

INSIDE

2  
3  
4  
5  
6

A Message from Pastor  
AUMI virtual hunger walk  
Hendersons host Black History celebration  
About COVID-19  
Antioch is biggest loser

*Congratulations  
2020  
Graduates!*

*Connecting  
People  
to Christ*



# The Church at Antioch

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

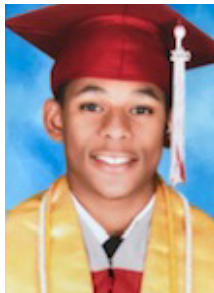
April- June 2020

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## 2020 High School Graduates



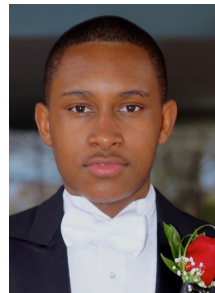
Austin Byrdsell  
International School Bangkok



Jaylen Cooley  
Hillgrove High School



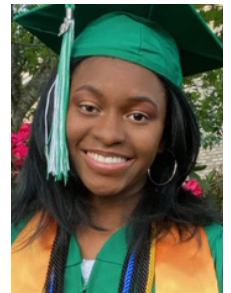
Gerald Gray  
Hillgrove High School



David Henderson  
Roswell High School



Michael Henderson  
Roswell High School



Cameron Johnson  
Collins Hill High School



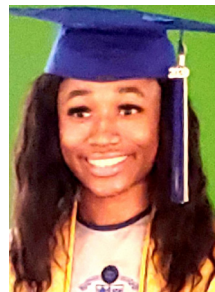
Gillian Johnson  
North Atlanta High School



Cameron Kearns  
Westlake High School



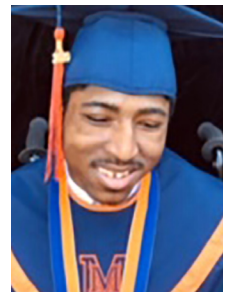
Julian Lamar  
Lithia Springs High School



April Briana Nalls  
Westlake High School



Carlson Reed  
Marietta High School



James Rencher  
Mundy's Mill High School



Elizabeth Scott  
Northview High School



Samuel Tolbert  
Stephenson High School



Jordon Weekes  
Westlake High School



Myah Williams  
Atlanta Girls' School



David F. Wilson  
Riverdale High School



Leah Wright  
Mill Creek High School

## A Message From The Pastor



Dear Antioch Family,

We began the new year with great expectations. Many people made New Year's resolutions geared toward bettering themselves. Plans were made for anniversary, birthday and graduation celebrations. Yearly vacations were scheduled. We were looking forward to life continuing as usual with some en-

hancements. We had no idea that we would face a pandemic that would alter the normal and introduce us to new terms such as social distancing, novel coronavirus and COVID-19. Activities we took for granted, such as gathering on Antioch's campus for worship service, Bible Study, Sunday School and ministry meetings, going to school, work and the gym and even traffic in metropolitan Atlanta were off limits. Shelter-in-place and self-quarantine orders have changed life as we know it for the unforeseeable future.

With this issue, we can reflect on the first quarter of the year, when we were, for most of the time, the church gathered rather than the church in many locations. Our members continue to make a difference wherever they are, and we celebrate Dr. Brenda Eason's appointment as President of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.'s Ministry of Ushers and Health Professionals, Bro. William A. Clement as recipient of the AUMI Anchor Award for 2019, and Mother Grace Brooks as Queen of Atria Mableton Senior Living Center. Our Note Singers not only sang but gave the valuable history of shape-note singing at Elizabeth Baptist Church.

Our seven sons who preached the Seven First Sayings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ during Wednesday Night Bible Study truly let the Holy Spirit use them. Our pastoring son, Rev. Ken Jelks, Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, Columbus, gave us excellent instruction and direction during our Leadership Conference as we installed our ministry leaders. We were delighted to celebrate with Pastor Brendan and Sis. Dr. Jelyne Jenkins in the Fifth Pastoral Anniversary at Rocky Ford Baptist Church.

Our Family Gathering Black History Dinner Theater was exceptional. It was exciting to see everyone dressed in African attire, enjoying a delicious fellowship meal provided by our Culinary Ministry. Our Adult M.A.D.D. for Christ and our Youth Ministry came together to remind us of our strong heritage that is being manifest in the accomplishments of today's youth as they assume positions of leadership in their schools and use their talents and gifts in various organizations and activities.

We continue to be fully involved with the National Baptist Convention, The General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc., and the Fifth District of the GMBC. We were educated and edified at the GMBC Ministers' and Moderators' Conference and the GMBC Adjourned Session. The Fifth District Benefit Service raised over \$6,000 for Carver College, which our member, Dr. Robert Crummie, whose Home Going Service we celebrated in January, served as President.

I, my wife, and over 100 members are slimmer and healthier having participated in the 40-Day Turnup, led by my good friend, Rev. Joseph Williams, of Salem Bible Church. I will be forever grateful for his dedication to teaching us the well-researched, well-informed process that strengthened our temples, which house the Holy Spirit. We were the only group he guided outside of Salem's Campus and then in a virtual environment when we had to cease our physical meetings. Needless to say, we were also his most successful group--#Antioch Strong!!!

Yours in God's service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenneth Alexander". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Reverend K. L. Alexander, Pastor





*Joseph Malbrough was named a Cobb Chamber 2019 Ambassador of the Year in March. Malbrough, a long-time member of Antioch Baptist Church North, is owner of The UPS Store on Cobb Parkway in Smyrna.*

# AUMI participates in virtual Hunger Walk/Run

Not even the COVID-19 pandemic could keep Antioch Urban Ministries' supporters from participating in the 2020 Atlanta Community Food Bank Hunger Walk/Run.

Instead of hitting the pavement, participants made the 3-mile walk on their treadmills and stationary bikes in the privacy of their homes and then posted pictures on social media.

The event helps AUMI provide food to more than 350 families each week, an amount that has tripled in recent years.

Appalled at the number of impoverished and food insecure households in Georgia, founder and former executive director Bill Bolling knew that he had to do something. He began with one community kitchen in 1979, and now the food bank partners with over 600 agencies as far north as Dalton and as far south as Griffin in the effort to provide nutritious food.

The program has expanded from food distribution to supporting community gardens and educating and assisting people to achieve economic security.

Both Bolling, who retired in 2015, and his successor, CEO and President Kyle Waide, often cite AUMI, and the Rev. K.L. Alexander, Dea. Joseph Beasley, and the Rev. Terry Hightower as the food bank's staunchest supporters.

# Note Singers give us that old time religion

As Sis. Jacque Dodson puts it, the Antioch Baptist Church Note Singers "are woven into our Sunday worship service."

Not as a community group, she said recently, but as part of the church's Music Ministry.

Led by Sis. Wendy Harding, they sing from the floor rather than from the choir stand "to maintain the traditional closeness to the congregation, which in days gone by all lent their voices to the singing."

Indeed, she said, some might even take them for granted, but at a recent Old Time Religion Program hosted by the Golden Years Ministry at Elizabeth Baptist Church, the Note Singers' gift

couldn't be denied.

They stood out among the many other soloists and singing aggregations across metro Atlanta, Dodson said.

The annual program features songs that would have been sung as far back as slavery times. While a few of the groups and soloists had some accompaniment, most were like the Antioch Note Singers. Their voices, clapping hands, stomping feet, tambourines, and a couple of washboards were their instruments.

Some of the groups dressed in period attire like overalls, long dresses and bonnets, adding to the authenticity of the music and days long gone.



## 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:  
[gstaples@ajc.com](mailto:gstaples@ajc.com)



# Hendersons host first Black History celebration

For the first time in its history, Black History was celebrated this year at Roswell High School.

It would not have happened without the efforts of Michael and David Henderson, Antioch Baptist Church members and co-founders of the Roswell High School Black Student Union.

Former gubernatorial candidate Stacy Abrams was the keynote speaker. Abrams created Fair Fight to end voter suppression and ensure fair elections.

Because the election is fast approaching in Georgia, students felt the celebration would be the perfect

time to have Abrams speak about the importance of both black history and voting.

This wasn't the first for the Henderson twins. They also hosted their school's first ever HBCU college fair.

Michael Henderson said it took more than seven months to secure Abrams's attendance but it paid off. Not only did the event draw a big crowd, including many from Antioch, Abrams shared her action plan for making social change, her willingness to serve as Democratic front-runner Joe Biden's vice president and perhaps run for president



*Antioch members show their support for Michael and David Henderson (kneeling, black suits)*

one day.

In another first, the Henderson brothers said they will exercise their right to vote in the November general election.

As current contribut-

ing members of society, we have things that we want to change, not only to benefit ourselves, but also for the people coming after us that cannot vote, they said.

# District attendees told to fear not

The Fifth District held its first Quarterly Fellowship Worship Service of the new year in March at Silverleaf Baptist Church.

The Rev. Eddie Bryant, first vice president of the Fifth District and a son of Antioch Baptist Church North, was among those who preached.

Taking his text from Deuteronomy 31:1-8, Rev. Eddie Bright reminded those gathered that when Moses passed the leadership reins he told Joshua not to fear or be dismayed, discourage, disheartened.

"When trouble comes your way, it has a way of getting to you not only in your mind but in your body," Bright said.

That's when we need to

be reminded, as Joshua was, what God has done.

"You must walk in 2020 without fear, knowing that the Lord is with you," the Rev. Bright said. "You cannot do the Lord's work in fear, worry or dismay. God says, 'Be not dismayed' because he will never leave you, never fail you, and never abandon you."

During the evening service, the Rev. Bobby L. Giddens preached from John 5:2-6 "When Jesus Comes to Church."

No preacher wanted to be at the Church at Bethesda, he said. There were no ushers and no greeters with visitor cards because there was an odor from the sick and decaying members who were lying

in their own body waste.

Many in the church today are also sick, the Rev. Giddens said.

"Some are spiritually blind, having eyes with no vision," he said. "All they can see is darkness and sameness and doing what has always been done. The lame are always out of step thinking others are walking too fast. The paralyzed want every detail worked out, wanting to know the exact end before the beginning. They have a paralysis of analysis and don't want to walk by faith."

To avoid becoming like-minded, Giddens said we must change our focus and look unto Jesus.

When Jesus comes to your



*Rev. Eddie Bright*

church, he will lift you, tell you to rise up, stand up, and take up your bed, he said. Pick up your testimony and encourage others in the Lord."





**Queen Atria:** *Mother Grace Brooks, 97, was crowned Queen of Atria Mableton Senior Living Center in Austell this past Valentine's Day. Brooks said she didn't know people noticed how she treated people. "I always try to be nice," she said. "My mother told me, 'Before you do or say something, think how you would feel.' When you treat people nicely, they treat you the same way." When asked what she did to live so long, Mother Brooks said she drinks Noni juice "but it didn't keep me, the good Lord did."*

# What you should know about COVID-19

As a church, we stand strong and even stronger with the new reality of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 commonly referred to as COVID19. The opening of the state has led to concerns on what to do, how do we do it and what responsibility we have to keep each other safe.

Our Antioch website has communicated to our membership key information including the link to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that provides the daily updates of COVID19. The CDC website shares basic information on what the disease is, how it is spread, who is at risk and how to protect ourselves.

So who is at highest risk? This is important to know as we, our Antioch family, take precautions.

- People 65 years old or older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised such as those with cancer and weak-



*Dr. Sheryl Heron*

- ened immune systems
  - People with severe obesity/overweight
  - People with diabetes
  - People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
  - People with liver disease
- Sadly, people of African-American and Latin descent are at the highest risks for illness and death. This is based on risk factors noted above, which I am sure we can all relate to either with ourselves, our

family, our neighbors, or with someone in our Antioch family.

We are Antioch, and we are proud that we stand on our 4 pillars - Fellowship, Evangelism, Doctrine and Stewardship. Never more important are these pillars as they are now. What can we do to honor our pillars?

**Fellowship** – Continue to fellowship, and while we may not be in person, call, Facetime or Zoom with our family at Antioch services and fellowship with your family in a Bible study and God's word. 1 Corinthians 1:9

**Evangelism** – Spread the good news of God's neverending Love. John3:16

**Doctrine** – Feast on God's word. Know the biblical facts that apply today. Let's WASH our HANDS and Wear Our Masks. Proverbs 2:11

**Stewardship** – Commit to support our church with your tithes, your offerings and your talent. Take care of our world and each other Psalm 24:1

Until we see each other face to face... Stay well. SELAH

Heron is a member of Antioch and professor of Emergency Medicine/Assistant Dean Emory University School of Medicine.



## Antioch is biggest loser in 40-day Turn Up

Even before being forced to shelter in place by the COVID-19 pandemic, members of Antioch Baptist Church North were seeing considerably less of those enrolled in the 40-Day Turn Up.

Not only had they begun experiencing weight loss results, their bodies were starting to look more toned, blood pressure was dropping and diabetes was under control.

Thanks, of course, to the Rev. Joseph Williams, the program's brainchild.

The Rev. Kenneth Alexander agreed to bring the six-week program to Antioch after sisters Cara Malbrough, Bonita Da-

vis, and Olivia Rencher reported losing weight while enrolled in it during the spring of 2019 at Salem Bible Church.

Because of his friendship with Pastor Alexander and the overwhelming interest in the program, Williams agreed early this year to hold the sessions at Antioch.

In February, members participated in an orientation, weigh-in and expo held at Salem then began virtual meetings in mid-March.

They were required throughout the program to weigh in, record their blood pressure and share stories of success and struggles. Dr. Joe, as Williams is affection-

ately called, began the ministry after losing over 100 pounds himself and exposing the myths and misinformation prevalent in the diet and healthcare industries.

His findings and personal testimony are chronicled in his book, *Lifestyles of the Fit and Healthy*. It includes a detox formula and eating process he developed that keeps blood sugar stable throughout the day and allows the body to rest and recover at night.

#Antioch Strong! lost the most weight of any group that has participated in the program.

## King observance: a day on for Omega Psi Phi volunteers

Members of the Delta Mu Mu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., observed this year's Martin Luther King Day volunteering at the Antioch Baptist Church North Food and Clothing Bank.

Instead of taking the day off, the fraternity enjoyed a day on encouraging members of its Black Rhinos Mentoring program to do the same.

The program, designed to address the academic, social, and community issues that students face daily, provides opportunities for them to work independently and collectively in cooperative learning circles.

In addition to mentoring youth, fraternity members award scholarships to graduating seniors in metro Atlanta Metro.





# Rev. Brendan Jenkins celebrates fifth anniversary

Although Jude 1:24-25 are the go-to verses for church benedictions, it is not unusual for those words to signal the start of good beginnings.

Indeed, the first word in “now unto him” indicates that there was something before, the Rev. Kenneth Alexander told those who gathered in March for the fifth anniversary celebration of the Antioch son Brendan Jenkins.

“You didn’t get here by yourself,” he said. “Somebody helped you, mentored you, and carried you for nine months.”

Recalling the days before both he and the Rev. Jenkins, pastor of Rocky Ford Baptist Church in Dallas,



*Rev. Brendan and Jelyne Jenkins*

were pastors, Rev. Kenneth Alexander said they didn’t realize how privileged they were to sit under the tutelage of the late Rev. C. M. Alexander and enjoy the

teachings of so many other great preachers.

Now, it’s a strange feeling for us with so many of our elders gone, he said. We’re privileged to still

have the wisdom to guide us from Dr. Flemister, who is 90 years old, as we stand on the wall.

He admonished the congregation to stop complaining, being angry, and carrying resentment.

“If Jesus is real in your life, take your now and turn it over to him,” he said. “Your now always begins with the fact that he woke you up this morning.”

As the service drew to a close, Jenkins thanked everyone and acknowledged the gift of serving under Antioch’s late pastor.

“I learned so much as did all of us did sitting under his training,” Jenkins said. “That is why the Antioch sons have super powers.”

# Biden addresses National Baptist Convention in Texas

Presidential frontrunner Joseph Biden, speaking before the National Baptist Convention in January, pledged to build upon the gains made under former President Barak Obama and work to steer the nation back together from its present political and racial divide.

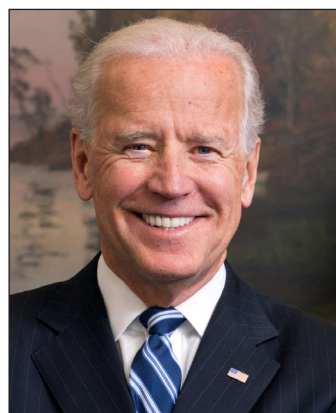
The vice president spoke on day two of the convention’s mid-winter board meeting held through Jan. 16 in Arlington, TX, but the highlight was none other than Sis. Brenda Eason.

Eason, who formally served



*Brenda Eason*

eight years as vice president of the National Ushers’ and Health Professionals Ministry, was installed as president of the auxiliary. She also serves as President of



*Joseph Biden*

the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia’s Ushers’ and Health Professionals, having started it 25 years ago under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. C. M. Al-

exander when he served as president of GMBC.

Asked about her appointment she said simply, “To God be the glory.”

In other action, Dr. Jerry Young, president, emphasized the need for African Americans to participate in the Census and to vote in unparalleled numbers, and officials from the Census Bureau and the NAACP and other concerned parties explained partnerships with churches and non-profits in the effort to work toward 100% participation.

# 2020 graduates get an Antioch virtual send off

Although all in-person church services have been suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it didn't stop Antioch Baptist Church North from celebrating this year's graduating high school seniors.

In typical Antioch fashion, 17 members were honored during Antioch's May 24 service as members looked on virtually.

Virtual church services and graduation ceremonies have become the norm as the coronavirus continues to cast a shadow on American traditions, making large gatherings dangerous.

But that didn't stop Antioch from giving this year's seniors some semblance of the traditional pomp and circumstance students have become used to as they prepare to head off to college.

And so as their photos flashed across computer

screens, iPads and cell-phones, Sister Wendolyn Harding called their names.

Harding, chair of Antioch's scholarship ministry, said that even in the midst of crisis, students and their families recognize how God has blessed them to reach this milestone.

In addition to recognizing the graduating class of 2020 during the Sunday service, seniors were treated to a virtual zoom party, photos on the church marquee, and scholarships.

Pastor Kenneth Alexander offered congratulation to seniors and their parents, who he said pivoted to be become teachers, counselor and kitchen staff to their seniors with degree or teach certification.

"You were able to help our students cross the finish line," he said.

Alexander said that members had learned to operate in a virtual world.

"Who could've predicted at the beginning of the year, life would've changed the way it did?" he asked. "A big shout out to all our students but especially our graduating seniors. A big shout out to college graduates. We've not forgotten you."

Then turning to the day's scripture in 2 Timothy, in which Paul tells the young preacher to "be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears..."

"How applicable these words are today," he said. "You and your support team had to be instant.

You didn't have time to prepare for this season."

And yet, seniors and their parents persevered.

"In spite of it all, they kept the faith," Rev. Alexander said. "We're proud of you and want the world to know that we love you."

But he added commencement doesn't mean you're finished. Commencement means a new beginning.

"It's now your turn to pick up the blood-stained banner," he told them. "I implore you to use your tools to fight the good fight, to help and inspire others."

If this world gets better, he continued, it will be because of this generation.

"You are the hope of slaves," he said. "You are the fruit that sprang from Jim Crow. You are who are forefathers prayed for, bled and died for. You are our hope for a better world."



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