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Connecting
 People
 to Christ



The Church at Antioch

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

April-June 2015

Volume 6, Issue 6



Father's Day 2015 at Antioch Baptist Church North. Our Pastor Dr. C.M. Alexander called all of the male teens to sit on the steps in front of the pulpit. He asked the fathers of the teens to come sit with those young men. He then ask if the Men of Antioch would come and sit with the young men whose fathers were not there. Look at the number of men that stepped up!

Strange things are happening but God is still in control

After a week of landmark U.S. Supreme Court decisions in which same-sex marriage was legalized in all 50 states, Pastor Cameron Madison Alexander reminded his beloved Antioch Baptist Church North congregation that God is still sovereign.

"I don't care how much you celebrated yesterday, God is in control of the universe," the Rev. Cameron Madison Alexander told the Antioch Baptist Church North congregation to applause.

Then drawing from passages in the books of Acts and Luke, he reminded them of the Apostle Paul's missionary trip to Athens, where the people wor-

shipped all sorts of gods.

Jumping into the theological argument of the day, Alexander said Paul noted in Luke 5:25 that he'd seen strange things.

"This last week we've heard things and we've seen strange things," Alexander said. "Someone asked me where are we headed? I said we're headed for judgment. That's a day you better put on your calendar. God promised there would be a judgment day and he will be the judge. The Supreme Court judges will be judged. In fact, everybody will be at the judgment. We'll be judged on our stewardship here in this world."

Strange things.

And yet, he said, nothing happens in this world where we move and have our being, where we see strange things that surprises God.

"None of us can do anything to surprise God," he said. "God's stuff is always going to stand. Everything he set in motion is still working. Just because we have operations doesn't mean we've changed creation. When you go into the hospital to have an operation you didn't change anything. The best you can do is move stuff around."

Strange things.

He felt the same way, he said, when

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A Message From The Pastor



My Brothers and Sisters,

As we welcome this edition of the Church at Antioch, I am reminded of the recent good things that have given our Church Family causes for celebrations. Our youth have excelled in their academic and athletic accomplishments...our Christian Education Ministry has been engaged actively in continuous Christian Education and other learning activities designed to strengthen our base of Baptist Doctrine...While a number of members within our fellowship have retired and others have made us proud through their personal and/or professional endeavors.

As pastor, my heart is warm and my spirits are overjoyed because our fellowship remains laser focused on the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40) and upon the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) of Jesus Christ; especially when so many strange and unusual changes are happening in the world around us. I have every confidence and every reason to believe that God remains in total control of His world. The world He created for His people.

So in the midst of this sin-filled confusion, Antioch must never forget the reasons for God's Church and what we are to do as members of the Body of Christ. Always remember that the Bible determine both our message and our actions for every circumstance that we encounter. There is nothing new in our world that the Bible's teachings have not encountered or managed. The good news of God's Bible still offers lost people what they so desperately need! Love and hope.

Yours in God's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. M. Alexander'.

Reverend C. M. Alexander, Pastor

Continued from cover - Strange Things...

he witnessed Barack Obama become the first black president of the United States and saw him enter the White House with his wife Michelle.

Strange things.

Still stranger, Alexander said, was seeing and hearing the president, in the middle of the eulogy for Emmanuel AME Church's pastor Clemente Pinkney, break out singing "Amazing Grace."

"I got up and ran," he said.

But the strangest thing of all he said was the day Jesus Christ died for our sin.

"I didn't see it but I'm here because of it," he said. "One Friday."

Lester joins Supreme Court bar

If you've seen Sylvia Lester direct Antioch Baptist Church North's Adult Handbell and Women's Choirs, imagine her arguing cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Lester, a longtime member of Antioch and the Georgia bar, was sworn in June 22 before the nine justices. This honor grants her the privilege of arguing cases before the Supreme Court instead of having to turn cases over to another attorney. It is recognition that one is at the top of the legal profession.

To qualify, applicants must be a member of his or her state's bar, be endorsed by two other Supreme Court bar members, and obtain a certificate of good standing from the state's highest court.

"Good standing" means that the lawyer has no judgments, complaints, or disciplinary action against him or her and exhibits "good moral and professional character."

APRIL

The Seven Last Words of Jesus Christ

It is a tradition at Antioch to observe Good Friday with preaching by the sons of the church on the seven last recorded statements of Christ. On April 3, the 26th annual service opened with a replication of Christ carrying the cross by Antioch M.A.D.D. followed by the processional of Antioch's ministers.

Here's a synopsis of the seven last words by Antioch's sons:

Minister Michael Price

Scripture: Luke 23:34 • **Word:** Forgiveness

Summary: "People who know they are close to the end of earthly life say what is at the core of their hearts and souls. Jesus's first statement covers all of the statements that follow, what he said before, and what will come after. Jesus went to the cross as the final answer to the sin issue. Forgiveness was necessary for man to be able to commune with God and go to heaven."

Minister Derek McKinney

Scripture: Luke 23:42-43 • **Word:** Salvation

Summary: "Both of the thieves were on the cross reaping their 'sin crops; the only difference is that one mocked and the other received salvation from Jesus. The price Jesus paid on Calvary covers the sins of the lamb and the wolf. As a seasoned preacher said, 'God is the I in each person's I am.' God gives us free will to choose the blank in the phrase. He chose I am thief, but he also chose I am thief who believes in Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

Minister Walter Collins

Scripture: John 19:25-27 • **Word:** Affection

Summary: "In spite of everything Jesus had been through up until this point, he still had affection. Christ made sure that the disciple John and his mother not only showed affection toward him but developed a new connection of affection toward each other, son toward mother. It always has been and will be Christ's will that we show feelings of affection, love toward one another, toward everyone who comes across our pathways, for it may be just what that person needs to keep going."

Minister Rod Reese

Scripture: Matthew 27:46 • **Word:** Anguish

Summary: "Having been silent during the three hours of darkness, Jesus cries out in anguish. Jesus calls on his God, not on himself as God, but as a man who was given

the sin of the entire world to bare. He understood that the separation had to occur because he could not be God and have sin on himself at the same time. Anguish, torment and distress, happens when something is in conflict. Once you have come to know God, separation from God causes anguish."

Minister Ed London

Scripture: John 19:28 • **Word:** Suffering

Summary: "Jesus was fully divine but also fully human, and in his humanity, he was suffering from dehydration. He went through the pain and suffering for your sins and for mine, so that we know that when we have pain, we are not alone. Jesus bears the pain, also. He understands our suffering. We need liquid water, but we also need the living, spiritual water that belief in Jesus provides, so we will not wander in the desert but have eternal life with God."

Dr. Raleigh Ragland

Scripture: John 19:30 • **Word:** Victory

Summary: "Jesus has won in taking victory: victory over death, sin, hate, and mankind. There was no one else who could take up the fight over sin and win. Jesus was willing and able. The devil doesn't like it that Jesus won. The word was made flesh because blood is in the flesh, and blood had to be shed for the remission of sins. Victory in Jesus!"

Minister Derrick Jackson

Scripture: Luke 23:46 • **Word:** Contentment

Summary: "It is difficult to digest that Jesus was 'happy and satisfied' as he hung on the cross as he was going through the most excruciating pain that everyone could imagine. Jesus is perfectly content as in the sixth word he said, 'It is finished', and he knew the sufferings were almost over. Through various stages of life, when we fulfill momentous occasions, we have reasons to feel content. Twenty-eight prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus's death, so he was content that his purpose was fulfilled."

Antioch takes ministry to the Bluff

“The Bluff” has been characterized as one of the most desolate and dangerous communities in Atlanta.

In January, the community was the subject of a WSB television news feature about the high prevalence of drug use, sales, and overdoses in what is called “Atlanta’s most notorious heroin highway.” The focus of the news report was the use of the drug Narcan (naloxone hydrochloride) to reverse overdoses. In the report, a drug user who admitted to selling drugs to support his habit, ad-

ministered a shot to a woman who was overdosing.

“We always send a prayer,” he said. “Prayer helps us to be guided to save these victims.”

The woman lived.

Like Jesus in his encounter with the woman at the well, Antioch Ministers spread out on the street corners April 4 throughout “The Bluff” to present the living water of Jesus Christ.

But unlike the one-time life-reversing shot, the sons of Antioch were presenting

the way to eternal life.

They were joined by the S.W.A.T. Team and a large delegation of members who witnessed, evangelized, and proclaimed God’s Word. Members gave sack lunches and tracts as they shared God’s word, prayed with those requesting prayer, and invited people to attend Resurrection Sunday services the next day at Antioch.

At the culminating prayer gathering, one person gave his life to Christ, and five asked for prayer.

Fifth District holds Agape Prayer Breakfast

Several Antiochans attended the 5th District Agape Prayer Breakfast held at Israel Baptist Church, where Antioch son, the Rev. William Smith, is pastor.

Held on Good Friday, April 3, the breakfast is sponsored by the Women’s Ministry, and in addition to providing food for the flesh, it features food for the soul.

Four preachers expounded on the theme, “The Cross”: Rev. Demetrius Myette, Matt.21:1-9, “To the Cross;” Rev. Donald Hill, Matt. 19:18, “At the Cross;” Rev. Donel Heflin, Sr., Matt. 27:58, “To the Grave,” and Mark 16:9, Rev. Rickey Jones, “From the Grave.”

Rev. W.J. Lawson, 5th District President, encouraged everyone in his closing remarks to remember that “when you encounter the brutality of the cross, remember there is a Sunday morning resurrection.”

NBC holds Congress of Christian Education

The National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. Congress of Christian Education met June 21-26 in Detroit, where classes, seminars and workshops are held in every aspect of Baptist doctrine and mission.

In addition to the Certificate of Progress Program which leads to a Diploma of Christian Education, members can participate in everything from Advanced Church Ushering taught by Sis. Brenda Eason to a Sign Language Interpreter’s Clinic headed by Sis. Janet M. Hill. Eason and Hill are members of Antioch Baptist Church North.

Classes for children, youth, and young adults and the Children’s and Youth Rallies and iRock Young Adult Explosion provide training for every age and stage of life.

As the educational arm of the Convention, President Jerry Young has

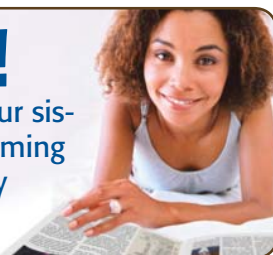
charged the Congress to provide a curriculum that supports his passion to have a Convention fully committed and trained “from the pulpit to the pew to comprehend the application of scripture to our daily lives and to share the good news of the gospel.”

Worship services during the five-day congress are held morning through late night and feature world renowned preachers. A special prayer service was held in honor of those whose lives were taken and the survivors of the attack at Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, S.C.

The Health Fair that runs the entire week provides free health screenings, materials, and seminars explaining how to access resources to provide summer meals for low-income children, treatment for recovering addicts, and housing for the homeless.

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.



MAY

Depression topic of ministry brunch

The 5th Annual Care and Comfort Ministry/AUMI Brunch Fellowship was held May 16.

The theme scripture, Psalm 34:24, formed the framework of courage, strength, and hope for the fellowship, all of which Sis. Renee Arnold expressed in her touching testimonial.

The slide show featuring pictures of the Care and Comfort Ministry in service and those whose lives they have touched showed the depth and breadth of the ministry, which reaches out to anyone experiencing any type of illness, loss, or life trial.

Young Bro. William Evans made a special tribute to Pastor Alexander, and Sis. Kirkland gave a heartfelt tribute to

Mother Frances Miles embodying the courage, strength, and hope in the Lord each has modeled throughout their lifetimes.

One of the evidences of that strength and wisdom is Pastor Alexander's recognition that the needs of Antioch members are not limited to spiritual growth and his support to bring in a guest speaker on a topic rarely addressed in churches.

The guest speaker, Dr. Kenneth W. Hepburn, addressed the topic of depression. In his presentation, he dispelled many of the myths about depression, discussed how to recognize signs and symptoms, presented types of treatment available, and provided resources.

Not everyone who is depressed experiences every symptom. Some people experience only a few symptoms; some people suffer many. The severity of symptoms varies among individuals and also over time.

They include:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down"
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight changes
- Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts
- Restlessness, irritability
- Persistent physical symptoms

Source: National Institute of Mental Health



5K Walk dedicated to Sis. Emma Kelly

Antioch Baptist Church North this year dedicated its annual 5K walk to the late Sis. Emma Kelly.

Kelly, who lost her battle with breast cancer in June, was one of many Antioch members who participated each year in the annual Sisters by Choice 5 K walk.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed and the second leading cause of cancer death among women in Georgia.

All proceeds from the walk go to the nearly completed Sisters by Choice Mobile Breast Clinic.

To date, Antioch has contributed more than \$12,000 to that effort.

2015 Graduates/Retirees

Last year, more than 50 students were awarded scholarships totaling some \$30,000 by the Antioch Scholarship Ministry. Recipients included 2014 high school seniors and college sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Dozens of 2015 graduates, listed below, will receive awards this year.

High School

Haley N. Abrams
Micah Arnold
Tyler Campbell
Christopher Calhoun
Miles Dickey
Shedreck Dorsey-Calhoun
Jordan Ferguson
Armani Fredrick
Robert A. Jackson
Christopher Johnson
Channing Kirkland
Justin Lamar
Carl Melton
Derrick Moses
Autumn Riley
Edward Thompson
TeSharie Walker-Swift
Omari Washington
Myjhan Wheeler
Carlton A. Williams

Middle School

Janae Baker
Jillian Carroll
Rachel Henderson
Jayden A. Kimbro
Geneva Tilman
Chase Walker
Jayla Walker
Miracle Walker

Elementary School

Xavier D. Bailey
Preston Jackson
Amari N. Ringer

Kindergarten

Tiffany Burton
Zoe Cannon
Armani Ford
Kerry O'Neal Gary
Sydney Willingham



Bachelor's Degrees

Khari J. Arnold - Journalism, Howard University
Collis L. Clark II - Political Science, Lenoir Rhyne University
Kristofer A. Curtis - Information Management Technology, Syracuse University
David M. Gallo - Organization Management, Ashford University
Alexa Kimbro - Information Technology, Clayton State University
Jonathan M. Lamar - Exercise Science, Georgia State University
Brandis O. Rencher - Psychology, Tuskegee University
Jasmine J. Reeves - Business Management, Valdosta State University
Andrea J. Trimble - African-American Studies, Savannah State University

Master's Degrees

Tunica D. Walker - Master's Public Health, Georgia State University
Breana Wilson - Master's Public Administration, Clark Atlanta University

Retirees

John Paul Blanton - 20 years Marta
Dorothy Compton - 11 years Atlanta Public Schools
Jacqueline H. Dodson - 31 years Georgia Pacific
Vivian Edwards - Georgia Tech University
Ann L. Hornsby - 20 years TBS Broadcasting
Dr. Rochelle Hopson Lamar - 21 years Carroll County Schools
Maggie McCullum - 25 years Fulton County Government
Al McGuire - 17 years Bank of America
Annie Moses - 10 years Department of Family and Children Services
Ollie C. Nelson - 38 years Nabisco
John E. Smith - 4 years Briggs & Stratton Power Group
Sarah B. Thomas - 25 years Fulton County Government

Antioch youth destined for greatness

More than 100 students and retirees were honored May 28 during Antioch Baptist Church North's 11th Annual Youth Achievement Banquet.

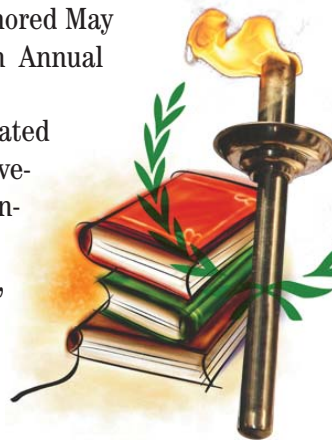
Students in Pre-K through college were celebrated for their academic and extra-curricular achievements during the 2014-2015 school year as hundreds of Antioch members and friends looked on.

Several students, including Kristofer Curtis, Andrea Trimble and Carlton Williams, offered inspiration from personal experiences.

Curtis, a recent college graduate, told the crowd that combining their strengths with what they love will lead to success. For instance, by pursuing his passion, he said he was able to create an app that can be used to mentally train athletes.

Williams, Justin Lamar, Autumn Riley, and Armani Fredrick, all recent high school graduates, shared reflective essays in which they chose a meaningful scripture and shared a life lesson they experienced connected to that scripture.

In a powerful message from Min. Oscar Scott, students were given five "stones" to guide them through school and



YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT BANQUET

life: Always Pray, Have Respect, Love Self, Love Family and Love God.

The evening was then topped off with the enthusiastic presentation of athletic and academic achievement awards.

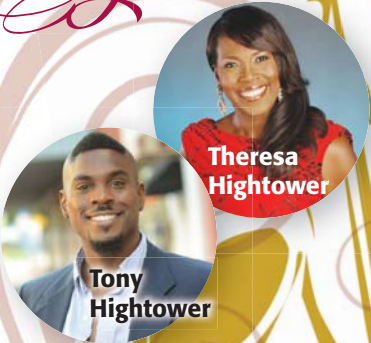
Olivia Rencher, who spearheads the effort each year, said the Antioch youth are a shining example of what is possible.

They are learning and demonstrating the power of Christ early in their lives, which destines them for great things, she said.

UPCOMING EVENT

Celebrating Pastor's
46th Pastoral Anniversary

*Montreal
Jazz
Experience*



Tony
Hightower

Theresa
Hightower

Friday, July 31, 7:00 p.m.
Café 590

Featuring Teresa Hightower and her charismatically talented son, Tony Hightower. Table for 8 is \$200 or \$25 per person.

Rencher earns bachelor of psychology degree

Brandis Rencher was among dozens of Antioch Baptist Church North college seniors to earn degrees in May.

Rencher, daughter of Olivia Rencher, received her degree in psychology from Tuskegee University with a minor English.

While attending Tuskegee, Rencher, a longtime member of Antioch, was an avid member of the Events and Treasury committees of the Student Government Association, Press and Publicity Committee co-chair of Tuskegee University's NAACP Chapter, and Treasurer of the community service organization known as Civitan.

"I plan to pursue my Master's Degree in either Public Health or Business Administration this fall," she said.

Rencher said Antioch has been one of the driving forces behind my success and motivation to keep pursuing my dreams.

"With the support of our amazing pas-



tor, co-pastor, and the members I can truly say that this church is my family, and I am so happy to be back among all of you," she said.

District session held at First Corinth

The Fifth District of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. combined worship, education, evangelism, social outreach, and fellowship at its annual session held April 6-8 at First Corinth Baptist Church.

Antioch members Vanessa English, Karen McKinney Holley, and Bonita Williams of the Christian Education Ministry were among those who participated in 21st Century Methods of Teaching Christian Education, a National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. Certificate of Progress Program course.

They plan to incorporate what they learned in Antioch's School of the Bible. The inaugural training for a district's Mentoring Program initiated by President W.J. Lawson was also presented during the session. Churches in the district have been asked to reach out and reclaim our young people, especially those in the community, in partnership with local schools.

A food and clothing giveaway accompanied evangelistic outreach in the surrounding community. The daily lunch and learn program included seminars on health and well-

ness and the timely topic of relationships between the police and the community. Two policemen provided perspective and helpful information on how to respond in various situations when one encounters the police.

In addition to worship services during the day, each evening's worship had a different focus. On Monday evening, Antioch members participated in the Welcome Program and Musical Celebration presented by the district choir. On Tuesday, the Laymen's Auxiliary President, Dea. Jimmie Gowans, gave his annual address supported by Antioch deacons. The Deaconess presented the play, "The Women of the Bible."

Sis. Gwendolyn Jones West, President of the Women's Auxiliary and daughter of long-time Antioch members, Dea. Johnnie and Sis. Delaware Jones, delivered her annual address.

The Annual Session was uplifting, informative, and inspirational. Attendees left renewed and invigorated for the glorious privilege of spreading God's word abroad.



Fun day on the Land of Promise

Although the rain caused some changes in schedule and activities, it did not dampen the spirit of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc., Land of Promise Celebration/Fun Day/Ushers' Picnic held on April 25.

Rev. David Stanley, newly-appointed President of the 6th District, preached to approximately 300 GMBC members while the 500 children and youth experienced a worship service at the Wailing Wall.

Following the services, Dorcas Ford Jones, director of the Statewide Young People's Department, provided food and games for the young people; the Ministry of Ushers and

Health Professionals, enjoyed fellowship at the lake, and the adults enjoyed barbeque prepared by the Land of Promise ministry.

The recovery program, the brainchild of Co-Pastor Kenneth Alexander and the Rev. Rodney Turner, was started by Antioch Pastor Cameron Alexander during his presidency of the GMBC.

The program, which ministers to men suffering from addiction to drugs and alcohol, has been highly successful in helping men who complete the program receive a new start in life for more than 20 years.

Rev. Phillip Spann installed at Shiloh

Antioch journeyed a short distance to Westview Drive June 14 to participate in the installation of Rev. Phillip R.A. Spann as pastor of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta.

The Dr. Rev. Spann follows Pastor Emeritus James H. Sims, Jr., who served the church for 40 years.

Spann is the brother of the late Sherry Spann, a beloved member of the Antioch Adult Choir. She passed in 2001. A scholarship was established in her memory.

Pastor Cameron Alexander commissioned the Adult Choir to sing one of the songs Sis. Spann led—"Fight On"—during the service as a tribute to her parents, who



Rev. C. M. Alexander congratulates Rev. Spann

were in attendance.

In the installation sermon, Pastor Alexander said to the Shiloh members, "I know you think you called Rev. Spann, but the Lord sent him according to Jeremiah 4:1-10.

"The Lord ought to have at least one person on this earth that He talks to and will do exactly what God tells him to do."

Recalling past pastors in the church's 148-year history, Pastor Alexander told the congregation that God had something for Rev. Spann and each of them to do.

"God sent them for a particular assignment, and he has done the same with Rev. Spann. Follow him as he follows Christ," he said.

Hundreds turn out for Vacation Bible School

More than 400 Antioch Baptist Church members enjoyed a week of in-depth study and fellowship during the annual Vacation Bible School session held this year in the 590 Building.

The theme, "Adventure at Sea: Diving Deeper for God's Treasures," was taught from Matthew 13:45, with daily texts from Mark 4:1-12; Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 5:25-34, and Matthew 4:18-25.

In addition to the biblical texts, students followed the Blackburn family as they attempted to apply the scriptures to their - and our - daily lives.

Even though each class from children through adults studied the same scripture, the presentations were as varied as the age groups. Participants

were asked to wear a different color each night, which reinforced God's plan of salvation.

At the close of the week-long session, Bro. Joshua Carpenter, who graduated from high school this year, presented a Black History play about a young lady who tells her teacher she sees no value in learning about what happened in the past.

But after witnessing scenes from slavery, Jim Crow, and Civil Rights, and recent injustices at the hands of law enforcement, the lead character comes to understand not only why she should care about her past but how rich and strong her ancestry is.

The school was headed by Sis. Homerzelle Gentry, Dea. Jerome Trimble, chairman of the Deacon's



Minister Oscar Scott leads a class

Ministry, and a cadre of able instructors, arts and crafts facilitators, a culinary committee, videographer, and Antioch's security team.

JUNE

Pastor's BBQ 46th Pastoral Anniversary





Cancer awareness focus of Honor's Banquet

The Women's Auxiliary of the Mt. Hermon Association held its Annual Honor's Banquet June 20 at the First Baptist Church, where the Rev. Norman Thomas Jr. is pastor.

The banquet usually features Mt. Hermon scholarship recipients from member churches expressing what the scholarship has meant to them. Although money raised will still fund the scholarships,

the theme was "Think Pink," putting an emphasis on breast cancer awareness.

Sis. Francene Coleman, Coordinator of Missions, gathered the Antioch delegates. Members of Christian Education, the Mother's Board, and Mission paid tribute to one of their members, the late Mother Emma Kelly.

Several survivors shared their testimonies, saying they hoped to strengthen

and encourage everyone to be aware of the signs of cancer, have annual mammograms, and remember that God can handle every life challenge.

Rev. W.W. Morris, Moderator Emeritus, encouraged women to urge the men in their lives to have screenings for prostate cancer stating that at age 86, Morris is a five-year survivor of prostate cancer.

Ushers, Health Professionals gather for conference

If the ushers and nurses seem to have an extra bounce in their steps and sharper signals, it's because they attended the 20th conference of the General Missionary Baptist Convention's Ushers and Health Professionals Conference held March 25-28 in Augusta.

Two of them, Sis. Marie Thompson and Faye Weekes, were honored at a formal gala banquet for having attended the conference for all 20 years. Sis. Brenda Eason, GMBC Statewide Coordinator, began the conference under the administration of our pastor, Rev. C.M. Alexander. Alexander served 29 years as President of GMBC and is currently Vice President At-Large of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

Ushers and Health Professionals Auxiliary had been traveling across the state

to churches, large and small, presenting training Eason had received at the NBC sessions. She suggested to President Alexander that a larger number could be reached through a statewide conference and he supported the idea. In 1995, the first conference was held and has grown to include more than 2,000 attendees.

On Wednesday afternoon, delegates accompanied the Saints with a Testimony and witnessed in a designated area of the city. This year, the evangelistic efforts inspired one soul to accept Christ and numerous people having prayer with the team.

The conference provides four levels of classes and special topics on the biblical basis, history, and protocol of ushering as well as classes on biblical and Christian

education topics.

Spirit-filled worship services are also a mainstay of the conference.

This year, Rev. Clarence Moore, pastor of Good Shepherd Baptist Church in Augusta and a son of Antioch opened the conference with a soul-stirring message.

The culmination of the conference, the Rededication Service, on Saturday morning, is always a foretaste of glory divine as the sea of ushers hold up their lights and sing the theme song: "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder."

The demonstration is a testament that "every round goes higher and higher" for the ushers and health professionals as they re-commit to excellence in service at their churches, in their districts, and in their daily lives.

Carpenter reaching for the Oscars

Joshua Carpenter is determined not to be guilty of doing nothing with his life and by all indications he's done plenty.

Carpenter, 18, and a recent graduate of Grayson High School, will be attending Full Sail University in Winter Park, FL. He plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in film production.

He's got big dreams.

"In ten years I plan on having my own entertainment company called Hitplay Entertainment," he said. The company will include HitplayFilm, HitplayMu\$ic and HitplayGraphics.

Carpenter said his goal is not only to change the way films are made, but how they are watched.

"In music I'll bring back old styles of

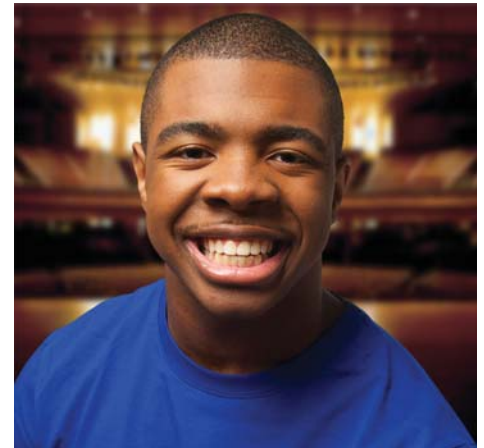
music, mix it with today's style, and then create a style that will change the face of the music industry," he said.

Carpenter, a long-time member of Antioch Baptist Church, has honed his acting skills at Grayson High and Antioch, where he has acted in and produced plays, including "Awaiting a Change."

He credits Antioch member David Vaughn for encouraging him to pursue a career in acting and film.

In addition, he said, Pastor Cameron Alexander and the Antioch church family have been an inspiration to reach for his goals.

"The biblical teachings I have received from my pastor has taught me that 'I can do all things through Christ



who strengthens me,'" Carpenter said quoting Philippians 4:13. "No matter what life throws at me as long as I trust and believe in Jesus Christ all things are possible."

Channing Kirkland amasses 4.14 GPA

Channing Inez Kirkland, daughter of Cherie Kirkland and Donovan Kirkland, will be heading to Hampton University in the fall on a full scholarship.

Channing graduated in the top 10 percent of her class at Allatoona High School in Acworth. The honor student had a 4.14 grade point average.

Channing enjoyed groundbreaking terms as Senior and Junior Class Presidents, and other activities and honors throughout high school. She was a member of the National Honor Society, Concert Band Top Wind Ensemble, the Marching Band, second chair District Honor Band, All-State Band Alternate, Jazz Band, Girl Scouts of America, Future Business Leaders of America State Competitor, Band Secretary and Allatoona's Women's Basketball Team Manager.

She said she is especially proud to have co-founded Earthwise, an environment-focused school club devoted to ensuring an eco-friendly school and community. Channing counts herself fortunate to have had opportunities to attend summer enrichment programs at Yale, Emory, Spelman College and Grambling State University. She was presented as a debutante with the Marietta-Roswell Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Channing has been an active member at Antioch, participating in Youth Orchestra, serving as a Youth Culmination



Speaker, and acted in various plays. Antioch has served as a support system throughout her membership -- always offering encouraging words, opportunities to hone her talents, and providing a welcoming environment.

Although she received acceptance letters to pursue a degree in Psychology from Georgia Tech, Spelman College and Xavier University and scholarships totaling approximately \$150,000, she looks forward to making her mark at her new home by the sea.

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