

Christmas: A promise kept

I don't remember much about Christmas 1973 except that it was the year my mother died and I got my monkey. This wasn't just any monkey. It was the old, stuffed kind with a plastic face, feet and hands, one of which clenched a plastic banana. I was 16, and can't remember ever receiving - with the exception of my daughters and the Samoyed puppy my husband gave me on our wedding day - a more perfect or special gift.

My sister Dianne had redeemed it with those yellow Top Value stamps a sack of groceries from Winn Dixie could get you. I never gave it a name. It was always simply my monkey. When I went off to college, I took my monkey. When I left home for the first time, chasing hope in North Carolina and then California, my monkey came with me. Today, nearly 40 years later, it rests on the top shelf of my closet, much more than a monkey. It is a reminder that God will provide.

I was reminded of that the other day reading newspaper headlines about this bruising economy. I thought about all the children who don't have a big sister with Top Value stamps.

I thought about the huge number of moms and dads, many of whom are members of this church, who've lost their jobs, lost their homes, lost their good health.

It's enough to lose hope but that is what I love so much about this season. It is a reminder that God will provide, that his promises are true.

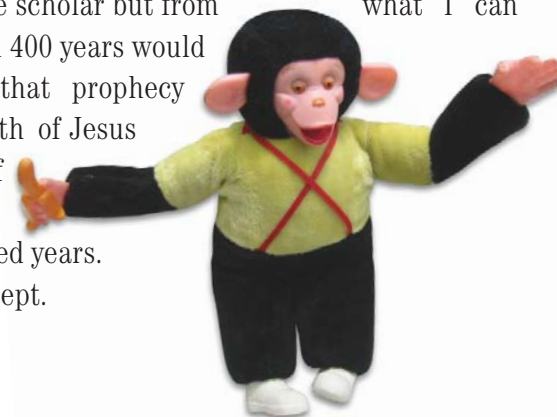
In Isaiah 7:14 it is promised that a "a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

I'm no Bible scholar but from what I can tell more than 400 years would pass before that prophecy and the birth of Jesus in the book of Matthew.

Four hundred years.
A promise kept.



Gracie Bonds Staples



Empowerment ministry to host job series

The Empowerment Outreach Ministry will begin hosting a series of job-related topics Dec. 22 designed to help Antioch members gain and/or keep employment. The meetings will be held from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. in the chapels. The series of topics and the dates in which they will be held are listed below:

Topic	Meeting Date
I'm Unemployed...Me!	Tuesday, December 22, 2009
Am I Next, Well Am I?	Tuesday, December 29, 2009
My Resume Strategy	Tuesday, January 5, 2010
Marketing Me!	Tuesday, January 12, 2010
Why Can't I Find a Job?	Tuesday, January 19, 2010
What God Has for Me	Tuesday, January 26, 2010
The New Me	Tuesday, February 2, 2010
Connect, Connect, Connect	Tuesday, February 9, 2010

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INSIDE

- 2 GMBC Pays Off Debt
- 3 Members of the Year
- 4 Pastor's Coming...
- 5 Pioneers on Parade
- 7 Members Memorialized



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The Church at Antioch

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

December 2009

Volume 2, Issue 12

Church Briefs

Celebrate Christmas

Antioch hosted its annual Christmas Tree Extravaganza was held on Friday at 7 p.m. on Dec. 4. Well-deserving families will receive a fully-decorated Christmas tree prepared by the ministries and auxiliaries of Antioch.



Antioch's Choir sings during the 132nd Anniversary Celebration.

Demonstration Day

Added members are invited to celebrate their union with the Antioch Family today, Sunday, Dec. 13, by serving with the Choirs, Ushers, Visitors Ministries. The will also share in reading the scripture, sharing a tithing testimony, and fellowshiping together.

55/40 Banquet

In a show of thanksgiving and love, Antioch
Continued on page 2



Rev. Rodney K. Turner



Rev. Kenneth L. Alexander

Eight give their lives to Christ

Eight give their lives to Christ at church anniversary services

In October, the Antioch Baptist Church North choirs kicked off the fall revival that by all accounts was a Holy Ghost filled performance.

When the church gathered Nov. 8 to celebrate its 132nd anniversary, it was as if they were still in concert mode.

It was a fitting prelude to the Word brought during the day's services, starting with the Rev. Rodney Turner at 8 a.m. and ending with the Rev. Kenneth Alexander at 11 a.m. Eight gave their lives to Christ.

Turner, brought greetings from Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, where he is pastor. "Oh what a mighty God we serve," he declared leading into a sermon from one

of King David's prayers: Psalms 17:1-8.

"Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer that goeth not out of feigned lips."

David, Rev. Turner said,
Continued on page 5

GMBC pays off its debt

Sis. Margaret Weaver addresses prime time session

The General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. was declared debt free during its annual meeting Nov. 16 in Rome, Ga.

The Rev. Clarence Moore, a son of Antioch Baptist Church North and pastor of the Good Shepherd Baptist Church of Augusta, told the delegation that the convention's debt had been "paid in full."

Moore, in his address to the convention, said that MasterCard has commercials that detail prices for a variety of things but always ends with something which is priceless.

"Hope is priceless and in the reach of every soul who has faith and trusts in Christ," said Moore. "We need not be affected by and panic at what is going on in the world around us. We have hope because of the cross, not because someone is still on it, but because it is empty."

Moore, who succeeded Pastor Cameron Madison Alexander as president of the GMBC, was named first vice president recently of the National Baptist Convention USA and will be responsible for coordinating the Southeast Region. The region consists of five states: Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.



Rev. Clarence Moore



Dr. Margaret Weaver

The keynote speaker for the Women's Auxiliary Prime Time session was our own Sis. Margaret Weaver who electrified all gathered in her demonstration speech entitled "put on the Garment of Praise."

Don't just throw it casually around your shoulders or drape it over you, Weaver told those gathered for the address.

"Put it fully on so that it cannot be easily removed. Make praise to God the very center of your life, and it will keep you warm and protect you," she said.

Throughout the session, Antiochans were visible in many roles; Sis. Brenda Eason is the Convention Planner and Coordinator of the Ushers and Health Professionals Ministry; Rev. Ervin Richards, a son of Antioch and Pastor of Antioch Loving Spirit in Lithia Springs is the Statistician; Dr. Mary Hicks serves as President



Antioch Ushers at convention

and Sis. Karen S. McKinney serves as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Bryant Bible College and Theological Seminary; Sis. Dorcas Jones serves as Acting Coordinator for the Youth of the Fifth District; many Antioch ushers were on post serving in every session, and the delegates, led by Mother Francis Miles, attended mission classes and various training sessions returning to Antioch better equipped to serve the least, the less, and the lost.

Continued from cover: Church Briefs

will gather at 7 p.m. Dec. 18 to pay tribute to Pastor Cameron Madison Alexander. The event, to be held at Renaissance Concourse Hotel, will celebrate his 55 years of preaching the gospel and 40 years at Antioch. This is our time to say "Thank you" and "We love you." Tickets are on sale now.

Candlelight Communion

Baptism & the Right Hand of Fellowship (4pm) and the annual Candlelight Communion (5pm) will be held on Dec. 20. This will be the first time Baptism/Right Hand of Fellowship will be observed during a Communion Service. There will be special music and restructuring of the services.

Watch Night

Watch Night Services, Dec. 31, 6:00 & 10:00 – End the old and bring in the new in prayer and worship at the annual Watch Night Services. There will be two Watch Night Services – at 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. - to accommodate early churchgoers and those who prefer worshipping at midnight.

Members memorialized in prayer garden

Five long-time Antioch members were recently remembered during a candlelight ceremony for their contributions to the church.

In an effort to preserve their memory, their names will be added to the Memorial Garden.

Antioch has been paying tribute to its pioneers and pathfinders this way since 1966, when Sis. Charlotte Kemp initiated the idea.

The most recent additions include:

Bro. Ernest & Sis. Cora Mae Barnes

During their long service at Antioch, Bro. and Sis. Barnes made sure their entire three children were also members. Bro. Ernest Barnes was an avid member of the Sunday School Department, a member of the D.T. George Gospel Choir, a cook that served in the Culinary Department.

Mrs. Cora Mae Barnes was also an avid Sunday School member. During her early years at Antioch, she served on the Usher Board and was a mem-

ber of the D.T. George Gospel Choir. Lighting the candle in memory of Bro. and Sis. Barnes was their lovely daughter, Sis. Peggy Barnes.

Sis. Annie Lee Jackson

Ms. Annie Lee Jackson was a devoted member with more than 60 years of membership here at Antioch. During her membership, she served in several church auxiliaries, including the D.T. George Gospel Choir. Not only was she a faithful member, but a faithful tither as well.

Lighting the candle in memory of Mrs. Jackson was her daughter, Sis. Pat Jackson.

Deacon Johnnie J. Jones

Deacon Johnnie Jones was a member of Antioch for 36 years. During that time, Dea. Jones was a diligent member of the Antioch Deacon Board Ministry, chairman of the May Birth Month Club, and a member of the Christian Education Department



Antioch's Memorial Prayer Garden

where he taught Sunday School.

Lighting the candle in memory of Dea. Jones was his wife, Sis. Delaware Jones.

Bro. Herman Ocie Marsh

Along with his family, Bro. Herman Marsh joined Antioch around 1948. He was an avid Sunday School member and a tither.

Lighting the candle in memory of Bro. Marsh was his daughter, Sis. Cassandra Marsh-Norman.

Lover of music inspires children

Being a lover of music, Sis. Wendolyn Harding, also known as Ms. Wendy, became involved with children and their love of music years ago.

Antioch member Harding believes that a parent or loving caregiver is a child's first and most important teacher and that all children are musically inclined.

Sis. Harding, an educator with Kindermusik since the fall of 1998, operates a studio in her home in the Campbellton Road/Cascade area of Southwest Atlanta.

In a Kindermusik Village class, Harding said "we take

those special bonding moments between you and your baby and add in a unique blend of music learning activities that stimulate and engage all the senses." She said it also "encourages children to be creative, to initiate their own ideas and to respond in their own way, while your active participation gives them the security they need."

Harding will teach you how to encourage your baby's learning through vocal play, object exploration, instruments, and creative movement. There are weekly 45-minute classes that include new and unique par-



Wendolyn Harding

ent and baby activities, such as playing instruments, listening together and strengthen-

ing bonding relationships.

Kindermusik will explain "what to watch for" every step of the way and how each activity enhances your child's complete development. "You'll learn over 30 songs, lullabies, and nursery rhymes and play over 200 activities together by the semester's end," said Harding.

Harding believes that every child should experience the joy, fun and learning that music brings to life. To learn more about Kindermusik, call (404) 753-4471 or visit www.mswendyspreciousmelodies.com.

Crawford writes another children's book

Joy Crawford saw the situation each year on the first day of school.

A child walked into her kindergarten classroom begging for his or her mommy.

Such fears and uncertainty were the inspiration for Crawford, a longtime Antioch member, to write her latest book, "Sam & Joe Joe's First Day." The book is the story of how Sam adjusted to his new world with the help of a new friend, Joe Joe.

Sis. Crawford's book is aimed at accomplishing two goals: helping children overcome their fear of school and encouraging children to read.

"The earlier you start (reading to them), the better," said Sis. Crawford, who joined Antioch 20 years ago.

"(Children) always love listening to the stories," she added. "They hear words that might not be spoken to them at that young age."

"Sam & Joe Joe's First Day" is Sis.



Joy Crawford

Crawford's second published book. It was copyrighted last year and published in July. Sis. Crawford taught for 35 years before retiring three years ago.

The 19-page book costs \$6.95 and can be purchased on www.amazon.com and from her publisher, Highlights of Chicago Press.

In the book, Sam excitedly arrived at school, but he didn't want to let go his mother's hand.

"I want my mama!," he cried after she left.

Sam rolled a ball of clay off a table. Joe Joe picked up the clay and rolled it back to him. A friendship was born.

The two boys drew a picture and played with blocks.

At the end of the day, Sam's mother came to pick him up.

"See Sam, I told you your mom would be back," his teacher said.

"I like my school and my new friend, Joe Joe," Sam replied.

Sis Crawford's written about 50 books over the years for her students about her classroom experiences.

"I'm sure there are delightful stories in the classrooms of all teachers," she said. "I have written many of my students' experiences down.

Scholarships deadline approaching

Applications for Book and Memorial Scholarships are available for advanced freshmen to graduate students.

Interested applicants may apply for one of the following: the Sherri Spann Memorial Scholarship (Education, Music or Service to Humanity), the Sharon Wright Willis Memorial Scholarship (Elementary or Secondary Education), the Luther and Lenora Cain Memorial Scholarship (all majors), the William "Bill" Harding Memorial Scholarship (all majors), P.D. Harris Memorial Scholarship (music), Johnny Jones Memorial Scholarship (Education). Book scholarships from Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and Smith-Greene.

Applicants must be an active member of Antioch Baptist Church North and/

or Antioch Baptist Church North Urban Churches. See Sis. Wendy Harding, Catherine Huirt-Johnson or any member of the Scholarship Ministry for more information and applications.

DEADLINE: December 15

Application Criteria:

- One scholarship per recipient
- Grade-point average of 3.0 or higher
- Actively involved in church, school or community
- Meet other criteria/guidelines established by Antioch Baptist Church North, Scholarship Ministry and donor of the Memorial Scholarship

The scholarship ministry extends thanks and appreciation to the church family for the generous commitment and support to Antioch's young people.

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.



Lashia Levins, 25, was a runner up for Most Photogenic in the recent Miss Georgia USA 2010 pageant. Due to her overall performance, she has been invited to compete as Miss Georgia for the Miss Black USA pageant next year. She is the daughter of Sis. Margaret Levins-Neal.

Antioch Woman honored by the Concerned Black Clergy

The Concerned Black Clergy of Metropolitan Atlanta recently recognized three members of Antioch Baptist Church for their contributions to the community.

Sisters Rosalyn Curington, Regina Allen and Leah Burney

were each recognized as strong black women of accomplishment during the organization's annual Salute to Black Mothers. They had this to say about the honor:



Rosalyn Curington
Woman of the Year

"The deeds God finds pleasing are those done in service for Him."

It was 2001, after retiring from teaching music for 31 years, that I decided to devote more of my time and service to my God and my church-Antioch North. Yes, I am a singer and, yes, I sing with the Anthem/Acapella choir and other church functions, but that was about all the service

I rendered before retiring. After retirement, I was invited to become a part of a group of wonderful, working, women of Antioch - the Women's Division with Mrs. Alexander as our very able and dedicated coordinator. So, I went to work and contributed my time, talents, and tithes.

2nd Corinthians 5:9 teaches us to "make it our aim . . . to be well pleasing to God." I suppose I always had the desire to ren-

der my service because it is in my blood. I watched my 82 year old mother, Mary Murray, sacrificially give her service to God over and over down through the years. Perhaps, I am following in her footsteps. Even so, I had no idea that I would be selected as "Woman of the Year."

I was very pleased, yet humbled and very appreciative for having been chosen for this special honor. Yes, I'll keep working to please God.



Leah Burney
Young Woman of the Year

Receiving the Young Woman of the Year Award was amazing. I am delighted and humbled to know that my church family, especially the Women's Division, thinks so highly of me to nominate and select me for such a prestigious award.

I thank God not only for the

life lessons that have shaped who I am, but also for the Antioch Church family who have exemplified Christian discipleship and steered me in the right direction. Antioch has shown me what it is to love and to care for others. It is an honor to be honored by Antioch and hope that in my actions I bring honor back to you for all you have

done for me and my family.

Burney, daughter of Bro. Ruben and Sis. Angela Burney, is a graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. At Antioch, she serves with the Note Singers, Anthem/Acapella Choir, Sunday School, the Bell Choir, and Young Adult Ushers.



Regina Allen
Against All Odds Woman of the Year

I have been a member of the Antioch Baptist Church North for seven years. My spouse, Bro. Ricky Allen, and my daughters, Jasmine and Rikki are also members.

Having served in the United States Army, and retiring after almost twenty two years of service, due to brain surgery; being paralyzed and still able to serve my God, is a blessing.

It is my pleasure to be a part of the Women's Division, where I

serve on various committees. I was elated when I was selected as the "Against All Odds Woman of the Year." I believe in being committed and dedicated to my church, and I am deeply humbled by this special recognition. At a stage in my life, my hope had become very dim; however, having been bestowed this honor, my spirit has been renewed.

One of my favorite scriptures is "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Philippians 4:13). One of my favorite songs is one that my grandmother, Sis. Carolyn

Clark, used to sing, "May the Work I've Done Speak for Me." My grandmother instilled in me to always live a life that is pleasing to God. 2nd Corinthians 5:9 teaches us to "Make it our aim . . . to be well pleasing to God." As we by Faith believe in Him and give our lives in service to Him; He is pleased." (Hebrews 11:6).

Thank you, Pastor Alexander, and the Antioch Family for selecting me. I will be forever grateful, and I will always cherish this honor.

Pastor's Coming fellowship—a New Orleans success

The Pastor's Coming to Cobb got off with a bang as more than 100 members turned out to fellowship with the Rev. Cameron Madison Alexander and his wife, Sis. Barbara J. Alexander.

Church members greeted them with cheers, twirling beads and waving white handkerchiefs to the beat of New Orleans jazz.

The event kicked off a se-

ries of fellowships planned with Pastor Alexander as Antioch Baptist Church North continues celebrating his 55 years of preaching and 40 years at Antioch.

Members from Cobb, Bartow, Carroll, Cherokee, Douglas and Paulding counties gathered for a chance to enjoy each other, build new relationships, and win some great gifts.

Eight proclamations and one resolution were presented to Pastor Alexander along with a special performance from the kids of Cobb. State senators, city mayors and local congressmen and congresswomen sent greetings and welcomes from Cobb and surrounding areas.

"This was truly a special evening for us all as we danced away ~ Soul Train

Style," said Sis. Brenda Chavis, one of the organizers of the event.

Chavis said the pastor put the "rubber to the road" just to get to know more members of the Antioch family.

"He got a chance to see up close and personal just how far members actually travel every Sunday to worship at Antioch," she said



Pioneers on parade

Sometimes the years of service that a person gives to their church is taken for granted.

Last month, as part of the church anniversary luncheon in the 590 building, Antioch's anniversary committees took time to honor its pioneers.

Antioch's pioneers with 50 or more years of service were on parade and looking good. Not everyone made it — some elderly members were not in attendance due to health reasons — but those in attendance shared the spotlight for those who could not make it.

Among the honorees were: Mother Willie Mae James and Mother Nannie Daniel, both active members of the Mother's Board, a group that Pastor C.M. Alexander affectionately calls the "wrecking crew." These ladies watched as Antioch grew from the basement of an old building to its present home on Kennedy Street.

Mother Willie Mae James, who has been a member for 81 years, joining Antioch in 1928, captured what many were feeling: "I love the Lord, because he takes good care of me and I love my pastor. We have been through some good days and some bad, but the Lord brought us through."

Also honored were: Mother Ella Mae Merritt and Mrs. Charlotte Kemp, who have been members for more than 77 years. (One of Antioch's Sunday classes, Sybil Garvin, was named for Mrs. Kemp's mother.)

These ladies and other pioneers are our trailblazers and they have planted the seeds for others to continue with the tradition of keeping Antioch Baptist North a strong family-oriented church.



Continued from cover: Eight...

is calling on Jehovah to bless him, to keep him, to protect him.

He is exercising his divine privilege, petitioning God to move in an extra-ordinary way.

"I'm glad we can pray," Turner said to "Amens."

Jesus, he said, put it this way: "Man ought to always pray and not faint." But grandma said: "Call him up and tell him what you want."

"Let me submit to somebody right now, God will hear your cry," said Turner.

Then before opening the doors of the church, before one soul came to Christ, Turner reminded the congregation that God has blessed the Antioch fellowship with great pastors, great members and great ministries. "He's been good," Tuner said. "He's kept us down through the years."

Who is he?

That was the question the Rev. Kenneth Alexander dealt with at the 11 a.m. service.

It was the same questions Jesus put to his disciples when he came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi in the 16th chapter of Matthew.

Jesus asked: "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?"

"At some point in your life, you're going to ask what do others say about me," said Rev. Alexander, presiding minister of Antioch's Lakewood Mission. "That's us but why would Jesus ask that question."

Peter, of course, answers the son of the living God.

But Alexander said it doesn't matter how Matthew, Mark, Luke and John answer that question.

"There ought to be a gospel according to you," he said.

Eight agreed. Eight decided Jesus should be the Lord of their lives.