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New Year!*

Connecting
People
to Christ



The Church at Antioch

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

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Antioch Celebrates Pastor Alexander's 5th Pastoral Anniversary

The kickoff event on Saturday, February 3rd, was the kickoff event, the "Shower of Love Brunch." Fellowship Hall was buzzing with excitement as Pastor Alexander and Lady Lisa entered the room. Members of the church along with his extended family from Washington, GA, applauded with excitement as he and Lady Lisa entered. Individuals, ministries, auxiliaries, and community groups had an opportunity to "shower" love on Pastor Alexander and his family, including the famed Antioch Usher's March, in a relaxed atmosphere. As each "drop of rain" was presented, it became more and more apparent how much Antioch and our community love our pastor.

After prayer by Deac. Jerome Trimble, pre-siders Sisters Jacque Dodson and Karen McKinney Holley, opened with an exchange in which Sis. Karen tried to convince Sis. Jacque that there was an error on the program and the church was celebrating Pastor's Kenny's 25th

Pastoral Anniversary because of all that he has led the church to accomplish. Following the welcome by Bro. Corey and Sis. Amelia Dortch and the occasion by Bro. Fred Curry and family, the K.L.A. Steppers for Christ honored our pastor with an original tribute.

Musical selections by Sister Elexis Neal and Sister Lisa Irby were heartfelt, Grammy-worthy tributes. Bro. Bryant Johnson represented Antioch Urban Ministry, Inc. (AUMI) recovery program participants in a moving tribute detailing what the program has meant and how Rev. Kenny has personally encouraged their progress.

A week of fun and activities were planned for the pastor and his family. Members were very creative in expressing their love, including being mindful to provide healthy food options. Pastor Kenny was also presented with a keepsake video in which many members shared their love in unique video greetings.

K-Town, "A Motown Experience" held at the Ivy Community Center on Friday, February 23rd, gave us a chance to see our Antioch family in a whole different mode. People who think Christians don't have fun should have come out to see the 60s-90s attire and dance moves. The good-natured fashion competition featuring "old styles" astonished some of the younger members who thought bell bottoms and jumpsuits just come onto the fashion scene. Some of our seniors who move a little slowly down the aisle on Sunday mornings were cutting a mean rug on Saturday night as they showed the younger generations their moves from "back in the day." Our own Bro. Trey Daniels made the saxophone sing more than gospel as his smooth tones floated through the air. And, of course, when Antioch meets, she eats, and the food was delicious.

During the 5th Anniversary Worship Ser-

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A Message From The Pastor



OOOOO-EEEEEE!!!! Words are not adequate to express how grateful my wife and I are for the outpouring of love our family received—and continues to receive—during our 5th Pastoral Anniversary Celebration. The Committee presented some unique plans, and I tried to convince them that they were taking on too much, but they were insistent, and down to the last detail, everything was phenomenal. The opportunity to fellowship in relaxed settings during the Showers of Love Brunch and the K-Town Experience are memories we will cherish. The video presentation is a permanent tangible expression of love. The culminating worship service was just that, a high time praising the Lord. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

The January Birth Month Fashion Show brought out the inner fashionistas as our members strutted the catwalk. February and March Paint and Sing was visually a burst of color as each birth month had a specific color to dress in as we created our masterpieces and belted out songs.

I kept hearing “Easter is too early this year,” and I would respond, “Resurrection Sunday can never be celebrated too early; if Christ had not risen EARLY, we would be lost.” It warmed my heart to see our children reciting their speeches. For many of us, our first public speech was at church—future preachers, teachers, politicians, industry leaders, attorneys, actors, etc. Antioch’s accomplishments go far beyond her physical walls. Not only has Sis. Tiffany Burgess distinguished herself in her acting career, she has willingly provided exceptional service at the church. When we needed an interpreter for a Spanish-speaking member who came down the aisle to join, she appeared immediately by his side to let us know that he accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior. God provides what we need through his people.

As we celebrated our Pioneers at the brunch in their honor and on Sunday morning, I grew more appreciative of the service they have rendered down through the years. Led by the Holy Ghost, we are able to move forward because of the solid legacy of service our Pioneers gave and continue to give, some for more than 70 years. Let us keep serving, Antioch. Our community is better because of your unselfish contributions of time, talent, and treasure.

To God be the glory,

Rev. Kenneth L. Alexander
Reverend K. L. Alexander, Pastor

Continued from cover: 5th Pastoral Anniversary

vice on Sunday, February 25th, Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens congratulated Pastor Alexander, his “friend and fraternity brother.” He emphasized that he “is still a deacon” having been licensed and ordained at Antioch: “once Antioch, always Antioch.” He reminisced about his first time at Antioch stating that the church bus had picked him up from Georgia Tech in 1992, and the first faces he saw were “Rev. Kenneth Alexander and Rev. Sean Smith [his current pastor] and that stuck with my soul.” Stating that in his 2 years as mayor he has experienced that ‘leading is hard, but he puts into practice lessons he learned at Antioch. “Love ought to look like something, and it looks like Rev. K. L. Alexander and the love this man has for this community, this church, his family, and for God Almighty.”

Councilman Michael Julian Bond, an Antioch member, said of Pastor Alexander, “He is my spiritual leader; he has intervened with me when I’ve needed personal guidance.” Noting that Antioch has stood here on this corner for almost as long as Atlanta has been a city, he stated “Antioch has been the conscience of Atlanta from the hilltop and continues to give that clarion call to come to Christ and to be Christ-like with our brothers and sisters. Pastor Alexander has set a standard of leadership amongst the clergy; he doesn’t compromise... even when he is face-to-face with those who want to do wrong. Our pastor is THE man for this time and this mission.”

The Rev. Dr. Rodney K. Turner, son of Antioch and pastor of Mount Vernon BC, preaching on the anniversary theme, “His Work Continues” based on 2 Timothy 4:5 and Galatians 6:9 expounded on 5 Things the Define a Pastor Who is Working in the Vineyard Successfully.”

1. He practices evangelism in his own life. It is often said a sermon is best seen than heard. He practices what he preaches, is not a hypocrite; his light shines daily.

2. He proclaims the gospel publicly, for he is not ashamed to preach and exalt the name of Jesus. He doesn’t have to come into the pulpit with tricks and gimmicks, hacks and magic. He’s authentic, God-called, God-sent, God-brought, God-anointed, and God-appointed.

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JANUARY

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ed. He presents the liberating gospel pointing others to Jesus and not to himself.

3. He prepares the congregation biblically. He has a biblical mandate to remain Bible-based, and he makes sure we study the Word, for only the truth can set us free.

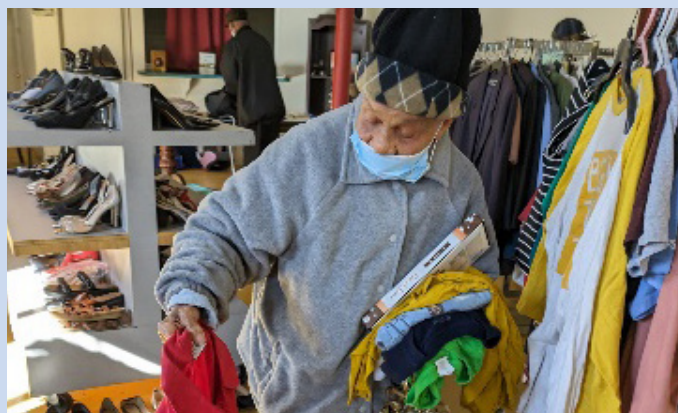
4. He constantly points the congregation to seize the opportunity to help somebody else. Our pastor is carrying the tradition. Luke's Place, Matthew's Place, the Land of Promise and other initiatives and ministries that Antioch supports continue. Men and women who show up at the door are not turned away but embraced.

5. He continues to passionately pray for souls, constantly on bended knee, constantly in prayer for the congregants and members.

Our pastor exhibits all these characteristics. Paul explains to Timothy that he will endure afflictions. Being a Christian is hard and being a leader is even harder because the enemy is working on you physically, emotionally, and mentally. No matter how much anointing you have, you will all sit in the seat of pain. Rev. Dr. C.M. Alexander used to say, "it is better to be knocked down than knocked out." Our pastor refuses to stay down. Just when the devil starts the count, he puts his leg or arm out of

the rope.

Pastor Kenneth L. Alexander is a preacher with a prerogative and a purpose. "He is a warrior like Moses, wise like Solomon, a leader like Paul, a builder like Noah, a pastor like his dad. He never fails to do the work. Through open heart surgery, he was still doing the work. He didn't let a global pandemic knock this ship off course. Trouble everywhere, problems all around us, a crazy society, dealing with personal issues—he's still doing the work. He made up in his mind, 'no turning back.' We've got the right one—our leader, our pastor, appointed for such a time as this."



Beginning in October, the Antioch Urban Ministries, Inc. Apparel Shoppe sent out the clarion call for coats, gloves, hats, and scarves as the winter months approached. As always, Antioch members stepped up to the plate to provide for those in need. Patrons listed sizes needed, and from the middle of November through the end of January, the items were distributed. Volunteers were thrilled to assist 92-year-old Mrs. Bester who picked up her coat and selected other items on her birthday. She remarked, "These are the best birthday presents I've had in a long time!"

Bible Study

The Winter Bible Study series offered by Christian Education Ministry focused on Stewardship, one of the four foundational pillars of Antioch. Classes were offered in person on Wednesdays from 6:00-7:00 p.m. and online for the Triple T: Theological Therapeutic Thursdays Bible Study from 7:00-8:00 p.m.

The classes provided an in-depth study of the definition and scriptures specified in our pillar statement. "Stewardship reminds us that as Christians, we are responsible for managing God's property. Stewardship

involves Christians contributing, managing their time, talents, money and resources in doing God's work. We must recognize the fact that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and they that dwell therein..... (Psalm 24: 1). As owner, God will be back expecting us as Christians to give a report of our stewardship."

As we wait for His return, we must demonstrate our commitment through our gifts of time, talent, and tithes. Members are encouraged to tithe consistently and cheerfully.

ly. Luke 12:42, "and the Lord said, who then is that faithful and wise steward who his Lord shall make ruler over this household, to give them portion of meat in due season?"

A different focus scripture was studied in depth each week, including the historical and cultural context of the scripture. Bible study provides an opportunity for students to ask questions to deepen their understanding of God's Word, and most importantly, to understand how to walk out the scripture in their daily lives.

Historic Four-Convention Mid-Winter Board Meeting

There are four national Black Baptist Conventions: National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. (NBCUSA), of which Antioch is a member and former pastor Rev. Dr. C.M. Alexander served as Vice President and on the Board of Directors; Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. (PNBC); National Missionary Baptist Convention of America (NMBC), and National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. (NBCA). Recognizing as Rev. Dr. David R. Peoples (PNB) stated, “this country and the world are in trouble, and black Baptists are their conscience and last hope,” the four presidents felt an urgency to join forces. The Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention, Rev. Dr. Gina M. Stewart, president, was also in attendance. The conventions came together under the theme “We Are Better Together” based on Ecclesiastes 4:1-9.

Meeting from Monday-Thursday, January 22nd – 25th, in Memphis, TN, the conventions enjoyed joint worship services, morning, evening, and late-night. The worship services undergirded what Dr. Samuel C. Tolbert, Jr. (NBCA) expressed as “strategic discussions, historic reflections on the Civil Rights Movement, collective witness, transformative worship, voter engagement, and recommendations for a wiser Baptist way forward.” Symposia, which brought together some of the brightest minds in the country, such as Dr. Cornel West, philosopher, theologian, and presidential candidate running for truth and justice, and other



Tommy Jennings with Dr. Cornel West

activists, provided the opportunity for delegates to engage with panelists on significant issues. Six symposia were held: “The Black Church and Mental Health;” “Reconnecting Intergenerational Pain;” “Remembrance, Repentance, and Repair: The Tole of the Black Church in the Reparations Movement;” “The Great Political Rollback: the Struggle for Voting Rights and the Ongoing Challenge of Voter Suppression;” “Lifting the Stigma: Reestablishing the Black Church as a Safe Haven for Mental Health and Racial Trauma Support;” and “Unholy Wedlock: The Black Church’s Resistance to White Christian Nationalism and Dismantling Its Myths.”

Antioch members Dr. Brenda Eason, who is president of the NBC Ushers, Bro. Tommy Jennings, who serves on the Scholarship Board for the National Laymen, Sis. Karen McKinney Holley, who serves as the Executive Assistant



Jean Jones and Dr. Brenda Eason at Mid-Winter

to the Chief of Staff and Dorcas Jones who serves as Coordinator of the Rites of Passage of the Youth and Young Adult, and several Antioch ushers were able to interact with members of their respective auxiliaries from the other conventions. The Youth and Young Adult Auxiliary attendees left with two projects to be implemented across the four conventions. Young adults will reach out to their counterparts in their local areas in the Get Out the Vote Initiative, encouraging them to register, work the polls, and vote. Operation Lodebar is an evangelistic effort to spread the gospel to 2,024 people by the end of 2024. After a training session, delegates signed pledge cards and took materials to help train others in their local Podcasts and Zoom reporting sessions will be held during the year to follow up on progress made.

FEBRUARY

Ministers & Moderators Maximum Impact Conference

Although the Moderators and Ministers Auxiliary of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. (GMBC) convenes the Maximum Impact Conference, it is not just for pastors and preachers. The theme “Breaking Barriers: Eliminating Obstacles To Effective Ministry” speaks to a variety of ministries, not just the ministry of preaching/pastor-

ing. Held at the Macon Marriott from Monday-Wednesday, February 5th-7th, the conference is a mixture of worship services and seminars.

Based on the theme, each seminar addressed barriers faced by churches. Rev. Dr. Bruce Williams, pastor of Bates Memorial BC of Louisville, KY, presented the first seminar, “Breaking Tra-

ditional Barriers,” in which he articulated barriers that keep people away from or cause people to leave churches. As churches continue to try to reach multiple generations, the seminar “Breaking Generational Barriers” garnered a lot of participation. Rev. Patrick Toney explained that “the church is unique in that most churches have 5 generations within them,

and it is a challenge to reach all of them effectively. Places of employment may have 2 or 3 generations with very well-defined hierarchies.” As he gave strategies for bridging gaps, a lively exchange of challenges and ideas ensued. Additional seminars included “Breaking Barriers of Individualism, Worship, Gender, and Financial Barriers.

Christian Leadership Institute and Adjourned Session

Several members of the Christian Education Auxiliary attended the 2024 Virtual Christian Education Leadership Conference, Part A. Held on February 12th-13th, a combination of seminars and National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. Certificate of Progress Program (C.O.P.P.) courses were offered. C.O.P.P. qualifies individuals to teach in a certified School of Christian Education. The seminars addressed timely topics such as, "Reaching the Non-Christians and Sects," "Developing Christian Black Men to be Role Models," and "Maintaining a Good Marriage and a Strong Family."

The Adjourned Session was held at Young's Chapel BC in Douglas, GA, the Rev. B.T. Rose, pastor. As one of the constitutionally designated business sessions, the

Executive Board Meeting featured the reports from all auxiliaries, the progress being made in establishing a Re-Entry Program at the C.M.A. Land of Promise, and the report of the Election Commission as the GMBC presidential election will be held at the November Annual Session. As always, the main "business" is equipping delegates to go back to their local churches and districts and evangelize, equip, and empower people. Sis. Monica A. Swayne, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Coach, presented the workshop "Too Expensive Not to Understand: Seven Mental Health Realities." She stated that we must continue to work to eliminate the stigma around mental health because it is "too expensive to have people living in pain or commit-

ting suicide because we do not want to talk about issues affecting their mental well-being."

The Women's Auxiliary had two enlightening seminars. The first, using the acronym G.R.A.C.E. (God's Riches at Christ's Expense), was led by Rev. Sonya Richardson and challenged women to live a lifestyle of praise as they think daily about what Jesus gave up for each person. "We sing, 'Amazing Grace,' but are we living an amazing grace life?" she asked. Rev. Todd Rhodes, pastor of Shiloh BC in Brunswick, also a former lieutenant of police, presented a workshop on "Security and Safety Measures for Ladies of Faith." His unique approach interwove the assurance of God's protection we have as Christians with practical tips for remaining safe in our

homes and in our daily travels. The Moderators/Ministers Division workshops included "Ministry Tools for Membership Engagement" in which Rev. Patrick Toney addressed both some traditional and technological outreach and in reach methods. Brother Warner McCray addressed a similar topic in the Laymen's Division as he talked about ways to engage Black men in the work of the church.

The GMBC sessions are open to everyone. Those who cannot travel to other areas in the state are urged to become involved locally in the Fifth District events and to plan to attend the Annual Session in November which will be held in Stone Mountain.

NBC iROCK Collective Pop-up Conference

While the weather was frigid and the roads were icy in Memphis, the National Baptist iROCK Collective was on fire for the Lord. The National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. Young Adults (ages 18-35) had planned a full weekend pop-up conference slated to run from Friday through Monday, January 19th-22nd, just prior to the Mid-Winter Board Meeting, but because of an uncharacteristic snowstorm, most of the events were postponed.

On Sunday evening, young adults from across the country and local choirs, soloists, and praise teams joined together in an evening of worship at Pilgrim Rest MBC, Rev. Terrick Banks, pastor. Inspirational meditations presented by preachers from different Baptist conventions provided solid biblical exposition and urged the con-

gregation to walk out the biblical mandates in their daily lives.

Because of the storm, LeMoyné-Owen College was closed on Monday, but the President, Dr. Christopher Davis, who is also president of the Tennessee East State Convention, graciously opened for NBCYYA iROCK Collective to hold its sessions. The staff was more than accommodating, giving up a day off to make sure everything needed for a successful conference was available.

After a delicious breakfast buffet, Dr. Kia Conerway, pastor of The Church at the Well, gave a powerful presentation on prayer. She related how important it is to teach our youth to pray, relating how her 6-year-old daughter, Harper, is quick to stop and pray with and for her friends in many different

situations.

Rev. Banks preached "Stepping Out on Something New" based on Matt 14:29. The Social Justice and Community Impact panel echoed Rev. Banks' message that each of us must have "the audacity to attempt to make change, to step out into the waters." Brian Harris, Director of the Memphis Office of Youth Service, Dr. Kia Conerway, in her role as an advisor to the White House and digital political strategist, Collins Pettaway, an active public servant in Selma, AL, and communications consultant for the Pettapull Firm and Tristatz, and Rev. Dr. Earl Fisher, pastor of Abyssinian BC, Memphis, professor, community organizer, and political commentator both informed and challenged attendees to get involved in their local communities

and make a difference.

The purpose of the iROCK Collective Pop-Up is to bring the essence of the national gatherings to engage young adults in their regions, districts, and local churches. The model is reproducible with space for modifications that incorporate local flavor. For instance, a campfire vesper service was planned for Memphis, but that might be changed to a gathering on the beach in California or Florida or a visit to The King Center and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.

If there is any question about whether Baptist young adults are well grounded and on the move, the purposeful activism of the NBCYYA proves that our young adults are well equipped and invested in making the world better.

A Black History Moment:

Robert Kennedy, Jr. Visits Antioch

On the eve of the celebration of the life and contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday on Monday, January 15th, Antioch welcomed a special guest to her Sunday worship service. Pastor K.L. Alexander reminded all gathered that we should never take our civil liberties for granted because someone fought for us to be where we are today. People were beaten, bitten by dogs, hit with water hoses, in order that we can enjoy the rights we now have.

"If America had a royal family, the name would have to be Kennedy," Pastor Alexander stated as he introduced Robert Francis Kennedy, Jr., nephew of President John F. Kennedy, Jr., and son of US Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy, Sr. He thanked Kennedy and his family for "putting themselves on the line and even giving up their lives so that we can enjoy the freedoms that we now have."

The Kennedys had a special relationship with Dr. King, who considered his father, Robert, Sr., a friend. Dr. King was arrested in October 1960 at a DeKalb County lunch counter sit-in. While some of the protesters were let go at their first court appearance, Dr. King was held because his arrest violated the terms of his probation stemming from a traffic incident. Dr. King had been pulled over in DeKalb County in May of 1960 and charged with driving without a license. Even though he had a valid Alabama license, the state of his residence, Dr. King pleaded guilty, paid a fine, and was sentenced to a year's probation. Today, you can see the

historical marker on the corner of McDonough Street and West Trinity Place in Decatur, the former site of DeKalb County's Civil and Criminal Court and Jail where Dr. King was sentenced, jailed, and taken in chains to serve a sentence of hard labor for violating his probation.

Robert Kennedy, Jr. related that Mrs. Coretta Scott King called then-vice-president and presidential candidate Richard Nixon for help, and he never returned her call. She then called Harry Belafonte, who was a major funder of the Civil Rights Movement, who put her in touch with Sargeant Shreiber. Shreiber contacted then-presidential candidate John F. Kennedy, Jr. requesting help. It was very risky for him to get involved because three southern governors, including Georgia governor Samuel Vandiver, had said they would support him for president if he did not help Dr. King. Nevertheless, John Kennedy reached out to Mrs. King.

According to RFK, Jr., his father really didn't know a lot about the Civil Rights Movement, but "he hated bullies," so he called the sheriff and then the governor and asked him to get Dr. King out of jail. The governor was reluctant, but Kennedy, Sr. pressed him and told him to call in the morning and explain what he had done toward getting Dr. King released. Dr. King was released, and Kennedy, Sr. went to the Dexter Ave. BC in Montgomery, where Dr. King served as pastor, and publicly endorsed John F. Kennedy for president. The John F. Kennedy campaign aides told RFK, Sr. that he had lost the election for



Robert Kennedy, Jr. with Antioch member, Beverly Dawkins

his brother.

On the contrary, Kennedy's support caused a rise in African American support for the Kennedy and the Democratic Party that led him to win the presidency by the second narrowest popular vote margin in history, 112,000 out of 68 million votes cast. The African American vote made the difference.

President John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert F. Kennedy, Sr. continued to support Dr. King, such as in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the boycott of businesses in Montgomery and Chicago, the Selma to Montgomery March, and the protection of the Freedom Riders. President Kennedy partnered with King in the March on Washington and proposed the Civil Rights Act, which passed in July of 1964.

Robert F. Kennedy, Sr. supported Dr. King's protest of the Vietnam War. Dr. King said, "we can't separate the war from the violence that is happening here. 45% of the paratroopers in Viet-

nam are black. Black lives are being sacrifices for freedoms that don't enjoy at home." The night that Dr. King was killed, Kennedy, Sr. refused to cancel his scheduled campaign speech in a black neighborhood in Indianapolis. Discarding his prepared speech, he spoke from the heart. He said that the country could move in the direction "of greater polarization...filled with hatred toward one another...or [toward] love, wisdom, and compassion toward one another" (Bohrer, John R. "Robert F. Kennedy, April 4, 1968, National Registry [added 2018]).

Kennedy related how he watched his father die from an assassin's bullet 2 months later. As he had supported Mrs. King, procuring an airplane to carry King's body from Memphis to Atlanta, she supported him staying with him as his father's body was transported to New York and then to D.C. There was a bond between the Kennedys and the Kings that death could not break.

Congratulations to Sis. B. Maria Hunter

Antioch knows Sis. B. Maria Alexander Hunter as the co-lead of ABCNN, the team that provides Antioch's presence on digital and social media platforms and as our pastor's sister. God had already positioned her and provided her with the training needed to seamlessly pivot Antioch into the virtual space when the Covid-19 pandemic closed the door for physical gathering for worship services, Bible studies, and auxiliary and ministry rehearsals and meetings.

In her professional life, Sis. Hunter is the Director of Digital Business at Georgia Tech, and in March, she was featured during Women's History Month as one of the celebrated women in Informa-



Maria Alexander Hunter

tion Technology (IT).

Maria Hunter has always had a desire for problem-solving and helping others. This affinity was evident during her time in college when an assignment led her to de-

velop code to automate processes. With her new passion for technology, Hunter decided to pursue a career in IT.

After her first professional role with AT&T, she went on to Southern University and Tulane Hospital and Clinic in Louisiana. Eventually, her path led to Georgia Tech, where she currently serves as the director of OIT's Digital Business, delivering client support services and enterprise service management across the Institute. "I work through cross-departmental collaborations to identify and develop processes and services that drive IT transformation and growth and for the delivery of best-in-class, custom-

er-focused technology services and support," Hunter said.

Professional Insights

She acknowledges that the ever-evolving nature of IT can be an obstacle, and she and her team regularly explore new systems and information to prepare for changes in the industry. "It provides an opportunity that is equally challenging and rewarding for us." Hunter also credits professional organizations for helping her network with others in digital business, and she cultivates connections with her peers at Tech and at fellow University System of Georgia institution.

Tiffany Burgess: Finding Ministry in the Arts

As the only daughter and youngest of four children, Tiffany Burgess was raised in the 15th Avenue Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, where she was always active in the choir, children, youth, and young adult ministries and area conferences. In her home, which was filled with love and rooted in Christ, tough issues and challenges were always addressed through the family's faith. "Rely on faith and trust in God," she readily recalls as her aunt's favorite foundational scripture from Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and He will direct your path." These cherished verses remain instilled in Tiffany's heart and memory and are her guiding light for her life's journey.

Tiffany realizes that this foundation is especially important, and



Tiffany Burgess

vital in her chosen career industry. As far as she can remember, she has always been interested in the arts, whether as a writer for *Huffington Post* and *Blavity*, or behind the scenes in movie screenwriting. A pivotal point in Ms. Burgess' career occurred when she participated in an acting showcase through the Premiere Actors' Network here in Atlanta in 2019. "People Store" talent

agency was present and invited her to audition for representation. As a result, she was signed by the agency and the auditions began. These auditions eventually led to her securing a commercial with *In Touch Ministries*, a faith-based organization airing throughout the southeastern United States, and a role on ABC's *The Wonder Years*. Ms. Burgess then began to make more appearances in films and web series.

Tiffany states that this five-year career path has been an on-going learning process. Through it all, her relationship with Christ has been key to navigating the 'ups' and 'downs', 'yesses' and 'nos' in this well sought after industry. She recalls having to make faith-based decisions on roles that were or were not for her. Her faith has not failed her yet.

In 2022, Ms. Burgess auditioned for the role of Miss Celie's grown

daughter, Olivia, in the Oprah Winfrey produced movie, *The Color Purple*. She was elated to land this role which reinforced her aunt's words as she reflected on the film's energy and portrayal of faith and redemption in its script and scenes. In the closing song, "The Color Purple," the lyrics, "look at what God has done" is perfectly aligned with her current and future goals.

Through the company she co-founded, Tyler Street Films, Tiffany and her partners are currently pitching a network television series. With long-term goals to land more acting roles while continuing to produce and write on a much larger scale, she is well on her way. Armed with her foundational beliefs and her family's continuous guidance and encouragement, clearly a much higher power is directing her career path.

MARCH

Seven Last Words

Beginning at noon, Antioch continued her tradition of observing the seven last recorded sayings of Jesus Christ from the cross on Good Friday, March 29th. Rev. Otis Byrd led the congregation in a hymn preceding each message.

Forgiveness, Luke 23:34 – Rev. Darrell Arnold

If an insurance premium payment is not received on time, there is a grace period, and if you pay during that time, there is no lapse in coverage. The text provides a business transaction, a one-time, paid-in-full premium paid on the cross for sins past, present, and future. If you're guilty of sinning, repent, for there's still room for you. Jesus will forgive you, so you must forgive yourself and others. Take out the Blessed Assurance Love Policy before it's too late; the final premium payment has already been paid in full.

Salvation, Luke 23:42-43 – Rev. Dr. Ed London

Salvation is a unique experience, a gift of God. It is a mystery that the angels strained trying to understand the unmerited favor and unconditional love God has for humans. One thief on the cross listens as Jesus prays and sees Jesus's goodness and light, and his hope is revived as his life is slipping away. He feared God and prayed a prayer of faith, and immediately, Jesus let him graduate from Death Row to Paradise. For each person who repents and asks to be redeemed, Jesus promises, "you will be with me in Paradise."

Affection, John 19:25-27 – Rev. Charles Walker

Jesus gave his mother Mary to his disciple John, who took her into his own house for them to become family. Affection should be found in family. You can love from a distance, but affection has to be hands-on; you have to be close. We need everyone in a family, the young because they're strong and the old for their wisdom. My mother taught me how to pray through example; walking up and down the hall, I heard her prayers. If you've got a prayer line, you've got a hot line to God.

Anguish, Matthew 27:46 – Rev. Walter Collins

Christ has been the perfect example for us to live by. He was obedient in easy times, and he



Antioch Seven Last Words Ministers pose with Pastor Alexander

also obeyed when times were difficult. John 10:30 records Jesus's words, "I and my Father are one." He told the truth, and the Jews stoned him believing what he said was blasphemy. Nailed to the cross by members of his own creation, his anguish so great that he cried out. At any point, he could have said, "Enough is enough" and come down from the cross, but he chose to stay, obeying His Father even though he was in extreme pain.

Suffering, John 19:28 – Min. Harry Holley

Hanging on the cross, Jesus was dried up, and no one was willing to give him a drink of cooling water from Jacobs'—or grandma's—well. Psalm 22:15 paints the picture of how dehydrated he was, and Luke 22:44 records that his sweat was as "great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The physical suffering paled in comparison to his suffering on our behalf as he asked if his Father could remove the cup of sin. He accepted that because he came to fulfill the law, he had to suffer so that God's will would be accomplished.

Victory, John 19:30 – Rev. Bruce Scott

Jesus accepted being beaten with a whip embedded with metal and enduring the most painful and degrading punishment in the an-

cient world, to pay the debt of sin for each of us. The victory of the salvation of the world was completed on the cross. The perfect sacrifice for the sin of humanity, he fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:5. Jesus's obedience is our example to trust God's purpose and follow him faithfully. He is the beginning and end of our search for peace, joy, and happiness.

Contentment, Luke 23:46 – Rev. Lester Duncan

Because we are all sinners, we all had a hand in putting Jesus to death. He concluded his prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane with "nevertheless," echoing the psalmist in Psalm 31:5 by committing his spirit to God. Happiness depends on happenings, but true contentment, satisfaction, exists regardless of circumstances. Contentment starts with a true relationship with Christ. He died to set us free from the penalty of sin. Jesus gave up the ghost so that we could receive the Holy Ghost, our comforter.

Pastor Alexander stated that there were "a lot of words to live by in the seven sermons" and encouraged everyone to give God the praise that Jesus died for each of us. "He died, but don't park there."



January Birth Month Fashion Show Winner

March Birth Month Sing and Paint

If you are not a member of any other auxiliary, you are a member of a Birth Month. Our birth month celebrations provide us with another avenue for fellowship. The funds raised in the good-natured competition for Top Birth Month are used for long-term projects, such as refurbishing the 590 Building. Each month spearheads a fellowship, and everyone is invited.

Just ahead of the "Big Four" fashion weeks held in February in New York, London, Milan, and Paris, Antioch's January Birth Month held a unique fashion show on Friday, January 31st. Antioch members chose to model their favorite fashions. From casual to business to formal and Sunday Best, Antioch members regaled all gathered in Fellowship Hall.

Even the artistically challenged enjoyed the Sing and Paint Birth Month Fellowship on Friday, March 22nd. February and March joined to provide a signature experience for all ages. Pictures drawn by Morgan Baxter and E'mirah Wallace were distributed for attendees to paint. People were intent as they chose colors to fill in faces, flowers, cars, trucks, shoes or blank pallets to create their own designs. Several brave souls belted out tunes chosen from a song list, some adding choreography. Pastor Alexander serenaded Lady Lisa.

Food is plentiful at the Birth Month Fellowships. Birth months are divided up and assigned a specific food item to furnish. The amount and variety of food items has satisfied every palate.



Antioch Urban Ministries, Inc. (AUMI) participated in the 40th Annual Hunger 5K Walk/Run sponsored by the Atlanta Community Food Bank on Sunday, March 11th. During the festivities prior to the walk in the Home Depot Backyard, Laila Ali, a longtime champion for reducing hunger and food insecurity encouraged the crowd to continue the fight until no one in America is hungry. As walkers and runners crested the hill coming up Northside Dr., they could see Antioch's steeple cross as a beacon of hope.



Medicare information session

On Wednesday and Thursday, March 20th and 21st, in Antioch's Fellowship Hall, AUMI, Inc., through its Choose Healthy Life initiative, partnered with Oak Street Health to provide information about Medicare benefits. Once eligible for Medicare Part A, there are a variety of plans and providers, and it is best to check what each offers and choose the best plan for the individual.



Young Adults in Action

by Cameron Woods

On January 4th, 2024, Antioch hosted its very first College Connect. College Connect is a fellowship for the youth of Antioch, college students specifically, to reconnect with one another and form new connections. The event was hosted by Bro. Nigel Walker and Sis. Bethani Price. College Connect proved to be a wild success as it brought many generations of Antioch together to help find new ways to best support the new youth of Antioch physically, mentally and emotionally.



Nahri Marks

Nahri Marks, granddaughter of Sis. Algernon Roberts and niece of Sis. Lynn Roberts was a featured soloist when the Johnson C. Smith University Concert Choir sang at Zion Baptist Church in Marietta, Rev. Eric Beckham, pastor, on Saturday, March 9th.



590 North Easter Bash

In partnership with Antioch Urban Ministries, Inc. (AUMI), The 590 North held an Easter Bash. Coordinated by Sis. Erica Mansfield, two days of fun, information, and incredible food were available at the 590 Building. Vendors provided information on a variety of services and products, and the variety of food trucks was a gastronomical delight, from crawfish to jerk to sumptuous desserts. The DJ mixed up the music, so you could do-si-do to Texas Hold 'Em by Cowboy Carter, Electric Slide to the Electric Boogie, or rap to Good Feeling with Flo Rida.

The children had non-stop fun. They enjoyed the bouncy houses and made up their own races. Leah Renee, who won the bike, was overwhelmed with joy. Her mother said it was truly a blessing because they were recently homeless and just getting back on their feet. During the Easter Egg Hunt, an older child was going to give a younger child one of her eggs, but the younger one said, "I want to find my own." The older child took two eggs out of her basket and put them back in the grass, went and found the younger child and led her near the two eggs so she could "find" them. There could not have been a better illustration of Christ-like behavior as we celebrated Easter.

Antioch Note Singers Minister on Black History Programs

While Antioch is blessed to enjoy our Shape Note Choir regularly, it is a special occasion for many other churches and organizations. During Black History Month, the Note Singers are sought after keeping this specific genre of music alive. Although shape notes were introduced in England and brought first to New England by the settlers, the style of music quickly took hold in the South. African Americans embraced shape note singing because of the ease of learning the syllables that corresponded to the shapes and the emphasis on congregational singing without instruments.

On Saturday, February 3rd, the Note Singers blessed the Black History Program held at the Hillside Presbyterian Church in Decatur. A collaboration between the church's Christian Education Department, First World (Africa) Productions, and the Samuel H. Johnson Summer Study Skills Program Foundation, the program draws an intergenerational audience. Two weeks later, on February 17th, the Note Singers repeated their ministry through shape notes at the R.O.S.A., Inc. (Reaching Out to Senior Adults) African-American Heritage Program at Mt. Welcome MBC in De-



Antioch's Shape Note Choir

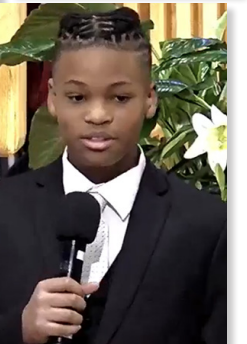
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Sis. Wendy Harding gave a brief history, and the Note Singers demonstrated how they tune up and then move into a selection. As they were singing the shape note syllables, the audiences leaned forward in rapt attention. When

the Singers added the words, their enthusiasm for the message of the songs became palpable. The audiences were on their feet, joining in the choruses as the Note Singers moved through the aisles shaking hands.

Youth Easter Speeches

Antioch's Children, aged 2-11, bravely stood before the congregation to recite their Easter speeches on Resurrection Sunday at the beginning of the morning worship service.



Antioch Celebrates...



**Rev. J. Scott Copeland's
10th Pastoral
Anniversary**

Antioch went 2 on a mule—or at least 2 bus loads and several carloads—to Lafayette, GA to help Rev. J. Scott Copeland celebrate his 10th Pastoral Anniversary at Prospect MBC on Sunday, March 24th. There was high fellowship between the churches during the delicious barbecue meal that Prospect provided prior to the afternoon service.

Pastor Kenneth L. Alexander preached on the theme, "Preaching In and Out of Season" based on 2 Timothy 4:2-5. He stated that he is scared when someone says he wants to preach because preaching involves suffering. "Most of us run from the call until it is too painful to keep running. You preach because you've been called. Rev. Copeland is called to preach, and he was trained by the best, the Rev. Dr. Cameron M. Alexander. He does not compromise the Word." He thanked Rev. Copeland for preaching "in season and out of season," including the many graveside home going services during the pandemic.

Rev. Dr. Rodney K. Turner, son of Antioch and pastor of Mt. Vernon B.C., who preached during the morning worship service, along with many other of his brothers in the Ministerial Alliance as well as a host of members, paid tribute to Rev. Copeland. He has impacted lives far and wide, and a host of members and friends lined up to thank him. Lady Lisa Alexander shared her love

and that of the Antioch Minister's Wives for Lady Lisa Copeland.



**Rev. John Byrdsell's
3rd Pastoral Anniversary**

Antioch went across town on February 11th, to share in the joyous celebration of Rev. John G. Byrdsell's 3rd anniversary as pastor of Concord Missionary Baptist Church. The sons of the church showed up en masse to support their brother in the ministry, Rev. Dr. Rodney K. Turner serving as president. Rev. Carlton Williams preached during the morning worship service. Commenting on the number of Antioch sons and other preachers in attendance, Pastor Alexander stated, "if you look at who's under this roof right now, there's enough power in here to change Atlanta."

Pastor Alexander said, "We celebrate today because God didn't send Concord just any old body. When God got ready to choose for Concord, he sent Pastor John G. Only God working through his appointed person could have achieved as much in such a short 3-year time span, even in the midst of a pandemic." Referencing 2 Timothy 4:2-5, Pastor Alexander stated, "he has made proof of his ministry. The work is being done." He noted that Rev. Byrdsell and his wife Jean are "a match made in heaven."

"If the theme scripture, Romans 10:14, was all there was, we really wouldn't have a whole lot

to celebrate. All we'd be celebrating is preaching. There are folk out there preaching anything and everything, doing anything to pack a pew; they won't even call the name Jesus." Pastor Alexander read the previous verse and said there are a lot of celebrations that have nothing to do with salvation. Backing up to verses 1 and 2, he explained that Pastor Byrdsell's heart was that people be saved and have a zeal for God.



Rev. Eddie Lee Bright

Rev. Eddie Lee Bright, pastor of Mt. Zion BC, was promoted from President of the 5th District of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. (GMBC) to Northern Regional Vice President.



Rev. Aaron T. Brown, Sr.

Rev. Aaron T. Brown, Sr., was installed as pastor of Reedy River Missionary BC in Greenville, SC, on Sunday, February 18th. He and Lady Devora Simmons Brown enjoyed a celebratory weekend, including a Black-Tie Gala on Friday evening. Dr. Donald E. Greene, pastor of Andrew Chapel BC and president of the Baptist E&M Convention of SC, brought the installation sermon, "Find Your Strength," based on 1 Samuel 30:6 and gave the charge to the pastor.

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