who are struggling. Students who attend school regularly also feel more connected to their community, develop important social skills and friendships, and are significantly more likely to graduate from high school, setting them up for a strong future.

But when children miss an average of just two days of school per month, even for excused absences, their absences can have a negative impact and can affect kids as early as kindergarten.

For example, young elementary school students who miss an average of two school days per month often have difficulty keeping up with their peers academically and tend to fall behind in reading. But when students are able to read on grade level by the end of third grade,

GET SCHOOLED

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS

which is when kids transition from learning to read to reading to learn, they are **three to four** times more likely to graduate high school and attend college, post-graduate, or professional development classes than their peers who struggle with reading.

As a parent, you can prepare your child for a lifetime of success by making regular school attendance a priority.

Source: <http://absencesaddup.org/importance-of-school-attendance/>



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IS A

LIFESTYLE

by PAULA M. FARMER, HR CONSULTANT | EXECUTIVE COACH | SPEAKER

Diversity and Inclusivity, also known as D&I, is a head-turner. Depending on who's in the room, it's almost always a hot-button issue. It pauses conversations, raises brows, and may even make some people uncomfortable.

God created us in His image, but we are all different externally and internally. For this reason and countless others, it is imperative for us to appreciate and appropriately manage our relationships. I've gained an appreciation for differences because oftentimes it is those differences that cement the strongest relationships.

Align D&I to Business Goals

According to a 2015 study conducted by McKinsey & Company, research shows that the more diverse a leadership team is, the greater chance productivity and profits will increase. Their research encompassed over 1,000 companies spread across 12 countries.

The success of D&I initiatives is directly related to individual beliefs and values. The true passing of the D&I test lies within the heart of those who internalize it as a core value. The corporate arena is where it seems to land, however, it's not a corporate thing; neither is it a church thing. It is a human thing that becomes a lifeline for your business. After all, humans run the business.

Once personal and organization-wide values are established, the next step is to align those values to business goals. Incorporate a D&I initiative as one goal.

Here are a few questions to help you and your team begin the process of thinking through this critical goal:

- To whom are we targeting our products and/or services?
- How do our policies and protocols support our customers, clients, constituents, or congregants?
- Does our board effectively represent the population we serve or the people we

want to attract?

- Why should we do this, and how can we ensure it doesn't become a cliché?

Train Up a Child

Children are like sponges. They absorb information quickly, good and bad. Every child has the capacity to learn, and parents should consider teaching their children about diversity and inclusivity so that when they are around others, especially other children, they will be prepared to express themselves in a way that honors them and their heritage.

Here are some tips to help teach D&I to school children.

Tip #1: Show genuine interest, enthusiasm, and support whenever your children share something about themselves, their values, or their culture. Respond in a positive way.

Tip #2: Address the fact that sometimes people treat others badly or differently because of their looks, the color of their skin, their cultural beliefs, or their socioeconomic status. Having open and honest conversations will reduce the likelihood that your children will adopt biased, stereotypical viewpoints.

Tip #3: Children are watching how you respond to diversity. Consistency is the key. Being supportive and empathetic will model true diversity, inclusivity, and leadership.

The Benefits

We are made in the image of God. What a blessing! And because of that, we can navigate through this life knowing that "the blessing of the Lord makes rich, and he adds no sorrow with it" (Proverbs 10:22, ESV). If that is the case, we can acknowledge and celebrate the benefits of diversity. Some of the benefits include, but are not limited to, a variety of viewpoints, experiences, backgrounds, and interests to the table. Diversity also brings with it creativity and uniqueness.

The current United States Congress is a great example. There is a record number of women in Congress. There are also a number of ethni-

cities represented. And no matter what the subject matter is in their order of business, there is a great chance the outcome will be more inclusive based on the population. But diversity without inclusion can create large gaps.

Diversity and Inclusivity is a process and a way of life. It's not a program or a box to be checked off. It's about people.

References

ted.com
forbes.com
blog.brookespublishing.com

.....
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Photo of Paula Farmer taken by Nora Canfield.



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to join our new Facility Staging
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major events. Applications should be
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ule, and demonstrate an ability to adapt
to all staging requests.

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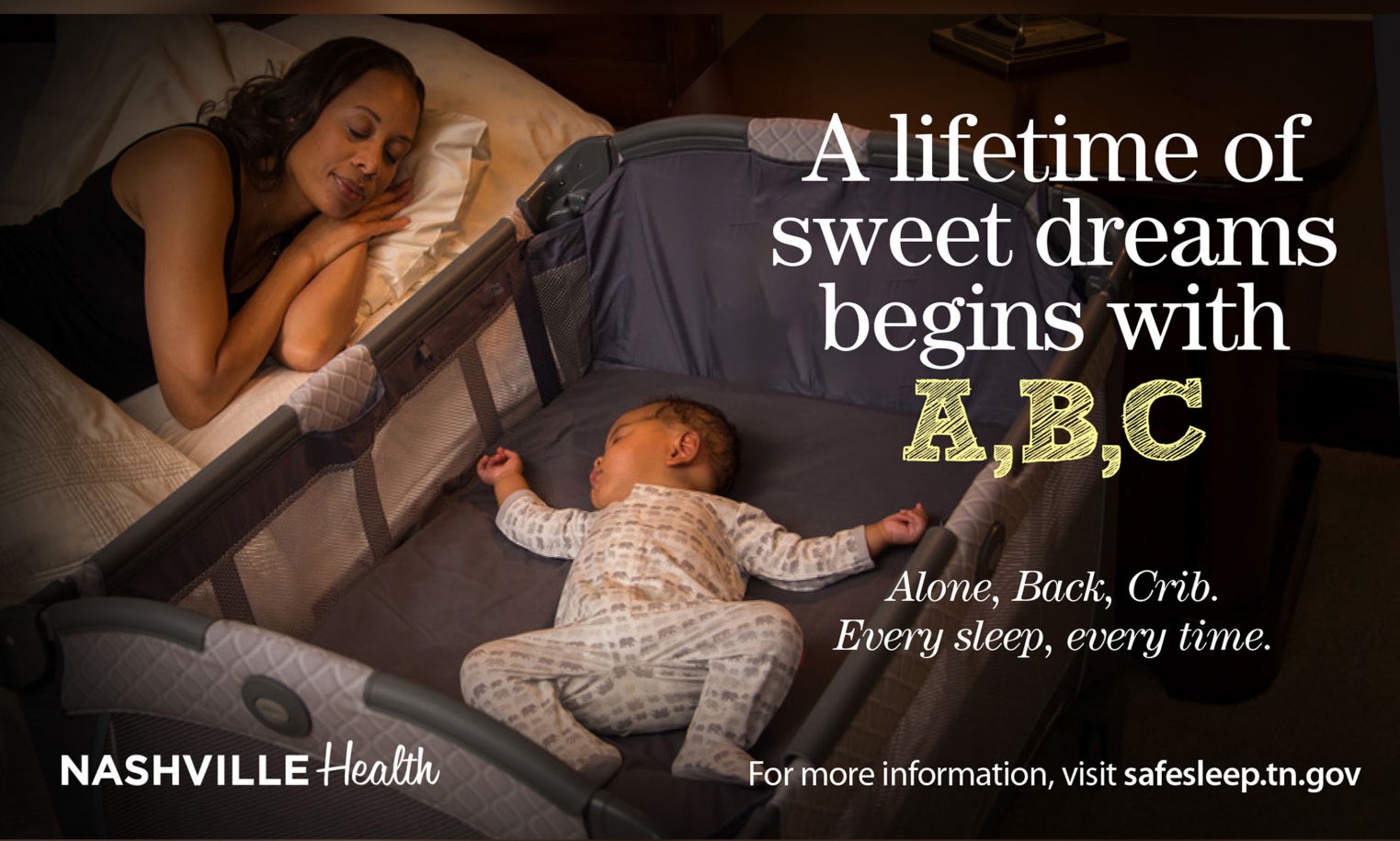
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ANTIOCH

7PM
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INTERNATIONAL

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Itinerary

Wednesday, July 3

ChurchFIT and KidzFIT Exercise Classes

Doors open at 5 AM

6 AM – 7:30 AM

Gaylord Opryland Tennessee Ballroom

(attire: fitness gear with favorite church t-shirt)

Culinary and Nutrition Class Schedule

May 19, 2019 (Old Hickory Boulevard)

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Name: Benefits of Juicing

Demo: Juicing of Various Fresh Foods

August 2019 (Antioch)

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Name: Cooking With Kids

Demo: Kid-Friendly Meals and Snacks

Exercise Class Schedule at Mt. Zion



WELCOME TO

2019

CHURCHFIT

MIND 

BODY 

SPIRIT 

ANTIOCH LOCATION

TUES.	6:30PM – 7:30PM	PILATES
WED.	6:30PM – 7:30PM	CARDIO BLAST
FRI.	9:00AM – 10:00AM	YOGA
SAT.	9:00AM – 10:00AM	HIGH INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING (HIIT)

#COMMIT2FIT #CHURCHFIT19 **SWIPE LEFT**



WELCOME TO

2019

CHURCHFIT

MIND 

BODY 

SPIRIT 

OHB LOCATION

MON.	6:30PM – 7:30PM	YOGA
TUES.	6:30PM – 7:30PM	CARDIO
WED.	6:00PM – 6:50PM	BOXING
THURS.	6:30PM – 7:30PM	ZUMBA
SAT.	9:00AM – 10:00AM	HIP-HOP FUSION

SWIPE RIGHT #COMMIT2FIT #CHURCHFIT19



Photos of ChurchFIT classes taken by Rodney McKinnon.

CHURCH FIT CHALLENGE TRAINERS



Ayesha Keller, Dance Blast

"I teach a pretty high-impact cardio workout. It is a fun way to burn calories. You are thinking about the moves and the beat, so it takes the edges off working out. This class is for anyone who can move. My class consists of fun and sweat! The hour goes by quickly because you are having a great time. Most people, including me, simply struggle to lose weight and keep it off. I love encouraging people in any area of life. It is part of who I am. When I help people to be successful, it is one of the best feelings in the world."

ayeshakerller.msw@gmail.com



Tramaine Cook, Fitness Boxing

"My classes are high-impact and low-impact, depending on who is participating. I've been instructing for quite some time now, so I can pick up on what type of group I have during warm-up. Participants can expect an intense class where they will actually learn real boxing techniques that can be modified for any age population to partake in. What excites me the most is when my clients reach goals that they never thought they could reach. I hear clients say, 'I feel like I can take on the world,' 'You have saved my life,' and 'Boxing is the highlight of my day!' Those are things that motivate me to always bring the best quality work when I step on the stage."

tikifitness@gmail.com



Kempson Onadeko, High-Impact Interval Training

"My class consists of a high-energy environment with a family-friendly competitive spirit. They also expect to feel a sense of value and empowerment. I get excited when I see people go through their changes and strive for 100 percent effort in life. As a fitness instructor, I envision myself serving as a catalyst to bring the best energy out of people. Some of the things I hear my clients say: 'Whew, that was tough. You are crazy! That was no joke, and your class was amazing!' "

kempson@yahoo.com



Jennifer Yokley, Hip-Hop Fusion

"My class is a full-body workout that consists of cardio, weights, body resistance, and agility to accomplish a desired regiment. It is performed to the upbeat tempo of hip-hop music. Although my class is considered high-impact, it is for all levels. One of the things that excites me most when helping people live their best healthy life is when I see my students hit milestones and reach their goals. It's a celebration for me as if it were my own. Some of the things I hear my clients say: 'Jennifer, you really rock. Awesome class! That energy carried me through the day!' "

j.yokley65@gmail.com



Kestiny K. Glover-Cooksey, Zumba Basic

"Zumba Basic is considered the entry-level class for Zumba day-fitness. This party is designed for everybody! I like to refer to my clients as my Zumba family. They can expect to reach whatever goals they have set for themselves, so it's not limited to weight loss. Some participant goals are controlling blood pressure and having an outlet to reduce stress. Zumba Basic is the home for those who want a healthy, loving, and judgment-free dance-fitness environment. My slogan is, Ditch the workout, and let's dance!"

kglover@mtzionnashville.org



Shanta Batchelor, Cardio Boot Camp

"People can expect to have fun while getting in shape. My class is total-body interval training that combines cardio and weights. Participants encourage one another. What I love about my class is that it accommodates any fitness level. If you're looking to challenge yourself, you can do the high-impact version of the exercises. But if you're not quite there yet, you can keep it low-impact with the modified version of the exercises. What excites me most about helping people live their best life is that I can be part of their fitness journey while motivating and pushing them toward their goals."

sbmarathonfit@aol.com



Kim Watson, Yoga and Pilates

"The participants who take my class can expect better flexibility (range of motion) and decreased stiffness. They will also get stronger overall, and enjoy decreased back pain. I love being able to create safe, non-repetitive, and competitive classes. Some of the things that I hear from my clients are how their clothing are fitting looser and how they are sleeping better. My favorite stories are when they are shocked when they step on a scale after I mention weight loss that they have not noticed yet."

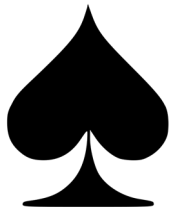
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How many ACE's

How Childhood Experiences Can Stack the Deck Against Your Health as an Adult

by **DR. VANESSA ELLIOTT BELL**



health predictor.

ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) include different types of physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction (for example, violence, substance misuse, mental illness, parental separation or divorce, and incarceration).¹

The original ACE study, which began over 20 years ago and included over 17,000 participants, demonstrated that adverse childhood experiences were quite common, with half of the participants reporting at least one ACE, and one fourth of the participants reporting two or more ACEs.² Additionally, the researchers found that as the number of ACEs increased, so did the risk for a number of chronic health conditions, including heart, lung, and liver diseases; cancer; and obesity. There was also an increased risk for smoking, alcoholism, depression, and suicide attempts.

Reflecting on ACEs in a health context can be a powerful starting point in finally getting to the root of unhealthy coping strategies that contribute to poor health outcomes. There are highly effective interventions available for working through the residual effects of ACEs that linger into adulthood. A person may be experiencing post-trauma symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, and panic attacks; or they may have developed unhealthy thoughts about themselves or the world that impact their adult relationships with others and their faith (for example, "I am worthless," "You can't trust anyone," "God

doesn't love me"). A plan of healing may be directed toward developing a toolbox of coping skills for anxiety symptoms and recognizing, challenging, and replacing the distorted thoughts formed in childhood.

Trauma-informed systems of care are being developed outside of traditional mental health spaces. Schools, faith-based communities, healthcare, justice, and others systems are encouraged to shift their perspectives in their work with others from asking, "What's wrong with you?" to asking, "What's happened to you?" For example, instead of focusing primarily on the symptoms of oppositional behavior, depression, or substance abuse ("What's wrong?"), organizations are encouraged to be curious about "What's happened?" and incorporate practices to routinely screen for trauma exposure and related symptoms.



¹CDC-Kaiser ACE Study
cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html

²Felitti, et al (1998). "Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults," American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 14 (4), pages 245-258.

³Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2015). Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper No. 13. Retrieved from developingchild.harvard.edu.

are you holding?

It is important to note that a high ACE score is not a foregone conclusion that a person will experience poor health outcomes. Researchers recognize the importance of positive experiences early in life that equip children with the ability to bounce back and thrive, despite the hardships.

Children who do well tend to have at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult, which helps them develop re-

silience, or the set of skills needed to respond to adversity and to thrive.³ Whether you are an aunt, a football coach, a mentor, or a youth pastor, you can play a role in reshuffling the deck for a child who is holding one or more ACEs. Be the caring adult who takes the time to notice, listen, encourage, support, and believe in a child.

Resources

Take the ACE Quiz online:

npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/03/02/387007941/take-the-ace-quiz-and-learn-what-it-does-and-doesn-t-mean

Find a mental health provider:

For urgent assistance, call 855-CRISIS-1. Review therapist profiles at psychologytoday.com/us. Contact your primary care provider or insurance company for a referral.



Photo of Dr. Vanessa Elliott Bell taken by Nora Canfield.



ALL ABOUT GLUTEN

Have you ever shopped in a grocery store and seen a label stating that a product is “gluten free?” These labels appear on everything, from bread to grapes. In recent years, some people have declared themselves gluten-intolerant. But what is gluten?

Gluten is the general name for the proteins found in wheat. It helps foods maintain their shape, acting as a glue that holds food together. The two main proteins in gluten are glutenin and gliadin. When flour is mixed with water, the gluten proteins form a sticky network, which is what makes dough elastic and gives bread the ability to rise when baked. It also gives bread its chewy and satisfying texture.

In short, gluten consists of a family of proteins found in grains such as wheat, rye, and barley. Wheat is commonly found in breads, baked goods, soups, pasta, cereals, sauces, and salad dressings. Rye can be found in rye breads, such as pumpernickel, and cereals. Barley is found in malt (malted barley flour, malted milk and milkshakes, malt extract, malt syrup, malt flavoring, malt vinegar), food coloring, soups, and brewer’s yeast.

The majority of people tolerate gluten just fine. However, in a few people, gluten can cause medical issues if they have certain health conditions. The most common condition is called celiac disease, which is the most severe form of gluten intolerance. It is an autoim-

by **DEBORAH W. WALKER, MA, RDN, LDN**

mune disorder that causes the body to treat gluten as a foreign invader. The immune system then attacks the gluten, as well as the lining of the gut. Once the gut wall is damaged, nutrient deficiencies such as anemia and severe digestive issues can occur.

The most common symptoms of celiac disease are bloating, diarrhea, constipation, headache, tiredness, skin rashes, and weight loss. Blood tests or antibody tests are the best ways to find out if you have celiac disease. If you think you may have celiac disease, consult your doctor.

Gluten-Free Foods

Corn	Lean Meats
Rice	Fish, seafood (without breading)
Oats	Eggs
Quinoa	Dairy products
Flax	Fruits
Millet	Vegetables
Sorghum	Legumes
Tapioca	Nuts
Amaranth	Fats, such as oils and butter

Note: Always read food labels. That’s the safest way to know you are eating gluten-free.



Photo of Deborah W. Walker taken by Alden Lockridge.





SLEEPING

YOUR BEST LIFE

by Dr. JALILA HUDSON

.....
“He rested on the seventh day from all his work.” Genesis 2:3

We’re still in the first half of the year, and many of us probably had some awesome New Year’s resolutions outlining how we’re going to go even harder this year. Forget sleep. We have too much to do and too little time to do it.

But that’s debatable.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that sleep deprivation has been a public health epidemic since the 1980s, with one in every three people being sleep-deprived. We are only getting an average of six hours of the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep daily (National Sleep Foundation). In 1910, we slept an average of nine hours daily. It’s believed that the reason we don’t get as much sleep is due in part to our increased use of distracting technology, for example, cell phones, televisions, video games, and tablets.

Statistically, those who work in healthcare, manufacturing, and warehouses; those who work the night shift; and people ages 30-44 are the most sleep-deprived, which can lead to low overall productivity. Sleep deprivation is also responsible for 20 percent of all fatal car accidents in the United States because it causes poor judgment and concentration.

Sleep deprivation can be a contributing factor to many health issues such as depression, anxiety, obesity, diabetes, hypertension, heart

disease, and low sex drive. It causes puffiness, leading to dark circles under the eyes; high-stress hormone levels that break down skin, causing more wrinkles; and decreased muscle and bone strengthening hormones.

But there is hope. Here are some recommendations that can help you get the sleep you need:

1. If you need to nap, don’t nap for more than 30 minutes.
2. Set an alarm to prompt you to wind down before sleep (relax in a bath, meditate, or read; no vigorous exercise or heavy meals, alcohol, caffeine, or citrus within three hours of sleep time).
3. Work out in the morning (or at night, if you’re a night-shift worker).
4. Keep the temperature in your bedroom between 60 and 67 degrees, or whatever is cool to you.
5. Sleep when you’re sleepy. Do not override your sleep signals with distractions (for example, social media, television, work).
6. Decrease bright light stimuli before you go to sleep. (Red is the least stimulating light color.)
7. If you are restless in bed, get up after 20 minutes, do something relaxing, but keep lighting low until you get sleepy.

Getting our beauty sleep is important because it keeps our minds and bodies youthful! God gave us the best example of rest, so before you go hard this year, go to bed first!

References

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/sleep/

National Sleep Foundation
sleepfoundation.org



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Dr. Jalila Hudson is a member of Mt. Zion and physician board-certified in internal medicine. She practices telemedicine and is a hospitalist in rural communities in Middle Tennessee.

✉ jhudson63018@outlook.com

Photo of Dr. Jalila Hudson taken by
Raynard Nicholson of Picture This
Photography.

KNOW YOUR NUM BER S



Want to know more about your health? Get to know your numbers for blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol, and body weight. If these are too high, you are more likely to have heart disease and other health problems. Getting your numbers checked regularly and knowing what they mean is a great first step toward better health.

BLOOD SUGAR

What should my number be?

Before eating: Less than 100.

Two hours after eating: Less than 140.

What is it?

The amount of sugar in your blood.

BLOOD PRESSURE

What should my number be?

Less than 120/80.

What is it?

The force of blood against the arteries when the heart beats (top number) and rests (bottom number).

BLOOD CHOLESTEROL

What should my number be?

Total cholesterol score should be less than 200.

What is it?

A waxy substance produced by the liver. Too much can make it harder for blood to circulate.

BODY WEIGHT

What should my number be?

A body mass index (BMI) of 18.6–24.9.

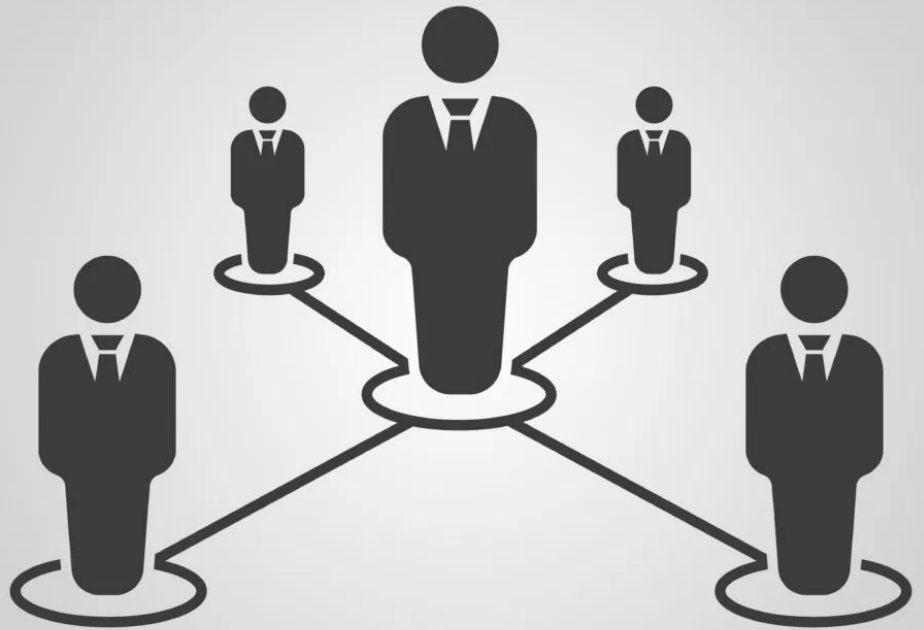
What is it?

Your ideal body weight depends on your gender, age, height, and frame. BMI provides a good guideline.

SOURCE



American
Heart
Association.



Lead With Integrity: Why *Not* Me?

by **Alfonzo Alexander**

As we continue to grow as leaders and professionals, we encounter situations that lead us to ask, “Why me?” Not long ago, I asked that question in response to an adverse situation and heard an answer from the Holy Spirit: “Why *not* me?” Suddenly, I found myself in a quandary because I did not have a good answer to that question. In fact, the question inspired deeper thinking on my part that led to a great epiphany.

The answer to the first question “Why me?” is the true epiphany. At times, we face challenges or adversity to allow us to grow as ethical leaders. The challenge I faced forced me to think differently and helped me to produce a strategy that will ultimately be positive for me and others around me. Without the adversity, I would not have invested time to come up with the strate-

gy and the solution. As a leader, I owe it to those I lead and influence to overcome the challenges I face with integrity, so I can assist them when they have challenges.

Here is the new perspective for leaders wondering, “Why me?” Change the question to, “What will I learn from this?” or “How will I grow from this experience?” By changing our perspective in difficult situations, we shift our attitude from pity to solution mode. Once in solution mode, we begin the journey to successful resolution.

Effective leaders may ask “Why me?” but the best leaders move quickly to “Why *not* me?” and go into solution mode. As you pursue the journey to lead with integrity, I encourage you to change the question and grow as a leader.

As always, lead with integrity!



Alfonzo Alexander serves as chief ethics and diversity officer of the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) and president of its Center for the Public Trust (CPT). He also leads two additional businesses, The Alexander Success Group, Inc. and Playlist Properties, Inc. Currently, Alexander is a member of the Mount Zion Deacon’s Ministry and Men’s Health Initiative.

Photo of Alfonzo Alexander provided by Michigan State University.

VISION TEAM UPDATES

WELCOME TO MT. ZION



Pastor Darrell Brown,
Overseer of High School Ministry

Pastor Darrell Brown, a Nashville native, oversees the High School Ministry of Mount Zion at the Antioch and Old Hickory locations and partners with Metro high schools in Nashville/Davidson County. His primary focus is to engage, equip, and empower students as they develop a relationship with Jesus Christ and to create opportunities for them to build and serve their communities. Seeking to advance the total student, the High School Ministry is intentional in addressing all facets of students' lives—their spiritual soundness, emotional stability, educational ambitions, and their civic contribution.

Brown's mantra is, "Our lifestyle should express louder than our actual declarations." He wants to model this not only as a pastor but as a husband and a father. He has been married to his wife, Alisha, for 13 years (and counting); and they are the parents of Darreyon, Donovan, Sophia, Mary, Martha, and Angela.

He encourages everyone to join the vision of investing in the "now generation" and others to come, not only to recognize the plan of God, but to live the plan of God. Be the culture!

#ALLIN



Delia Coleman,
Administrative Assistant to Finance

Delia Coleman is a native of Cleveland, Mississippi, and is a graduate of Delta State University. She lived in Dallas, Texas, and the surrounding areas for over five years before relocating to Nashville in May 2018. Upon her relocation, she became a member of Mount Zion Baptist Church. Her administrative experience includes project management, special events, and account management.

ON POLLUTION

by TIFINI P. WILLIAMS

Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground’ ” (Genesis 1:26, New International Version).

What a beautiful blessing it is to rule and have dominion over our land. Whether a theologian or an environmental scientist, it’s quite difficult to disagree with that simple fact. Indeed, we do have power over our land, but it’s difficult for me to observe how our land is being treated. Many of us are poor stewards of the earth; and even though it has been sent, not everyone has heeded the memo about taking care of what God has given us.

Almost a year ago, my family and I moved into our beautiful new home. Settling in hasn’t been easy. It rained the day the movers brought our furniture inside, we discovered we had voles and moles living in our yard, and there was a host of insects that had moved inside the house before we did. We had a moisture issue in the crawlspace that needed immediate remediation, and currently there is a stench of sewage coming from the pipes under our sinks in the master bathroom.

Unfortunately, many of my calls to professionals to fix things have been ignored. Rather quickly, I learned that none of these issues would be repaired within my one-month time frame.

It takes time to create the perfect place for my family to call home. Thankfully, my family understands the hard work that many people do to make it a home. All three of us do what we can to maintain it (sometimes with me nudging them), as we all understand the value of a well-kept home.

When I think about the process of moving or settling in, I’m reminded of our most powerful God preparing a home for mankind. God has the power to create everything all at once, but just like settling into a home, God took His time creating the earth. Perhaps He wanted to put all He had into each phase of Creation to ensure that we, His most precious creation, would have all that we needed within His perfectly created ecosystem.

I’m sure that many of you can identify with the process of settling in to or creating a homestead. Growing up, I did all I could to customize my room with the perfect toys and décor (that my parents would allow). Perhaps you are nesting for a new baby or a pet. Even if you are preparing a space for a houseguest, the process involves using care, as God did when He created our world. Imagine God’s sense of pride when He was finished, admiring His hard work on His day of rest. Similarly, we experience pride when we step back to take a look at what we’ve done.

Now, please take a moment and think of what may happen to the space after you’ve finished. Your growing baby may display his or her best artwork on the wall by using it as a canvas. Your houseguest may leave a

mess in the kitchen or the bathroom. Thankfully, we can remedy such situations; but what if your child or houseguest burns down your house after being careless with fire? Hopefully, our children and guests are more careful. As we live with dominion over the land, let’s be careful and mindful of our actions and how they might impact our carefully prepared environment.

Some damage that we cause can be repaired, but some actions are irreversible. Imagine if your trash weren’t collected. Instead, you had to burn it inside your house. The trash would become overwhelming, and the resulting smoke and gases would make the air hard to breathe. This mirrors the current state of our environment. If we don’t start making improvements, the air will become unhealthy. Everyone will need to make peace with living by landfills and breathing unhealthy air—something that many of our world’s citizens already have to do.

All of us must seek ways to nurture the earth. Respect the Creator and His creation. Recycle water bottles instead of throwing them in the trash, or refill reusable drinking bottles. Take a reusable bag with you when you shop and decline plastic bags. Find a way to carpool and enjoy the company while using the high-occupancy vehicle lane.

If you consider yourself to be environmentally friendly, step it up a notch. Seek to assist someone who isn’t. There are many ways to reduce our negative impact on our environment. I pray that we can find many ways to responsibly live in dominion over our irreplaceable home.



tifinipwilliams



twrite2018@yahoo.com

Photo of Tifini P. Williams taken by Abraham “Iamhaym” Toms.





COUNCILWOMAN ERICA GILMORE CALLED TO SERVE

by Latresa Witherspoon

Erica Gilmore's political career is nothing short of a result of God's favor. From her years as councilwoman of the 19th District to her current position as councilwoman-at-large, including her recent run in the 2018 Nashville mayoral election, Gilmore's journey speaks to her passion for the city of Nashville.

A Nashville native, Gilmore first served her community as an educator in Metro Schools, at Fisk University, and at the University of Phoenix. She also established The Gilmore Youth Leadership Institute, an empowerment program for young women. Around the same time, her mother, State Representative Brenda Gilmore, began her first term as an elected official. Though engaged in and aware of the issues happening in Nashville, it was when she bought her first home in Hope Gardens that she was inspired to answer the call to civic service. As she observed the community around her, she thought, *I can make a difference here*. Hope Gardens was the birthplace of her purpose.

Now entering her twelfth year in office,

Gilmore's platform has had an overarching theme: equity. During her time in office, she has championed initiatives to provide resources that empower Nashvillians. For example, she has tackled youth violence, affordable housing, the potential closing of Metro General Hospital, equitable transit, a resolution to encourage the city to divest in the stocks of private prisons. She also co-sponsored a bill to increase the local police department's awareness of racial profiling.

Gilmore has been a member of several committees within the council and has served in various capacities with local community organizations, such as the NAACP and the Center Business District Improvement Board. She and her mother are a dynamic duo in Nashville, blazing a trail for women in politics. She says being a public servant is a balancing act, which is why she believes few women go into politics.

"It is important to have a good support system. Serving at the local level in politics is designed to be something additional.

The council is not a full-time job. So if women are taking on full-time jobs, as well as taking care of responsibilities at home, then that does not leave much time to be public servants."

Even with a number of local leaders in the race, Gilmore launched a mayoral campaign in 2018. Along the way, God sent allies and angels to help her with many aspects of her campaign. Although she did not win, the experience changed her life.

"It took a lot of courage. It was life-changing because I was able to do things that I didn't know I could do for the community. I want to thank every person who voted for me, volunteered on a campaign, and offered encouragement. I appreciate those people who helped me because they believe in the vision of making the city better."

Gilmore continues to serve as councilwoman-at-large and speaker pro tem, the highest-ranking position on the council.



Erica Gilmore, Councilwoman-at-large



www.ericagilmore.com



Erica S. Gilmore



@ericagilmore



by LATRESA
WITHERSPOON

🐦 @lwitherspoon

Photo of Latresa Witherspoon taken
by Darren B. Rankins.

Photo of Erica Gilmore taken by Emanuel O. Roland, II.

WORSHIP TIMES, LOCATIONS, & BUS SCHEDULES

MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

SATURDAY LIVE @ 5

- 5 PM – Jefferson Street

SUNDAY SCHOOL

- 8:30 AM – Antioch
- 10 AM – Old Hickory Boulevard (OHB)

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

- 7 AM & 9:30 AM – Antioch
- 8:15 AM & 11:15 AM – OHB
College students are served lunch following 11:15 AM service.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

- 12 PM – Jefferson Street
Sack lunches served following service
- 5 PM – Antioch
Dinner served for teens at Teen Church following service.
- 7 PM – OHB
Dinner served for teens at Teen Church following service.

VIRTUAL CHURCH

www.mtzionanywhere.org

Live Stream

- Sunday – 11:15 AM
- Wednesday – 7 PM
- On Demand – 24/7

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CHURCH LOCATIONS/ADDRESSES

Old Hickory Boulevard (OHB)
7594 Old Hickory Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37189

Antioch
2261 Murfreesboro Pike
Nashville, TN 37217

Jefferson Street
1112 Jefferson Street
Nashville, TN 37208

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- Austin-Peay State University
–Arrive at the Ellington Building at 9:45 AM
–Depart for MZBC at 10 AM
- Belmont University
–Arrive at R. Milton and Denice Johnson Center (location of the café) on 15th Avenue at 10 AM
–Depart for MZBC at 10:15 AM
- Fisk University
–Arrive at 17th & Jackson Street at 10:15 AM
–Depart for MZBC at 10:30 AM
- Lipscomb University
–Arrive at Allen Arena Circle at 10:15 AM
–Depart for MZBC at 10:30 AM
- Middle Tennessee State University
–Arrive at Blue Raider Boulevard & MTSU Boulevard at 9:15 AM
–Depart for MZBC at 9:30 AM
- Tennessee State University
–Arrive at Kean Hall at 10:15 AM
–Depart for MZBC at 10:30 AM
- Vanderbilt University
–1st stop
Arrive at Peabody College at 10:20 AM | Depart 10:30AM
–2nd stop
Arrive at Kirkland Hall at 10:35 AM | Depart 10:45 AM
- Western Kentucky University
–Arrive at Downing Student Union (DSU) at 9:15 AM
–Depart for MZBC at 9:30 AM

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