



THE EPISTLE

*Newsletter of the
Nineteenth Street Baptist Church*

“You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men...” 2 Corinthians 3:2



Nineteenth Street Baptist Church

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Washington, DC 20011
202-829-2773

www.everyblessing.org

Ministerial Staff

- Rev. James A. Crosson Jr., *Interim Pastor*
- Rev. Jerry C. Cheatham Jr.
- Rev. Cheryl Coleman Hall
- Rev. Dr. I. Benni Singleton
- Rev. Reginald Townsend
- Rev. Edward Turner
- Rev. Robin L. Turner
- Rev. Eddie Martin Jr., *Youth Minister*
- Rev. Dr. Jerry A. Moore Jr., *Pastor Emeritus*

Church School, Sunday 8:45 AM
Morning Worship, Sunday 10:00 AM
Prayer Meeting, Thursday 6:30 PM



GOD is Our Passion. Serving **People** is Our **Mission**.

The mission of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church is to profoundly *experience*, joyfully *celebrate*, and meaningfully *share* God's grace.

We do this through Christ-centered *worship*, *biblical instruction*, *prayer*, *nurturing fellowship*, and *caring acts* that are reflective of our love for God and one another.

We, through the power of the Holy Spirit, proclaim the Gospel and Jesus Christ to all people while supporting the work of missions in our church, our community, our country, and the world.

The Epistle

is an official publication of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church.

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Rev. Dr. I. Benni Singleton

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- Sharon Anderson
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- Deacon Kevin Little
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- Deaconess Gloria Tisdale
- Rev. Reginald Townsend
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Submit articles and photographs

for publication via email to Epistle@everyblessing.org

Questions?

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We Need You!

By Rev. I. Benni Singleton

Photo: Deborah Crain Kemp



Are you a member of Nineteenth Street Baptist Church or are you a pew-sitter? Do you belong or do you just visit occasionally?

Nineteenth Street, established in 1839, is a historical Baptist Church in the Washington, D.C. community; yet we are still a growing church. We want to grow in membership and in activities. The Christian church is to be a “We Group” for Christ.

Nineteenth Street needs your presence and involvement. We worship together as we share the

Christian responsibility of serving within and reaching out to minister to and engage our fellow man and woman.

Your church needs your support, your talents and your involvement in worship services and other church activities that are of interest to you – attend church meetings; greet, meet and become acquainted with fellow church members; work with a church ministry; and participate in programs.

Think about this: Each person is welcome and warmly received in this Christian fellowship. We want you to feel the fellowship as a member of this church family.

The membership warmly welcomes you and seeks your talents and active involvement in church activities. The pastors, deacons, trustees, church school and all organizations herein are delighted to have your presence.

If you are not a member, consider joining this body of Christ, the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church. If you are a member, invite your friends to visit our church and join our family. ❖

Congratulations!



Photo: Deborah Crain Kemp

Congratulations to Marion Gale, who was recognized for 22 years of dedicated service as Director of Transportation for the church. Board of Trustees Chair Robert McNair and Interim Pastor James A. Crosson surprised him with the award presentation on March 27.

Spotlight on Chair of Deaconesses E. Louise White

By Deborah Heard

Deaconess E. Louise White's life at Nineteenth Street Baptist Church began in a Sunday School class when she was 9 years old. The church was located at 19th and I Streets NW then, about six blocks from her family's home in Foggy Bottom. "Our family lived down the street and my father was looking for a Sunday School he could attend," she said. With that introduction, she and her sister joined the Sunday School and became active participants in various youth programs.

"I give credit to the Sunday School for being the promoter of where I've gotten to on my Christian walk," she said. "It was there I began to get involved in activities in the church."

Her involvement coincided with her interest in becoming an educator. While she was attending college at the University of the District of Columbia, she was asked to teach a Sunday School class of young teenagers. It turned out to be a delightful and transformative experience. "That began my leadership role in the church," she said. "Wonderful church leaders modeled for me as I became a teacher."



Deaconess White ultimately spent 38 years in the D.C. Public Schools system, where she worked as a teacher, principal and administrator. After she retired, she worked for the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) focusing on organization development and school reform across the country. She later served as director of education and training for Covenant House Washington, as principal of a charter school, and, most recently as principal of Highland Park Christian Academy in Landover, Maryland. She

retired from there in 2015 — her third retirement.

Her biggest role in the church now is as chair of the Board of Deaconesses. She was elected to the board in 1987 joining her mother, Ora Mitchell as a deaconess. They are one of a very few mother-daughter teams to serve on the board. She spent about 10 years as vice chair, then was elected to her first two-year term as chair in 2014 following the death of Deaconess Board Chair Ettyce Moore. She was re-elected to a second term for 2016 to 2018.

Today, there are 40 members of the Board of Deaconesses. Deaconess White explains their job this way: "The role of a deaconess is as a *spiritual officer* whose real mission is to support the work of the church through supporting the pastor and the Board of Deacons." Deaconesses minister to the care and needs of the congregation through visits to members and Communion service to the sick and shut-in. The signature event of the board is hosting the church fellowship dinner every year in October. That dinner creates an important opportunity for

members to get to know each other and to fellowship.

Deaconess White's other activities include teaching an adult Bible school class, participating in the Helping Hand Club and chairing the church history project.

Among past roles, she chaired annual seminars to enhance the life of the church, served on the Constitution Revision Committee and helped organize the church's 175th anniversary celebration.

She and her husband, Bernard White Jr., have three adult children— one of whom is Minister Lorise White Wolfe— and 10 grandchildren. ❖



Helping Hand Club



Deaconess White, daughter Minister Lorise White-Wolfe and husband Bernard White Jr.



Deaconess White, daughter Karyn Sanders and grandchildren Lindsay and Nigel

Guest Preachers Welcomed at Lenten Services



Mrs. Bonita Ridley, Guest Preacher Rev. Dr. Winston C. Ridley Jr., pastor of The Greater First Baptist Church, Interim Pastor Rev. James A. Crosson Jr., and Worship Leader Deacon Fred Leftrict

Photos: Deaconess Gloria Tisdale



Guest Preacher Rev. Keith Battle, pastor of Zion Church, with Interim Pastor Crosson

Lenten Lunches and Spiritual Messages Feed Crowds



Hundreds came each Wednesday to Lenten Services to enjoy great spiritual food and a great luncheon.

Faithful kitchen volunteers for Lenten Services:

Standing in back - Chef Joe Sudduth and assistant Michael Bonner and server Rosemary Massey

Seated - Lenten chef assistants Hester Jones and Raymond Johnson



Photos: Deaconess Gloria Tisdale

Why Should We Give?

By Rev. Reginald Townsend



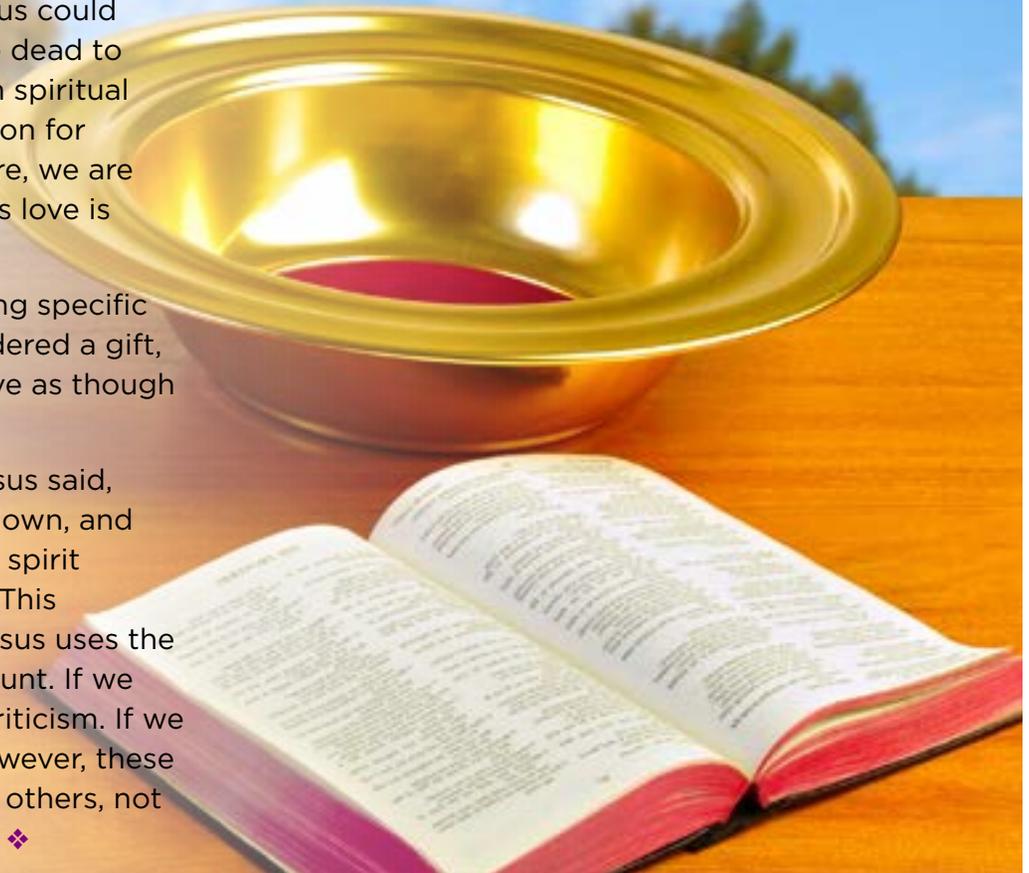
The German American Christian theologian and philosopher Paul Tillich once said, “Religion is, first, an open hand to receive a gift and second, an acting hand to distribute gifts.”

God gave to us and therefore we are expected to give to others. God is three persons in one: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God became a man in Jesus, so that Jesus could die for our sins. Jesus rose from the dead to offer salvation to all people through spiritual renewal and rebirth. God gave His son for the forgiveness of our sins. Therefore, we are admonished to forgive others. God’s love is

faith in action.

One way to put love to work is to take the initiative in meeting specific needs of others. The money we give others should be considered a gift, not a high-interest loan that will help us more than them. Give as though you are giving to God.

There are two principal ideas to guide believers in giving. Jesus said, “Give, and it will be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.” (Luke 6:38-39). A giving spirit demonstrates that a person has received God’s forgiveness. This scripture speaks to how we treat our fellow man. Second, Jesus uses the picture of measuring grain in a basket to ensure the full amount. If we are critical rather than compassionate, we will also receive criticism. If we treat others generously, graciously, and compassionately, however, these qualities will come back to us in full measure. We are to love others, not judge them. A Christian is one who lives by what God gives. ❖



The Food Pantry - A Long History But a New Look!

By Cynthia Thompson

In the early 1980s, a small staff of committed church members started the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church Food Pantry to provide food to the needy. They operated out of a very small room on the second floor off of the fellowship hall.

Deaconess Irish Stovall, one of the early organizers, remembers those good old days. “It was a joy to work it. We would bring our lunch and make a whole day of it,” sorting, stacking, folding bags and handing out the food.

In many ways the Food Pantry has not changed. Referrals come from private organizations and local government agencies.



Photos: Deborah Crain Kemp

Volunteer Deborah Heard and Maintenance Engineer Walter Thomas point to the new frost-free freezer in the Food Pantry.

Church members do not need a referral. Food Pantry workers follow guidelines on how much food should be given based on family size. During the month of October, there is an ingathering event when church members are asked to bring food to help stock the Food Pantry.

“No matter what, nobody comes through here and leaves with no food ... it’s in the Bible, feed the hungry, that’s what we do.”

~ Larry Holland

In 2000, Deacon Garnett Crossley asked Clendon (Terry) Wooten to take over the operation of the Food Pantry under the guidance of Deacon Sandra LeSesne. Terry was a long time employee who agreed to take on the challenge because he “has a passion to help others” and, through the church, his passion could reach many.

Five years ago, Deacon LeSesne asked Deacon Larry Holland to handle the administration of the Food Pantry. Deborah Heard is his right hand in managing many aspects of the pantry. Deacon Holland has improved the workings of the pantry, including acquiring a new frost-free freezer and adding fresh vegetables to the standard food supplies given to families. A major improvement was moving the Food Pantry from the second

floor to a larger space on the ground level. The new space can accommodate two freezers and shelving. The move also means that thousands of pounds of canned food and supplies no longer have to be carried upstairs, and filled grocery bags no longer have to be carried downstairs.

Our biggest supplier of food is the Capital Area Food Bank, which provides fresh fruits, vegetables, canned goods and a variety of frozen meats. We serve a growing number of households and

families, increasing from 725 family members in 2009 to over 4,000 family members in 2015.

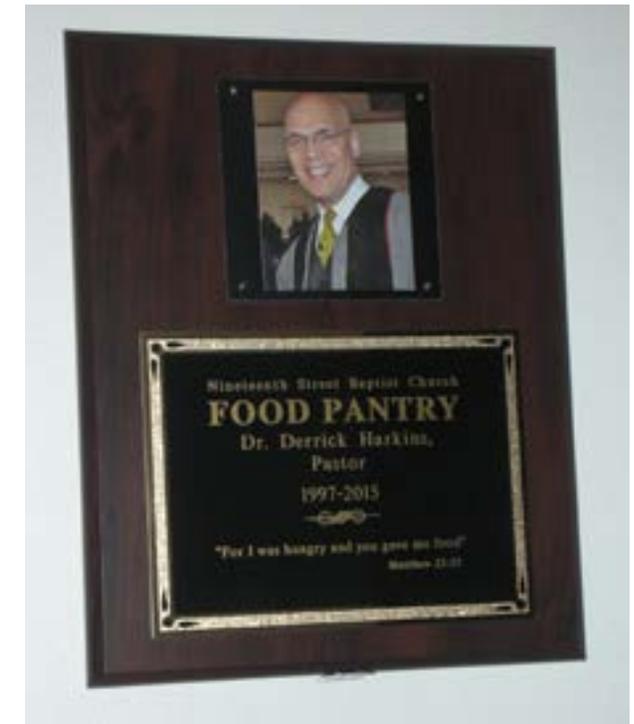
This service could not be done without the support of office staff, maintenance staff, and volunteers from inside and outside the church. They all serve from the heart. Deacon LeSesne's partnership with the D.C. Court Community Service Program has also provided volunteers who work in the pantry and with the maintenance staff.

Thank you to the Board of Deacons and the Benevolence Committee for the Food Pantry's new frost-free freezer. We love it!

Thank you to church members for your generous donations of money, food and service. We pray that you will continue to support the Food Pantry. ❖



Volunteers and church staff in Food Pantry



In 2015, the Food Pantry was dedicated to Rev. Dr. Derrick Harkins for his strong support of the Food Pantry and the church serving those in need. A plaque honoring him now hangs outside the pantry in the back of the fellowship hall.

A Parent's Role

By Bernard Bellamy Jr.

At times in life i've failed to
see
Those little things so close to
me
Those little hands that reach
for love
Among those grownups way
above

We don't slow down, we go so
fast
And we fail to see what truly
lasts
Those little eyes that watch so
close
For them it's love that means
the most

For nothing breaks as easily
As little hearts we fail to see
For all they ask is only time
A second costs not a dime

And is priceless to a little one
And helps them love each
rising sun
It molds them into happy
souls
When parents fill their rightful
roles

We only have one shot at love
We are the grownup way
above
It is our duty here on earth
To raise and love them from
their birth

To hold those little hands so
tight
To tell them it will be alright
The greatest gift that we can
give
Is to teach a little one to live
By showing just a little love
We show them there is a god
above

About Our Poet Bernard Bellamy Jr.

By Sandra Howell

I recently accompanied Bernard Bellamy to visit his son, Bernard Jr., who is incarcerated in Hagerstown, Maryland. Bernard Jr. is a member of Nineteenth Street, baptized here when he was eight years old. His father brought him to Sunday School and he joined the Young Men's Ministry before he graduated from high school. He enrolled in West Virginia State University on a military scholarship.

While in Hagerstown, Bernard Jr. has been teaching classes to fellow inmates and he trains puppies for military, police and handicapped people. He also has learned how to upholster furniture. His greatest love, however, is writing poetry. Bernard Jr. has written and sent me a large collection of his poems.

Bernard Jr. looks forward to receiving letters of encouragement and prayers. He would love to hear from other church members.

We should not forget those who need prayer. It is not our right to judge but to take the word of Jesus to all persons who want and need to hear about Him. If you would like to write to Bernard Jr., please contact me at eswhowell@gmail.com for his address. ❖



Palm Sunday Celebrated

Palm Sunday at Nineteenth Street Baptist Church was a day of celebration and preparation for Holy Week, the week leading up to Jesus' death. Rev. Dr. Lloyd T. McGriff, Senior Pastor of Galilee Baptist Church, was the Palm Sunday guest preacher. At the end of the service, the congregation enjoyed waving palm fronds to commemorate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. After service, Deacon Joe Sudduth took reservations for Maundy Thursday Foot Washing Dinner.



Photos: Deborah Crain Kemp

Maundy Thursday Observed



Above: The story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet on the eve of Passover is a powerful testimony to a theme that recurs throughout the Gospels: holiness and power are found in service. We wash feet to remind ourselves that in order to be part of Christ, we must be humble enough to serve others and to allow ourselves to be recipients of God's care and grace. We are reminded that this call to serve and be served should shape our lives in Christ.



Left: Through scripture, meditation, prayer and music, the Maundy Thursday worship service focuses on the Passover Meal Jesus shared with his disciples in the upper room on the eve of his arrest. Dinner consists of six symbols of a traditional Passover: bitter herbs, fruit and nuts, scorched shankbone, green herbs, unleavened bread and egg.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Shoes for Haiti: A Shoe for Every Foot

The Global Missions Ministry is collecting shoes in the Fellowship Hall each Sunday during the month of April.

Bring clean shoes in good condition and tie or rubber band each pair together.



Please...
No boots, flip-flops
or heels over 3-inches!

Are you receiving The Epistle in your Inbox?

If you did not receive an emailed copy of The Epistle from Nineteenth Street Baptist Church (19thSt@everyblessing.org), please send a note with your preferred email address to Epistle@everyblessing.org. We will help you get added to the distribution list.

You can read current and past issues of The Epistle online at the church website, www.everyblessing.org.

You can also print specific pages or entire issues, if you prefer a paper copy.

Items for Sale

Many dinner plates and real glasses,
all to be sold at discounted prices.

In Silver Spring, Maryland.

Call to arrange to see these items.

Eugene Townes
(301) 980-4593

Share, Sell or Swap on the Community Bulletin Board?

Do you have old baby furniture to give away or sell? Looking for transportation to the doctor or help with groceries? Are you a trusted babysitter or caregiver? Have church events to promote?

We will accept postings from church members and groups (no businesses). Submit your posts to Epistle@everyblessing.org by the 25th of each month.

Save
the Date!
Monday, June 27

Annual
John H. Brinkley
Memorial Golf
Tournament!

Have Good News You Want to Share in the Epistle?

Send announcements of weddings, engagements, births, promotions, new jobs, retirements, awards, graduations, performances and other news with a photo to

Epistle@everyblessing.org.



Calendar

APRIL

Sunday, April 10 – Installation of Newly Elected Deaconesses, 10 AM Worship Service

Sunday, April 17 – Youth Church, 10:45 AM

Friday, April 22 – Church Business Meeting, 7 PM

Sunday, April 24 – Women’s Day, Rev. Yasmine Bell-Flemons preaching

MAY

Saturday, May 7 – Progressive Adults Theater Outing to see “All the Way” at Arena Stage, 2 PM

Sunday, May 8 – Mother’s Day

Saturday, May 14 – Prepare to Care Workshop
Presented by Comforting Care and Health Ministries, 9:30 AM

Sunday, May 15 – Trustees Rally Day

Sunday, May 15 – Youth Church, 10:45 AM

Sunday, May 29 – Men’s Day