

Happy  
New  
Year!

Connecting  
People  
to Christ



# The Church at Antioch

Bible-based, Christ-centered, Holy Spirit-led, Mission-bound • Fellowship, Evangelism, Doctrine, Stewardship

October-December 2021

Volume 10, Issue 5



Pastor Kenny receives award

## Pastor Alexander recognized for civil rights work

He never seeks attention. Instead, the Rev. Kenneth Alexander labors “quietly and humbly” to get things done, to carry out God’s directive.

For that, the Women Works Media Group, a media and communications company that promotes and empowers women, honored Antioch Baptist Church North’s pastor along with other Atlanta giants.

Sis. Myrna White, Assistant General Manager for the Office of Public and International Affairs at Hartsfield-Jackson Airport and Honorary Dinner Chair of the event, assured those gathered that despite Alexander’s comments to the contrary, he did indeed belong at the table with the other award recipients.

*Continued on page 3*

### 2022 Vision

## Pastor Alexander’s call to press onward

We praise God today for the prayers of all those who came before us. We are ‘Antioch Strong’ because of the deep abiding faith of our former pastors, deacons, mothers, auxiliaries, and all our members who sacrificed, prayed, and trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ. They fought a good fight, they finished their courses and laid a spiritual foundation built on the solid rock, Jesus Christ.

Each age has its challenges. Those who came before us had theirs and we have had and are

accustomed, God is renovating our edifice to serve this present age. People are accepting Christ and renewing their relationships with God through the platforms and outlets God has given us.

Much like the early church when it was forced to scatter, we are now reaching more people than we were before. So, I ask you, after 144 years, what say ye?

Let us not be weary in well-doing. Let us “bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill

*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:14 KLV*

having ours. Our recent challenges have not broken us because the Lord is with us. We have been hit hard by this world’s troubles, but we stand rejuvenated, revitalized, and recharged.

Amid the pandemic, social injustice, racism, and hatred, we continue to engage, edify, and encourage each other and the world in the name of Jesus. Jesus has endued us with power from the Holy Ghost and allowed us to take His passion and pivot in the new normal and press on to see what the end will be.

Our congregation has grown in services that we offer to members and ministries that address the teachings of Jesus Christ in Matthew 25:35,36: “For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.”

As we battle the discomfort of not being able to gather and fellowship the way we are

the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). We must not let the storms of life separate us from the love of God or each other.

Paul, while facing great adversity, told the Philippians in chapter 3:14, “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Though our adversities are great, we must remember our God is greater, so let us Press On. Press on through the storms. Press on through the trials. Press on through the grief. Press on through sickness.

We press on because those who came before us 144 years ago pressed on. We press on because we know something at the end is waiting for us. We press on because Romans 8:18 tells us, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

We’re pressing on the upward way, new heights we’re gaining every day.



## A Message From The Pastor

My brothers and sisters,

The approval of the COVID-19 vaccine had everyone hopeful that the global pandemic would be eradicated—or at least held to manageable levels—by the time school started after a much-needed summer vacation. Instead, we find ourselves with a new variant, and we have experienced another tumultuous year on almost every front. Yet, we have not grown weary in well-doing (Gal. 6:9), and we have maintained our hope because although we don't know what tomorrow will bring we know who is in control and who holds all the days.

Through it all, Antioch has forged ahead. We continue to be about our Father's business as we activate our four pillars: doctrine, evangelism, stewardship, and fellowship.

**DOCTRINE:** I continue to be led by the Holy Spirit to deliver His message during Sunday Worship service and Wednesday Night Bible Study. Three of our pastoring sons, Rev. Eddie Bright, Rev. John Byrdsell, and Rev. J. Scott Copeland fed our souls during our revival. Our Christian Education Ministry is second to none, providing ongoing study opportunities through Sunday School, morning devotions, Thursday night Bible Study classes, and leadership training.

**EVANGELISM:** We still cannot knock on doors and invite people to come to know our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but the call to salvation is going out in unique ways as our members encounter the unsaved and backslidden. We can never know how many are reached through the Annual Thanksgiving Worship Service/Dinner our ministerial sons and Male Chorus provide for residents at the Salvation Army. Tracts and Our Daily Bread go out through our Food Bank, ASK, mailings and giveaways.


**STEWARDSHIP:** I cannot list the many ways in which Antioch consistently meets the needs of our community, the neighbors Christ commands us to love. The AUMI report each Sunday giving the number served through our Food Bank and meals served is only a glimpse of our outreach. Thanksgiving and Christmas boxes and other services for our Seniors, partnering with the Empty Stocking Fund and our annual Christmas Toy Giveaway, the Care and Comfort Ministry's outreach, and daily response to individuals who bring their needs to us cannot be quantified.

**FELLOWSHIP:** Our drive-thru and virtual celebrations of our pioneers and our 144th Anniversary were phenomenal. We continue to celebrate our married couples' anniversaries and individuals' birthdays. Your outpouring of love for my wife Lisa's birthday was overwhelming. She is still celebrating! ASK's Drive-Thru celebration of our Seniors brought generations together as children and grandchildren brought their parents and grandparents to the church to pick up their gifts. The drive-thru birthday celebration for our well-deserving security, set-up, breakdown, distribution point person, D.J., Jack-of-all trades, Bro. Bob Brown was a surprise he will long remember.

We celebrated and congratulated Rev. John Byrdsell as we installed him as pastor of Concord Baptist Church. Rising senior scholar-athlete Bro. Truman Jones' being named the 148th captain of the Harvard University football team is a tribute to how Antioch pours into her youth. I am sure we had a decisive hand in propelling our Mayor-elect Andre Dickens into office since our Fellowship Hall served as one of Atlanta's polling sites. Trained and ordained a deacon by our former pastor, Rev. Dr. C.M. Alexander, and serving at New Horizons BC pastored by Antioch son Rev. Sean Smith, we celebrate his victory and will keep him lifted in prayer for the daunting task he faces.

I am humbled to have been included in The Annual Power List of the Women Works Media Group. I thank our member Sis. Myrna White, Assistant General Manager of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, for nominating me and the organization for honoring me with the Power and Civil Rights Award. The award truly belongs to our Antioch and AUMI families who have given of their time, talents, and treasures so that we can positively impact the lives of those who need our help as we carry out the Matthew 28:19-20 mandate.

Yours in God's service,

  
 Reverend K. L. Alexander, Pastor

# After more than a century, Antioch still pressing on

In the 144 years since the Bethesda Prayer Band became Antioch Baptist Church North, tens of thousands have given their lives to Christ and ministries have increased in ways unimaginable.

And that, said the Rev. Frederick Robinson, is evidence that Antioch continues to press on.

Robinson is a son of Antioch North, former Associate Pastor of Holy Covenant United Church of Christ in Charlotte, NC and executive director of Mecklenburg Ministries, the city's oldest interfaith network.

He was the guest preacher Nov. 14, the day set aside to celebrate Antioch's 144th anniversary.

In all those years, Robinson said Antioch has never been content with past victories.

Through an unprecedented pandemic, he noted, the church has pressed on.

"You're still a beacon of hope, a hospital for wounded souls, still an open door for the marginalized and overlooked," he said. "You're still on the battlefield, still ministering to the sick, preaching the gospel, still



*Antioch participants at the 144th Anniversary Drive-thru*

singing the Lord's song."

Robinson, drawing from Philipians 3: 13-14, noted that even Covid-19 hasn't stopped the church from ministering to the least, the less and the lost. In fact, he said, the pandemic has helped Antioch do what God called her to do: go into all the world.

After taking a spiritual inventory of his life, Robinson said Paul tells us he still hasn't arrived when it comes to his walk with God. Indeed the apostle admits that he still has some work to do.

"That is all of our testimony," Robinson said. "All of us can say I'm not what I used to be but I'm not what I should be."

On the other hand, Paul says this one thing I do.

"Too many of us try to do the most," Robinson said. "We try to serve God and mammon. We try to have a wife and a girlfriend. We try to love God who we can't see but hate those we do see."

Paul says, however, give me an undivided heart so that I fear your name.

"We've got to be focused on our faith," Robinson said. "In

Mark 10:21, Jesus said there was one thing you lack: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

In other words, Robinson said, we got to get more focused in our faith, forgetting as Paul said, those things which are behind.

"Some of us need to develop holy amnesia about the past," Robinson said. "Behind me is pain but before me is peace. Behind me is hell but before me is hallelujah. Have faith in what can be."

Then Paul says "I press toward the mark of the high calling." Paul was saying there is something more than what the state offers. There's something more than fear based economics. There is a new system based on mutuality and love.

"Our press is a call to dream for something other than self, other than rampant poverty, than the indifference to the suffering of others," Robinson said.

Our press should be a life that honors Jesus Christ our Lord and savior.



*Pastor Kenneth and Lady Lisa*

*Continued from cover - Alexander recognized*

Rev. Alexander received the media group's Power and Civil Rights Award. Other honorees included: Billye Aaron; Balram Bheodari, General Manager of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport; Coach Bo Bell, who seeks to help student athletes through his training academy; Mary Parker, founder and CEO of All N One Security; Charles Person, one of the last two living Freedom Riders; Stephen and Heather Maio-Smith, founders of StoryFile.

It's dangerous, Alexander quipped, to have a preacher be the first recipient and allow him to make remarks. He said he's remind-

ed constantly of the man in Scripture at the pool of Bethesda and his answer to Jesus when he asked him whether he wanted to be made well.

The man began with excuses, but Jesus simply told him to "Get up," and the man was healed immediately.

"That is what we have been doing for over 30 years," he told a rapt audience. "Providing food, clothing, and housing and showing people how to get clean is showing them how to "Get up! If God woke you up this morning, you have a reason to get up."



NOVEMBER

# Team Honey walks to end Alzheimer's

The 2021 Walk to End Alzheimer's began Nov. 6 just moments after crowds celebrating the Braves' World Series win at Truist Park dispersed.

One worker said the last of the Braves' celebrants left around 4:00 a.m.

"We were cleaning the whole time they were here celebrating so that we could be ready for this morning, and we finished the set up just in time," she said.

Some participants, in keeping with COVID-19 safety protocols, made the 3-mile course around Truist Park. Others downloaded the mobile app and participated by walking from home.

Antioch's Barbara J. Alexander Team Honey, named for the church's late pastor's wife, who succumbed to the disease in 2019, was among those who opted not to gather together at the park but walked separately there and at home.

According to experts, 1 in 9 seniors aged 65 and older live with Alzheimer's dementia, and blacks are twice as likely to have



*The late Mrs. Barbara J. Alexander*

Alzheimer's or other dementias as older white people. Funds raised help to provide education, support for caregivers and those fighting the disease, and research in hopes that a cure will be found.

Even though no registration fee is required, the walk, held in over 600 communities across the country, is the largest fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Association.



## Aden inducted into 100 Black Women

Frieda Aden, a long-time member of the Antioch Baptist Church North, has been inducted into the Stone Mountain-Lithonia Chapter of National Coalition of 100 Black Women.

Aden, named to the coalition in September, sits on the organization's Advocacy and Civic Engagement Committee and the Young 100. The National Coalition of 100 Black Women is a network of professionals whose mission it is to advocate on behalf of black women and girls.

# 'Stir up the gift that is within you'

Antioch Baptist Church North honored her pioneers on Nov. 7.

The virtual service was meant to make anyone feel bad because they haven't been a member long enough.

"If you joined 50 years ago or today, we're glad to have you," Antioch's Pastor Kenneth Alexander said at the start of the service.

The day, however, summons many precious members of former pastors, mothers and deacons and ushers. It's a reminder of just how far God has brought the church.

Some may ask why look back?

"So that even when we face what seem like insurmountable challenges, we're reminded how God brought us through," he said.

Rev. Alexander recalled Sundays when men gave up their seats and sat on the steps

of the pulpit because the church was filled to capacity; when the church was landlocked and banks suggested it move.

The church remained in the community and now we give God the praise because we are sitting on some of the most desirable property in the city, he said.

"All these things are worthy of God's praise but what we praise God most for are the souls that have been saved and the peace we've enjoyed as a congregation," he said.

Paul told Timothy that he remembered "the unfeigned faith" that was in him, that dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and mother Eunice.

That is to say, Timothy didn't make it to the spiritual place on his own, Alexander

said.

"This faith has a way of working its way down through the generations," he said.

The same has been true for Antioch.

"This faith gives power to the weak. This faith gives joy to the downtrodden. This faith gives healing to the sick. This faith will give you 15 years of life when the doctor gives you 15 minutes. This faith can overpower cancer, it will pull an addict out of addiction, it will put a new song on your lips. It endures affliction and outlasts disappointment.

Since you have this faith, he told Antioch, "get your spiritual pot and no matter what you're going through, stir up the gift of God that is within you."

## Thanksgiving Day Service

# With God our fragmented lives can be made whole

For the past 18 years, the Ministerial Alliance and Male Chorus have partnered with Antioch Urban Ministries to provide a Thanksgiving meal to those who are sheltered at the Salvation Army.

This Thanksgiving was no different.

Rev. John Byrdsell, a son of Antioch Baptist Church North and pastor of the Concord Baptist Church, shared God's word from John 6:11-13.

Introduced as a "soldier and a servant of Jesus Christ," he preached "Gather Up the Fragments," saying the food fragments that we throw away may be considered a feast by

someone living on the street and cautioned against seeing any person as a fragment, for God can see the person as a treasure with a purpose.

"Our lives may be seen as fragments until we are touched by the Master's hand," Byrdsell said.

He noted that we are never told in Scripture what happened to the fragments collected after Jesus fed the multitudes with five fish and two loaves of bread, but we know that "Jesus wants us to be like him, concerned about the leftovers of society."

Jesus, he said, did not describe the frag-

ments as "remains because that would have suggested that they were dead. Neither did he use the term scraps, which signifies un-usefulness, nor leftovers, which would have implied an afterthought."

"A sentence fragment needs a subject or a verb to complete it," he said.

God can be that for us. He can make the story of our fragmented lives complete.

Indeed, Byrdsell said God's grace can wipe the hard drive of our lives clean, repurpose us by giving us a second chance and causing us to be made whole."

## National Baptist holds World Day of Prayer

Under the theme "Courageous Life" based on Hebrews 13:6, the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. Women's Auxiliary celebrated the Baptist World Day of Prayer in November.

Instead of gathering together in one location or even one Zoom call, prayer services were held in individual states and districts throughout the country.

The General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia Women's Auxiliary held

its observance virtually bringing together both men and women from across the state to worship in song and prayer.

Sis. Bobbie Marcus, first vice president of the Women's Auxiliary, spoke on "Christian Women Praying in the Spirit."

Using Ephesians 6:18 as the grounding scripture, Marcus said that praying in the spirit requires that "we call out to God and ask him to have mercy on us. Throughout her message, Sis. Marcus answered the

question, how can you pray without ceasing?

We must call on God throughout the day as we encounter different situations, she said. "One's prayer doesn't have to be long; sometimes you just look up and say, 'Lord, have mercy on me,'" she said.

Another way is to order your life around God's desires so that your very life becomes a prayer.

## Garner, Henderson awarded Mt. Hermon scholarships

Two Antioch Baptist Church North college students were awarded scholarships this year by the Mount Hermon Missionary Baptist Association.

Donovan Garner, a student at North Carolina A & T, and David Henderson, who attends Georgia State University, each received the ministry's Homer E. Smith Scholarship award.

The awards, given annually, were presented in November.

The Mount Hermon Missionary Baptist Association was organized in 1940 so that churches could band together and provide badly needed scholarships. Although the mission has expanded, the guiding principle has remained - "In Pursuit of Knowledge."

The criteria for the scholarship were set

early and remain in force: a scholarship applicant must be an active member of a church that is in good standing in the association.

The scholarship was renamed the Homer E. Smith Scholarship recently in honor of the founder of the association who served as president for 35 years.



## ANTIOCH FAMILY!

Proud of the job you do or want to nominate your sister or brother in Christ to be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Church at Antioch*?

E-mail your story idea to Sis. Gracie Staples at:  
[gracie.staples@gmail.com](mailto:gracie.staples@gmail.com)



**DECEMBER**



*Dea. Andre Dickens*

## Dickens wins mayoral race

Dea. Andre Dickens, a longtime member of Antioch Baptist Church North, was elected mayor of Atlanta in a run-off held in December.

The two-term councilman, Georgia Tech grad and Adamsville native, won the race for City Hall after garnering 64 percent of the vote and finishing a distant second behind Felicia Moore in the general election.

His ascension to Atlanta's highest office is a dream he's nurtured since he was a teenager.

The mayor-elect said in news reports that his priorities on day-one will be to reopen City Hall to the public, go over his 100-day crime plan with the police chief and ramp up community policing strategy, set up a team to be prepared for federal infrastructure dollars coming to the city, and work with leaders at the state Capitol to keep Buckhead a part of Atlanta.

## Toy Giveaway



*Antioch's Bob Brown assembles a bicycle for the giveaway*

**CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE:** Despite growing requests for Christmas toys and a plaza pirate that made off with packages left during the night, Antioch Baptist Church North shifted into high gear this year to meet the needs of children in the church and community. After volunteers discovered they had only 100 bags of toys and more than 400 requests, some members went to stores and picked up more items. An anonymous donor also donated enough toys to fill up both of the church's collection bins. Like last year, distribution was handled as a safe, limited contact drive-thru on Dec. 18. Packages were marked by name and number, and runners went into the church, matched the package to the registration form, and delivered it to the designated car.



## Antioch Memorial Book Scholarships

Memorial and book scholarships were awarded to members currently enrolled in college. These financial gifts are awarded to sophomores, juniors and seniors during

the second semester of the school year. For more information about these awards, log onto the church website [www.antiochnorth.org](http://www.antiochnorth.org) or contact a member of the scholarship ministry.

# Mentors Needed!

*JaQuan Riggins (right)  
with his Malachi mentor  
Troy François (left)*



**The Malachi Mentoring Program** is in need of MENTORS to meet the needs of our youth. Malachi Mentoring mission is to help young men and young women exemplify essential qualities of Leadership through Education, Health & Wellness, S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) and Community Involvement.

The Malachi Mentoring Ministry strives to mentor and provide guidance to all youth. This ministry incorporates a Christ-centered, role model approach. Our aim is to nurture, improve, and sustain life-changing positive influences on young people in our community.



*If you are interested in mentoring,  
please contact us at 404-522-4673.  
Thank you in advance!*



# Jones named Harvard football captain

Truman Jones has played little league football since the third grade, when his love for the sport began.

He continued to make moves on the gridiron for years after, playing for the Westminster Wildcats and the school's 2015 AAA GHSA State Championship team.

And so it was no surprise that he was recruited at the end of his senior year at Westminster to play for Harvard's Pilgrims.

Now a rising senior, Jones was elected recently as the 148th captain of Harvard football for the 2022 season.

Jones, according to head coach Tim Murphy, will continue the nearly 80-year-old tradition of one player serving as the Crimson football captain. Jones is also the 17th consecutive defensive player elected captain for Harvard football. He recorded 25 tackles, including 4.5 tackles for a loss and 2.0 sacks, while recovering one fumble, hurrying the quarterback six times and breaking up two passes during his junior campaign.

Jones, 21, is the son of Archie and Dr. Tiffini Eugene Jones.

Not surprising he's made a name for himself on and off the gridiron. In addition to being a pre-med student majoring in



*Truman Jones*

Biomedical Engineering, Jones is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., the Harvard Black Pre-Med Society, Black Men's Forum, Black Student's Association, Generational African American Student Association, and the Harvard Association of Black Varsity Athletes.



**Preaching the word:** Minister Otis Byrd Jr. a son of Antioch Baptist Church North and Princeton University theological seminary student, brought the message Nov. 28, the first day of Advent. The Sunday morning worship service was held at the Princeton University chapel. Byrd, a second year seminary student, preached from the book of Jeremiah and reminded those in attendance of the importance of holding onto our faith even when we don't know when God's promise will be fulfilled. God's promises are eternal and not bound by the limits of human time, he told them. While we wait, we must keep the faith and remember God's promises to heal, restore and revive.

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**Contributions by**  
**March 1, 2022**

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