

THE EPISTLE

"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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Rev. Robin L. Turner

Rev. Lorise White Wolfe

Rev. James L. Harris, *Youth Pastor*

Church School, Sunday 8:45 a.m.

Morning Worship, Sunday 10 a.m.

Prayer Meeting, Thursday 6:30 p.m.



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
Nineteenth Street Baptist Church.

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The Epistle is published monthly on the first of the month. **The deadline for materials is the 20th of each month.** Submit articles and photographs for publication via email to Epistle@19thstreetbc.org. **Questions?** Contact Karen Williamson at 202-829-5973 or williamsonke@gmail.com.

Lessons from the Praying Mantis

By Rev. Darryl D. Roberts, Ph.D.



What does a praying mantis have in common with a praying saint? On the surface, it seems not much. Recently I took this picture of a praying mantis while enjoying a round of miniature golf with the children. The insect gets its name for its notable legs, wide and prominent eyes, slender body, extended wings, long antennae,

protruding head, thorax, and abdomen. This insect has been the object of scientific study, cultural legends, and religious myths for centuries. While observing the behavior pattern of this fascinating bug, I learned several lessons that I want to suggest are applicable to our Christian walk.

The first lesson I learned was informed by the rationale for the mantis' name. Its long front legs are bent at about a 90-degree angle, suggesting a posture of prayer. The mantis perpetually sits in an upright posture so that it can use its front two legs to hunt. It uses its back four legs for walking and its front two legs primarily to eat to live. As believers, we, too, should always maintain a posture of prayer. Our children should see us praying. Our



friends should see us praying. Even when folk don't see us on our knees, they should notice something about us that demonstrates that we are always on the prayer line with God.

The Bible says that Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should "always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1). When we maintain a posture of prayer in word and deed in every season and every circumstance, we keep the lifeline

open to God that is vital to our personal survival and spiritual growth. You can avoid being somebody else's meal when you pray. You can put food on your table when you pray. The impossible enters the realm of possibility when you pray.

The other important lesson I learned from observing the mantis is that it possesses what scientists call "stereo vision." It is the only bug or insect that can turn its head from side-to-side. This ability gives it a decided edge when hunting because it can sneak up on its prey with limited body movement. Each of its five eyes (two are simple and three are compound) has a fovea, a collection of photoreceptor cells, that allows it to focus and trace with precision. It has 3-D vision that allows it to see on a higher level, which is distinctive

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from anything scientists have observed in nature. Jesus' desire is for us to operate at a higher level. Jesus told the disciples that "this kind can only come out by nothing but prayer and fasting" (Mark 9:29). When we hone the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, worshiping, serving, studying, fellowshiping, and giving, we increase our faith so that we can expand the depth of our spiritual vision.

The third insight I gleaned from my cursory observations of these peculiar insects is their remarkable ability to camouflage. They are normally green or brown in color, which enables them to easily camouflage on plants or in the green grass where they live. They take the shape of leaves, sticks or branches, which makes detection supremely difficult. Certain mantises shed their skin at the end of a dry season to make room for new growth. They might become black during the time of year when the nights grow longer, which allows them to escape the detection of predators for longer periods. For instance, the flower mantis takes on the intricate shapes and diverse colors of flowers. This ability deceives prey into thinking they are collecting nectar from the mantis but instead are setting the table for its next meal.

As believers, we can certainly take a page from the life of the mantis. We share the unusual gift of camouflage. Some of us do a better job of escaping detection than the mantis. We can enter any crowd and escape detection. We can show up at work, street corners, restaurants, grocery stores, schools, or public places and fit right in.

Unlike the mantis, we often forget the reason why God has given us this gift of camouflage. It is not so that we can hide our religious identity to ensure our own survival; it is so that we can get close enough to nonbelievers to share the hope of our salvation. In other words, we blend in for the special purpose of

meeting people where they are so that we might offer the light of our good work to overcome the darkness in our world. In so doing, we pray that men and women might see our good work and give glory to God, our liberator and sustainer. The Apostle Paul expressed a similar idea: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

One last interesting factoid I want to share from my introductory studies in entomology has to do with the etymology of the word mantis. It is a derivative of the Greek word *mantikos*, meaning soothsayer or prophet. The Greeks and ancient Egyptians once believed that these ancient insects possessed spiritual power to point lost travelers the way home through the darkness.

While you would be hard-pressed to find anyone today who thinks the mantis has spiritual power, the good news is this is not so for believers. Despite the attacks the church has endured, we pray, seek God's presence, and blend in to lift up because we believe there is still power in the name of Jesus to point lost travelers home from the dark street corners of life. ❖

Pastor Roberts on the Air

Tune into the Coach Butch McAdams Show on Sunday, December 20, 12:30 p.m. to hear Pastor Darryl Roberts talk about Nineteenth Street ministries and initiatives.

Listen live on radio stations WOL (1450 AM) and MAGIC (95.9 FM) or listen to live radio streaming on a computer or cellphone device by going to www.woldcnews.com. ❖



'Tis the Season, Plus More Ways to be a Blessing

By Trustee Donza M. Poole

'Tis the season, and what a different season it will be for most of us, including the Trustee Board. We won't have our annual Trustee Board Christmas party with more food than the Board could possibly consume in just over an hour. There will be no time to marvel over Deaconess Hester Jones' catering. No deciding what dish to bring as your contribution. No guessing who made the meatball dish with the secret sauce this year—Chairman Smith or his wife, Deaconess Gloria Smith. And no invitation to choir members leaving rehearsal to help us finish things off.

Though we will miss the in-person experience, some things will not change during this time of COVID-19. We will still celebrate the birth of Christ, still be thankful for our blessings, and still find ways to be a blessing to others.

End-of-Year Giving

When the pandemic first hit, many churches experienced a drop in contributions. Even now, as things have begun to stabilize, some churches may not survive. Our church is blessed that our congregation continues to give generously of their time, talent, and treasure. From tithes and offerings, to securing the Paycheck Protection Program's forgivable loan, and the COVID-19 reopening grant, the church has continued to thrive during these challenging times. Members quickly adapted to mailing in tithes and offerings or giving them online. We are blessed that, nine months into the pandemic, the church is still

able to meet expenses, carry out vital ministries, and help those in need. Your continued giving makes this possible.

Here are a few tips to ensure that your much-appreciated gifts are properly credited:

- Use your numbered offering envelope when giving by cash or check. Your contributions record is largely based on the information you put on the envelope.
- Write your envelope number in the memo section of your check or on correspondence sent with your offering if you do not use your offering envelope.
- When designating your offering for a specific purpose or ministry, write the purpose and specify the amount on the *other* line of the offering envelope or memo line of our check.
- When giving by app, online or credit card, using PayPal, Givelify or Cash App, include your envelope number, if you have one, and indicate how you want your contribution allocated.

To be tax deductible for 2020, your gift must be received or postmarked on or before December 31, 2020. Down to the wire? You can give online or by app at any time.

Visit the church website at www.19thstreetbc.org and click on the "Giving" tab to make a donation or to learn more about how and why to give.

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More Ways to Be a Blessing to Others

Last month, in celebration of Thanksgiving, we highlighted four causes to support in addition to giving your regular tithes and offering. In celebration of the Christmas giving season, we've highlighted a few more causes that could benefit from your support:

The Helping Hand Club: Each December, the Helping Hand Club donates baskets of food and fruit baskets to families in need. Contribute and specify that your contribution is for the Helping Hand Club. (see page 13)

Stoddard Baptist Home - Make a Wish Come True for a Senior: The Virtual Adult Sunday School Class is raising money for the Stoddard Baptist Home's resident holiday wish list, which includes clocks, computer headphones, audiobooks, CD players, winter sweaters, and shawls. For over 100 years, our church has been a vested supporter of the Stoddard Baptist Home, which has lovingly provided compassionate care at its Newton Street location for some of our members. To support this cause, contribute by December 20 and note it is for the Stoddard Baptist Home.

The Church Scholarship Fund: Each year the church awards scholarships to members pursuing undergraduate college degrees. In 2020, we awarded more than \$15,000 in scholarships. To support our undergraduate students, donate to the Church Scholarship Fund.

May the blessings and joy of Christmas be with you this season. Merry Christmas from your Board of Trustees. ❖

Watch Your Mail for Survey

By Trustee Donza M. Poole

The church currently remains in Phase One of the District of Columbia's reopening guidance, meaning the church continues to limit in-person gatherings to no more than ten people. Eventually, and when it is safer, the church will reopen for in-person worship services. The views of church members will be an important factor in the decision to reopen. To get a sense of how members feel about returning to in-person worship services, the church will be sending out a reopening survey later this month.

The survey will go first to those on the church's email list because email is the most cost-effective and efficient way to distribute and process the survey. By comparison, even with a low nonprofit postage rate, sending a survey by mail incurs the costs of stationery, photocopying, and personnel time to assemble, mail, and later process the returned surveys.

If you are not on the church's email list but would like to receive your survey by email, you can sign-up on the church website (www.19thstreetbc.org) by clicking the "Newsletters" icon at the bottom of the homepage under "Contact Us." (Joining the church email list also means you receive the monthly church newsletters and eblasts.)

If you do not have access to email or prefer not to sign up for the church's email list, a reopening survey will be sent to you by regular mail.

Your views about reopening the church for in-person worship services are important. We encourage all members to return their surveys, whether by email or paper copy, by the requested deadline to ensure your views are considered. ❖

Christian Education: The Foundation of Christian Study and Training

By Deaconess Patricia Kilby-Robb, Director of Christian Education



Director of Christian Education Deaconess Patricia Kilby-Robb and the Board of Christian Education invite the church family to participate in a two-part Christian Education Leadership Training Forum on Wednesday, December 9, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, December 12, at 10 a.m.

Planning for this virtual forum has been a labor of true dedication, commitment, and love by the Christian educators of our church during these uncertain and unprecedented times, requiring hours of study, biblical research, and preparation. The forum will provide Christian education information for the edification of church leaders, as well as enlighten and uplift potential leaders and lay church members. The purpose of the forum is to examine in-depth Christian concepts, sharpen leadership skills, and instill the participants with a greater understanding of Christian education.

The virtual forum will bring to life Christian education and the work of the Church. Twelve modules will be presented including a question and answer (Q&A) period at the end of each module. Over the past year, church leaders, Sunday school teachers, and ministry participants have asked questions such as, “What is the basis and significance of Christian education? How is Christian education defined, and how does it differ from Sunday school or other ministries? How do isolated and independent church activities and programs fit together to make a solid foundation for the church? Who are the Board members, and what is the

role of these Christian educators in the church and on the board?” Pastor Roberts and the Board of Christian Education presenters will answer these and other burning questions as a part of this forum. We will address questions submitted in advance to Deaconess Patricia Kilby-Robb during the forum.

For Christian education enlightenment, clarity, legitimacy, and validation, each module is biblically-based and has a primary focus on an attribute, characteristic, or quality of Christian Education.

Module 1: The Foundation and the Work of Our Church

Presenter: Pastor Darryl Roberts

Module 2: The Definition

Presenter: Deaconess Patricia Kilby-Robb

Module 3: The Purpose

Presenter: Deaconess Maureen Young

Module 4: The Goal and Objectives

Presenter: Deacon Jessie McCrae

Module 5: The Necessity

Presenter: Rev. Reginald Townsend

Module 6: The Understanding

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Cheryl Coleman Hall

Module 7: The Call and Service

Presenter: Rev. Robin Turner

Module 8: The Ministry

Presenter: Rev. Edward Turner

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Module 9: The Christian Education Director and the Board

Presenter: Deaconess Patricia Kilby-Robb

Modules 10-12: Church School and Leadership Development

Presentations and presenters include: Leadership Development, Deacon Nathaniel Robb; Prayer Ministry/Bible Study, Rev. James Crosson; Sunday School, Deacon Stephanie Thomas-Gordon; Youth Ministry, Rev. James Harris; Vacation Bible School, Elvinese Wyche; and New Members Ministry, Vialetta Graham. Rev. Christopher Crawford and Deaconess Monique Wiley-Crawford will discuss assessment and evaluation, and DeVera Redmond will discuss the forum survey.

The time has come for a greater understanding of Christian education, so please plan to share this time of study with the Board of Christian Education. Look for announcements with more information about participating in the forum on the church website and in eblasts. ❖

1 Timothy 3:15-16 (Expanded Bible) provides the critical nature for Christian education training and study of God's word:

15 Then, even if I am delayed, you will know how to live in the family of God, which is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth.

16 Without doubt, the secret of our life of worship is great: He was shown to us in a human body, proved right in spirit, and seen by angels. He was proclaimed to the nations, believed in by the world, and taken up in glory.

Christmas Memories



The Legacy of Deacon Reggie Elliott

By Deacon Leon Pierce

God is increasingly revealing that those close to us are given to us as gifts to fulfill His purpose. This revelation helps us to understand that they never really belonged to us, but to Him. Deacon Reginald B. Elliott, who passed in April 2018, was such a gift.



Deacon Elliott was affectionately known by everyone as “Reggie.” My family and I met him in early 1977 after we joined the church. We participated in the New Members Club and joined a fellowship group he led called Joy: Jesus first, Others second and Yourself last. Joy consisted of his mom Jennie (who was a deaconess), my family, and several other members from our church and other area churches. We engaged in Bible study, testimonies, singing, and ended with a group Jewish dance we all enjoyed.

I remember asking Reggie why everyone was talking so much about Jesus. He responded “Leon, Jesus was God *in the flesh*.” I said what!!!! Yes, the scales fell off my eyes. It was this revelation of Jesus by Reggie that laid the marker for me for our rich relationship. It was as if he had given me trillions of dollars, and I was so grateful to him. I have never been the same.

Reggie was ordained as a deacon in 1977. He was highly respected by the Board in meetings when he spoke on issues, everyone would hush out of respect for his faith, knowledge of Scripture, and relationship with the Lord.

Reggie felt we had to engage in *great exploits* for Jesus Christ. The Lord was always a crucial part of his conversations. He witnessed to whomever he encountered regardless of color or age. He spoke to audiences in churches and other groups, such as Joe Gibbs’ Washington football team. He chided the team for

just aspiring to get into the playoffs and urged them to get to the Super Bowl—which they did. One on one, Reggie would speak of the Lord as though He was standing right there. The Lord was personalized, and Reggie’s intimacy with Him was quite evident.

Reggie enjoyed working with youth and young adults and held youth retreats at Massanutten Mountain. He was influential in bringing the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship to our church, and Reggie sang bass in our Male Chorus.

For many years, he was the principal at the D.C. Street Academy (which later was renamed the Luke C. Moore Academy). What was significant about the Academy was the students were young people almost everyone had given up on. Deacon Elliott held their commencement exercises at our church and mobilized its board of directors to raise more than a million dollars for an expansion that included classrooms, a cafeteria/ auditorium, and offices.

It was my destiny to meet Reggie Elliott at Nineteenth Street. I try to reflect what he taught me through the Holy Spirit, and I feel inspired by what a blessing he was to our church. ❖

Editor’s Note: Deacon Elliott continues to be a blessing to us. His estate left the church a substantial 6-figure cash gift with no stipulations or restrictions except that a plaque be installed “to honor Deacon Elliott’s love and contributions to Nineteenth Street.” The Deacon and Trustee Boards are working to determine an appropriate location for the plaque. The funds are currently in a restricted account pending recommendations on how they should be used.

Contact the Trustee Board if you’re interested in setting up a legacy gift for the church.

Annual Christmas Bazaar Supports Love Pals

By Trustee Donza M. Poole, Chair of the Building Fund Committee

Virtual Christmas Bazaar Sunday, December 13 Noon-2 p.m. On Zoom

To register, email BuildingFund@19thstreetbc.org

For the past six years, the Building Fund Committee has held its annual Fair Trade Christmas Bazaar & Bake Sale in the fellowship hall on a December Sunday after service. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we knew that would be impossible this year. Still, we wanted to find a way to keep the tradition going. We also wanted to support local vendors we have worked with over the years, as they have fewer vending opportunities now due to the closure or cancellation of many flea markets and bazaars.

The vendors, mostly women, are small business owners, artists, retirees, entrepreneurs, and creatives. Some are members of Nineteenth Street. We recently received the following message from a vendor: "I am so proud of you, your committee, and Nineteenth Street Baptist Church for supporting vendors and small businesses. Thank you so much!"

This year we will hold the bazaar on the Zoom videoconference platform. We look forward to presenting a great group of vendors offering one-of-a-kind gifts, jewelry, accessories, art, dolls, and more. It should be a unique opportunity to get to know the vendors. Watch the church eblasts and social media posts for updates and more information.

We also look forward to continuing our tradition of featuring a church ministry at the bazaar. This year's ministry is the Progressive Adults' Love Pal Program. With theater productions suspended, Progressive Adults has been unable to raise funds through their theater outings. Participants in the Love Pal Program receive a bi-monthly stipend and supportive message while attending undergraduate school. The program has benefitted over 500 students. As in previous years, we will have a vendor table for ministries. We invite you to stop by the bazaar to learn more and support the Love Pal Program with a donation.

The bazaar will be a *giving experience* where we aim to help people "give gifts that give back" by shopping local vendors and supporting other good causes.

See you at our Virtual Christmas Bazaar! ❖



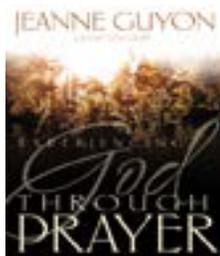


Page-turner Book Reviews

By Deacon Johnnie Love



Books reviewed for the month of December have a two-fold purpose. First, they will aid you in releasing the tensions of the pandemic. Second, they will draw you closer to our Creator. Both December Page-turners are for all ages!



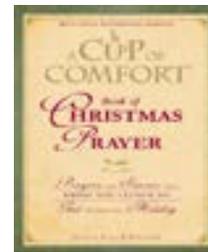
Experiencing God Through Prayer by Madame Jeanne Guyon

This past summer our Women's Ministry Bible Study explored women of the early Christian church in Romans 16. In that same vein, I have continued to study women who are martyrs and have given themselves to the work of

Christ. This book is about such a person and becomes a "Page-turner!" Madame Guyon (pronounced Gay-yo) challenges the reader to find ways of experiencing God through prayer. She provides examples for those who hunger and thirst after God's presence. She also clarifies the difference between praying to God and experiencing God through prayer. Her premise is that "people want to direct God instead of resigning themselves to being directed by Him. They want to show Him the way rather than following God's lead." (Gilchrist) Madame Guyon's gift to the reader is complex in nature. The gift is "how to enjoy God's presence, growing in knowledge of the Word as you learn to pray, experiencing rest from worry, and gaining wisdom and understanding." (Amazon)

Madame Guyon paid a heavy price for her views and writings. She was imprisoned at age 47 for seven years because her

writings and teachings were in direct conflict with the French Catholic Church. Great spiritual leaders such as Fenelon, the French Roman Catholic archbishop, and John Wesley, evangelist and founder of the Methodist Movement in the Church of England, have both acknowledged their indebtedness to Madame Guyon's publications—for her work was at the center of the great spiritual movement known as "Quietism" within the Catholic church. (Gilchrist)



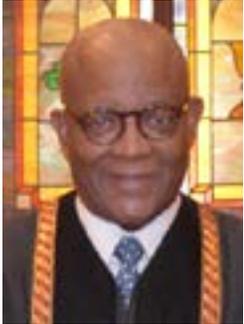
A Cup of Comfort Book of Christmas Prayer: Prayers and Stories that Bring You Closer to God During the Holiday by Susan B. Townsend

A Cup of Comfort is a collection of meditations that includes Scripture, devotionals, and stories of real-life accounts of Christmas miracles.

Christmas is a time for telling and retelling the story of the Christ Child. You will be able to read about that memorable journey Mary and Joseph made to Bethlehem. The Epiphany, the story of the Magi's visit to see the Christ Child, is also told. Other stories are *light in spirit* and create a sense of harmony and well-being. I truly believe this book will give you focus for creating a quiet time for your family. This book becomes a significant "Page-turner!" for it gives God's families the true reason for the season and an opportunity for the Lord's Word to "be taken to heart." It is an introspective look at how much we have the gift of the Christ child within each of us, and it is sure to provide holiday warmth for Christians everywhere. ❖

GriefShare Help for the Holidays

Rev. Reginald Townsend, Associate Minister



The purpose of the GriefShare Ministry is to provide help and hope for Church members hurting from the pain of grief. The ministry conducts life-changing support sessions for individuals who have experienced a life crisis resulting from the death of a loved one. The ministry is open to members of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church family and community participants who are grieving.

The GriefShare Ministry leadership team includes a cross-section of our church family, comprised of ministers, deacons, and concerned laity.

As we enter the holiday season, many of our church members have mixed feelings and emotions about this Christmas and the 2021 new year. There are those who have warm and happy memories of times past spent with loved ones that they will always cherish. Still, others may be feeling pain, loneliness, regrets, and in some cases, even anger. Regardless of your situation, we want to remind you that Jesus is the reason for the season and God is able to heal every pain while mending broken hearts.

Be Not Discouraged

The holiday season is a unique time for spiritual revival and reflection. The Christmas season is a time for praise and thankfulness to God for His many blessings. At Christmas, we should celebrate the gift of forgiveness and eternal life that Jesus brought us. His birth marks a new chapter in God's plan to save us from our sin and ultimately end our suffering. So, if you're

feeling discouraged during the holidays, remind yourself that the baby Jesus came, not only to save you from your sins but to heal your heart and the pains of this world, which are many.

Is Holiday Grief Normal?

Yes, grief is a normal response to a significant loss. The holidays can heighten our feelings of loneliness. In the event you find yourself feeling sad and lonely, here are some important steps to take in dealing with your emotions:

- Recognize that loneliness is what you're feeling, which is a normal response in times of crisis and uncertainty.
- Accept the reality of your situation. Pray and ask God to redirect your life in a positive spiritual direction.
- Seek structured activities that can include calling family, friends and other support systems.
- Support your church, sororities/fraternities, and other nonprofits, whenever feasible.
- If you find yourself stuck, don't be afraid to ask for help from your clergy or professional counselors.
- Read your Bible daily, eat a healthy diet, get your rest, and exercise.
- Don't watch too much TV but instead read books, write poetry, listen to music, develop a hobby, and overall, be creative.
- Wear a mask, wash your hands often, and practice social distancing whenever possible.

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It was David who said that even though we walk through the darkest valley, we should fear no evil, for the Lord is with us at all times (Psalm 23:4). We look forward to the new year with hope and expectation that there will be a positive change in America. Along with the installation of a new president, vice president, and administration, we can anticipate many positive changes. The new vaccines soon to be authorized will protect us against the COVID-19 virus. In addition, economic growth and other projected changes will soon bring about a new awakening of peace, prosperity, joy, and hope throughout our communities.

Strength in the Promise

Christmas gives us hope that things will get better if we just trust God. It is a reminder of the hope and the promise of the gift that God gave us through Jesus. Without the promises of Jesus, we could not deal with the losses that we've experienced as a consequence of sin and death. Your mind and body may grow weak, but God is your strength. Jesus has promised never to leave or forsake us (John 3:16). Our memories are precious gifts from the past, and they may even bring tears of joy amidst the sorrow. But cherish the memories and be of good courage because they represent God's way of healing our pain. GriefShare stands ready to support you both now and after the holiday season. Please call the church office for further information on the GriefShare Ministry at 202-829-2773. ❖

Helping Hand Club Continues Long Tradition of Helping

By Trustee Carolyn Wilson

The Helping Hand Club seeks your help to identify families to receive holiday food baskets this year. The Club has been distributing baskets to families in need since 1938.

This year's food baskets consist of a complete turkey meal that can easily feed a family of five. The baskets include all the ingredients for the meal, even including the cooking oil and butter!

The families do not have to be members of Nineteenth Street.

Please submit the names and contact information for any families by December 12, 2020, to Trustee Carolyn Wilson (202-526-2803 or 202-744-2174), Sheila Beale (202-253-3045), or any member of the Helping Hand Club.

The baskets will be distributed on Tuesday, December 15, and can be picked up in the fellowship hall between 1 and 4 p.m.

Thank you for helping us continue to help others. ❖



Check out and follow our social media accounts:

 **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/Everyblessing.org

 **Instagram:** www.instagram.com/explore/tags/nsbcdc

**Watch broadcasts of our weekly
Worship Services on YouTube**



Nineteenth Street Members for 50+ Years

We thank God for the faithful members who have belonged to our church for 50 years or more.
Thank you to the Archives Committee for maintaining our church records and continuing to document our history.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Shirley G. Ali | Leola Jackson | Juran D. Moore Sr. | Rachelle F. Washington |
| Eleanor T. Banks | Eleanor C. Jefferson | Dorothy J. Morgan | Mozelle E. Watkins |
| Myra Banks-Scott | Denise P. Johnson | Pamela D. Morgan | Bernard H. White, Jr. |
| Sidney H. Blakely | Dennis Leon Johnson | Diane Wendy Morris | E. Louise M. White |
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| Sandra Caviness | Sheila Y. Jordan | Ella M. B. Roberson | |
| Eunice W. Cothran | Laurice P. Juggins | Ann Hayes Saunders | As of 11/30/20 |
| Pearl J. Paige Davis | Nannie S. Leake | Dorothy D. Sayles | |
| Gloria B. Dempsey | Ellen Mills Lewis | Karen R. Sidney-Drumgold | |
| Ora M. S. Drew | Erma Long | Elvera Edmunds Snow | |
| Lewis M. Edmunds | Rosemary Mills Massey | Gloria T. Spann | |
| Sehon Grigsby | Josie M. Meeks | Joe W. Sudduth | <i>To add your name, please email name and dates of church membership to</i> |
| Lawrence Bruce Hayes | Sharon O. Miller | Jacqueline Tatum | <i>June L. Jackson, Church Clerk</i> |
| Shirley A. G. Hayes | Betty J. Montague | Ronald J. Taylor | <i>jkljackson@19thstreetbc.org</i> |
| Jean D. Jackson | Jerry A. Moore III | Inez C. Walker | |

Building Fund Progress Report and Thanks

By Trustee Donza M. Poole, Chair of the Building Fund Committee

It's been an exciting and busy time for the Building Fund Committee. We presented our first-ever virtual version of Stewardship Sunday and launched the 90-Day Giving Challenge in October. Our goal was to inspire stewardship and raise funds for the Capital Improvement Project, and we are well on our way.

We set a fundraising goal of \$10,000 for Stewardship Sunday, held on October 25. We also launched the 90-day Giving Challenge (October to December) to encourage the church family to give to the Capital Improvement Project on a regular basis.

We are pleased to report that over \$11,000 has been raised for the Capital Improvement Project so far! In addition, more than 20 members have signed up for the 90-Day Challenge which runs until December 31, 2020.

The funds raised from Stewardship Sunday and the 90-Day Challenge will be used for capital improvements to the church, including replacing the sanctuary air conditioner and one of the church's steam boilers for heat.

We are so grateful for the gifts of time, talent, and treasure from our church family. We thank Trustee Michael Beale and LaTonya Clark for their inspiring Stewardship Sunday video testimonials. We thank the donors to the Capital Improvement Project and those who enrolled in the 90-Day Giving Challenge.

The Building Fund Committee also thanks the members of the Communications and Media Ministries who helped us present Stewardship Sunday virtually this year, especially Roman Holton

for teaching us how to best present and produce videos for YouTube. Thank you to church staff Robin Smith and Portia Thompson, Treasurer Shirley France, Trustee Chairman Franklin Smith, and Pastor Roberts for their help.

Many thanks to Stewardship Sunday co-chairs Ferlandia Townsend and Deborah Lewis Thornton, and immediate past co-chair Sybil Barbour for their steadfast commitment to seeing these events through. Finally, many thanks to the members of the Building Fund Committee. We are a small ministry that aims to do big things!

There is still time to support our ongoing fundraising and the 90-Day Giving Challenge with a gift to the Capital Improvement Project. Visit the church website at www.19thstreetbc.org and click the "Giving" tab to give online and for giving information. ❖

Access LIVESTREAM on YouTube or Facebook:

YouTube at <https://everyblessing.org/live-streaming>

Facebook Live at <https://facebook.com/nineteenth.street.399>

**Access the PRAYER MEETING AND PRAYER CALL at
605-472-5349, access code 348952#**

**Access the CHURCH SCHOOL ADULT CLASS CALL at
712-770-5572, access code 577559#**

Contact organizers for access to ZOOM programs

A Gratitude of THANKS

By Robin Williams

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 2 Corinthians 9:11

The Church School Thanksgiving Service Project Committee wishes to extend a heartfelt Thank You to our Nineteenth Street church family and friends for your generous contributions which helped to provide Giant Food gift cards for families in need during the Thanksgiving holiday season. We were able to feed 42 families, totaling 210 family members.

The Committee distributed the gift cards the week before Thanksgiving over a three-day period making it convenient for families to come to the church to pick them up. We set up tables on the church parking lot and everyone practiced safe social distancing.

The Committee extends special thanks to the following persons for their help and support: Shirley France, Angela Griffin, Walter Thomas, Portia Thompson, Robin Smith, and Nekie Wilkey.

Dorothy Curtis, Karen Sidney-Drumgold, and Robin Williams served as the Thanksgiving Service Project Committee. ❖



Sunday School Class Puts Lessons into Action

By Anika Cooper

In November, the Virtual Adult Sunday School Class continued reading and discussing God's Word and putting those Scriptural lessons into action! The month's focus was on 1 Corinthians and Paul's advice for the early Christian churches, including Paul's prayers of thanksgiving for his fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

In keeping with that teaching, the Virtual Class generously supported the Church School's Thanksgiving project, with class members donating more than \$1,800 to help feed families in need during the holiday.

We invite everyone to join the Virtual Adult Sunday School Class on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. for 40 minutes of fellowship and spiritual growth!

The call-in number is 712-770-5572, access code is 577559#. ❖

Congratulations to....



Edith Bullard-Britt, who recently retired from Yes&, a D.C. marketing agency, to accept the position of Director of Communications for the ACLU of Virginia (See October 2020 *Epistle*). Yes& honored Edith's service by establishing the Edith Bullard Fellowship for

Racial and Ethnic Diversity. The fellowship is designed to encourage professionals with diverse backgrounds and from communities of color to enter the field of marketing, to lend their unique perspectives, and to advance their career aspirations. In announcing the fellowship, the Yes& CEO noted that "Edith's whole career serves as a demonstration of how much better our companies can be, and how much richer our lives can be, when we are inclusive and diverse. She has brought that awareness not only to Yes& but also to the clients and volunteer organizations she has served." The Edith Bullard Fellowship is an annual, school year-long, paid fellowship. ❖

Welcome New Members

Dr. Irvin Moody Jr.
Rev. Walter Jackson Jr.



On Monday, November 2, Pastor Roberts and members of Nineteenth Street participated in an Election Eve Vigil to pray for a just, livable future for all. We joined neighbors and congregations along 16th Street from the White House to Silver Spring. Prayer works!

Relax, Relate, and Release This Holiday Season

By Siera Toney, Membership Care Coordinator

As 2020 winds down, many of us could use an opportunity to chill (Relax), connect (Relate), and check-in (Release), and Nineteenth Street is providing the virtual venue.

Relax, Relate, Release (R3) is a laidback (relaxed) virtual gathering space for members of the Nineteenth Street community to connect (relate) and check-in (release). The inaugural check-in was held via Zoom the evening of November 13, 2020, and allowed members of the extended Nineteenth Street family—in the area and as far away as Arkansas—to connect with each other.

This space was born out of an effort to connect and check-in with members of our church who we don't often get to see or hear from, especially the “middlers” or sandwich generation (between the ages of about 30 and 50) who are often carrying

the demanding load of career, family, faith, and service at the same time. In these pandemic times, and particularly after the arduous 2020 election process, a safe space for checking-in was a timely effort.

The name *Relax, Relate, Release* is a reference to a holiday episode of the iconic '90s sitcom “A Different World.” In the episode, the show's producer, Debbie Allen, guest stars as a therapist striving to help various members of the Hillman College community (a widely beloved cast) to solidify and strengthen their familial relationships during the holidays. She invites both an individual 30-something (the young professional and socialite Whitley Gilbert) and a blended family (Col. Taylor, 50ish; his new wife Jaleesa, 35ish; and his collegiate son/her stepson, Terrence) to “Relax, Relate, Release” into their relationships and their real feelings about their current life circumstances.

Our goals for the R3 gatherings of Nineteenth Street's blended family in this *different world* we find ourselves living in are similar:

- Create a safe space for our community (especially our members in the middle) to gather, connect, share, and belong in this season of transition and change;
- Foster and nurture deeper connections within the church family near and far; and
- Have a deeper awareness of how our members (past, present, and potential) are really doing and how Nineteenth Street can walk alongside them in this stage of life.



Spearheaded by a group of ministry leaders whose work centers around membership engagement and congregational care, this collaborative effort yielded a beautiful gathering of about 21 members from various iterations of Nineteenth Street's legacy (see photo).

Special thanks to the planning committee and team of worker bees who brought to life this inaugural *Relax, Relate, Release* community check-in event:

- Jaleya Leonard, whose prayers for a check-in space for 30-50-year-olds planted a seed for R3
- Deacon Deborah Crain Kemp, whose advocacy for the event at every stage and provision of the Zoom platform took R3 from planning to implementation
- Edith Bullard-Britt, whose powerful event planning tool and process through the Communications Ministry gave the event clarity and whose creativity, skill, and speed, brought the event to life in flyer form for sharing
- Violetta Graham, whose emphasis on data-driven outreach and on the welcoming atmosphere of the Zoom space helped make R3 a space that people were able to show up to and wanted to return
- Shirley France whose optimism, encouragement, and database work laid the foundations for successful outreach to get people out to R3 and provided a great place to start from for the future
- Trustee Donza Poole, whose pragmatism, leveraging of relationships, and willingness to reach out to people on her day off helped get more people in the Zoom room
- Charles Gordon and Deacon Stephanie Thomas-Gordon whose consistent support of the event, ideas on who to reach out to for future gatherings, and helpful notes on

language helped make a flexible *pop-in, drop-in* check-in space

- Music Minister Kenny Peagler, whose presence, participation, and support, as the newest member of the church staff and a member of the 30-50 crowd, showed great solidarity
- Rev. James Harris, whose presence brought great energy to the space, whose leadership of the Youth and Young Adult Ministry (YAYA) provided access to many of Nineteenth Street's parents who embody the target audience for this gathering, and whose interest in a consistent vision extended the R3 space to the youth the following Sunday
- Pastor Darryl D. Roberts, whose pastoral leadership aligned the team and this endeavor with Nineteenth Street's Stronger in 2023 goals, provided great guidance on process and impact, and ultimately birthed a strong and powerful Membership Engagement Team for future collaborative work

.....
Join us for R3 December

**Friday December 11
7:30 – 8:30 p.m. EST**

Relax, Relate, and Release
as we reflect on the losses/gains of 2020
and our expectations for great things
during Advent and the New Year!

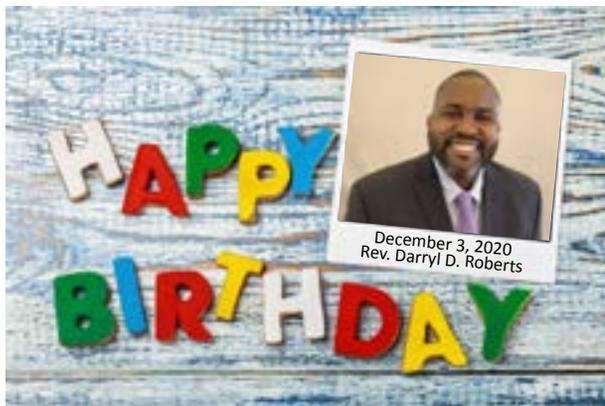
For Zoom credentials and more information, email
19thStreetR3@gmail.com



Sing it twice while you wash your hands!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------|---------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Jerry A. Moore III | 12/1 | Allison D. Thomas | 12/4 | Opal Hyde | 12/16 |
| Patricia C. Thomas | 12/1 | Deaconess Jean R. Jordan (91st) | 12/5 | Odelia McFadden | 12/16 |
| Bernadette Swanson-Thomas | 12/2 | DeVera Y. Redmond | 12/6 | Cynthia H. Thompson | 12/16 |
| Valarie B. Ashley | 12/3 | Queen Esther Baskerville | 12/9 | Stacey Burch | 12/17 |
| Taquanna Bolden | 12/3 | Delbert Miller | 12/9 | A. Samantha Buggs-Neel | 12/18 |
| John E. Jackson | 12/3 | Ronald J. Taylor | 12/9 | Sandra W. Howell | 12/19 |
| Beverly Janine Page | 12/3 | Deaconess Sandra Caviness | 12/10 | Deaconess Linda Leftrict | 12/19 |
| Rev. Darryl D. Roberts | 12/3 | Rev. James A. Crosson Jr. | 12/10 | Karen E. Williamson | 12/20 |
| Deacon Gerald Young | 12/3 | Deacon Harrison Lightfoot | 12/10 | William R. Hyde | 12/21 |
| Stephanie Sprow Owens | 12/4 | Deaconess Evangeline Stevens | 12/10 | Minister Leslie Wiley | 12/21 |
| | | William Washington Jr. | 12/10 | Erik A. Moses | 12/22 |
| | | Deaconess E. Louise White | 12/10 | Nathaniel Slayton III | 12/22 |
| | | Kenneth Martin | 12/12 | Ronald F. Williams | 12/22 |
| | | Melvin J. Spann | 12/14 | Kariel McMillan | 12/23 |
| | | Sheryll D. Cashin | 12/15 | Deacon Stephanie Thomas-Gordon | 12/23 |
| | | Ashley Lewis Sturdivant | 12/15 | Renee Bovelle | 12/30 |
| | | Julia V. Clark | 12/16 | Tonya R. Robertson | 12/30 |



Please notify the church office of additions or corrections.

December Calendar

Tuesday, December 1

Praying Through the Pandemic Prayer Call, led by Clergy,
6:30-6:45 a.m.

Grace for Living Bible Study with Rev. Roberts, livestream, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, December 2

Prayer Call, led by Deaconesses, Noon-12:15 p.m.

Music Ministry Choir Connection, Zoom, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 3 – Prayer Meeting “Covenant” Call, led by Deacons, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 4 – Women’s Ministry Bible Study with Rev. Dr. Cheryl Coleman Hall, Zoom, 7-8:15 p.m.

Sunday, December 6 – Second Sunday of Advent

Church School, Adult Class, conference call, 9-9:40 a.m.

Worship Service, Bring Your Own Elements Communion,
livestream, 10 a.m.

Youth Church, Zoom, 11:30 a.m.

Church School, Pre-K to Age 10, Zoom, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, December 8

Praying Through the Pandemic Prayer Call, led by Clergy,
6:30-6:45 a.m.

Grace for Living Bible Study with Rev. Roberts, livestream, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, December 9

Prayer Call, led by Deaconesses, Noon-12:15 p.m.

Music Ministry Choir Connection Call, Zoom, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Board of Christian Education Training Forum, Zoom, 7 p.m.

Thursday, December 10 – Prayer Meeting Call, Rev. Robin Turner preaching, led by Deacons, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 11 – Young Adult Ministry, “Quarantine & Chill” with Rev. Harris, Zoom, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 12 – Board of Christian Education Training Forum, Zoom, 11 a.m.

Sunday, December 13 – Third Sunday of Advent

Church School, Adult Class, conference call, 9-9:40 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service, livestream, 10 a.m.

Youth Church, Zoom, 11:30 a.m.

Tweens and Teens Sunday School, Zoom, Noon

Church School, Pre-K to Age 10, Zoom, 1 p.m.

Building Fund Virtual Christmas Bazaar, Zoom, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, December 15

Praying Through the Pandemic Prayer Call, led by Clergy,
6:30-6:45 a.m.

Grace for Living Bible Study with Rev. Roberts, livestream, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, December 16

Prayer Call, led by Deaconesses, Noon-12:15 p.m.

Music Ministry Choir Connection, Zoom, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 17 – Prayer Meeting Call, led by Deacons, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 18 – Women’s Ministry Bible Study with Rev. Dr. Cheryl Hall, Zoom, 7-8:15 p.m.

Sunday, December 20 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Church School, Adult Class, Conference Call, 9-9:40 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service, Church School Christmas Drama,
livestream, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, December 22 – Praying Through the Pandemic Prayer Call, led by Clergy, 6:30-6:45 a.m.

Wednesday, December 23

Prayer Call, led by Deaconesses, Noon-12:15 p.m.

Music Ministry Choir Connection, Zoom, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 24 – Prayer Meeting Call, with Rev. Lorise White-Wolfe preaching, led by Deacons, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 25 – MERRY CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 27

Church School, Adult Class, Conference Call, 9-9:40 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service, livestream, 10 a.m.

Youth Church, Zoom, 11:30 a.m.

Tweens and Teens Sunday School, Zoom, Noon

Church School, Pre-K to Age 10, Zoom, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, December 29 – Praying Through the Pandemic Prayer Call, led by Clergy, 6:30-6:45 a.m.

Wednesday, December 30 – Prayer Call, led by Deaconesses, Noon-12:15 p.m.

Thursday, December 31 – To Be Announced

Information on how to access these services is on page 15