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*Happy New Year!*

*Connecting People to Christ*



# The Church at Antioch

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

October-December 2012

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## Celebrating 135 years

### The Savior isn't in the White House

Days after the nation re-elected President Barack Obama to a second term, the Rev. Andrew Young reminded Antioch Baptist Church North and her visitors that the country had not elected the messiah.

"We can't elect a messiah," Young said. "God gives us a messiah."

The former mayor of Atlanta and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations was the guest speaker for both services Nov. 11, when Antioch celebrated its 135th church anniversary.

Young said that while Obama is one of the smartest presidents to ever lead the nation and comes from a unique background - his mother was white and father African - if you're looking for a messiah he is not in the White House.

"If we want to find a Sav-



*Rev. Andrew Young preaches at Antioch's 135th Anniversary celebration*

ior," Young said, "we must look within."

Even the answers to our financial problems, he said, can be found within and will come through our sharing with each other.

"When we get selfish and think we can make it on our own, we're headed to hell in a hand basket," he

said. "The troubles of the world are so complex you can't make it without the Lord. You can't make it without the church."

Young said that one of the reasons the country is having fiscal problems is it has neglected to care for the least of these.

Jesus is not going to ask

how much we saved, he said. He's going to ask did we feed the hungry, clothe the naked and set the captives free.

"If we live according to his purpose, continue the 135 year tradition of this church, we will go on to glory," Young said.

## A Message From The Pastor



My Brothers and Sisters:

As we bring closure to the celebration of our church's 135th Anniversary, I am uplifted and extremely optimistic about the future of our Congregational Family. The Anniversary Celebration certainly reminded all of us to appreciate and welcome God's blessings. As consumers, we too often equate and even value God's blessings with big material gains. However, God's blessings can be seen in the simple gift of a friend's smile or in the people in our lives who are there to love and support us.

As we embark upon another year filled with new opportunities for Christian Service, I pray that all of Antioch—the young and the not so young—will be positive in our approach to serving God and His people; especially those who are all too often counted among the least, the less, and the lost.

As pastor, I challenge every member to work individually and collectively to give hope to those who are lost and have not seen or experienced God's marvelous light. None of us can give that special hope if we close our eyes or turn our backs to the difficulties that others face. We must work zealously to show others that life is good. Together, we must trust our instincts and remember, especially during this Valentine season, that love is powerful and all of our lives are full of promise.

A wonderful romantic once said, "There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; No door that enough love will not open; No gulf that enough love will not bridge; No wall that enough love will not tear down; No sin that enough love will not redeem." I am always reminded that *God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

It seems to me that the happiest people on earth are those who have a hard time recalling their worries...and an easy time remembering their blessings. In which category do you fall?

Yours in God's service,

Reverend C. M. Alexander, Pastor

## 5th District Soul Bowl

As Missionary Baptists, our main goal is to win others to Christ.

Through witnessing and evangelistic efforts, we are called to share our testimonies in the hopes that others will want to ask Christ into their hearts as Lord and Savior.

Members of the 5th District brought unchurched family members, neighbors, and co-workers to the annual Soul Bowl 3-day revival in hopes that the teaching and preaching would encourage them to give their lives to Christ.

This year's Soul Bowl was held November 27-29 at Simpson Road Baptist Church, where the Rev. Charles Weems is pastor.

Many rededicated their lives to Christ.



## Antioch Briefs

### Mt. Hermon Association

The Mt. Hermon Association met in October for its Annual Session at Decatur's First Baptist Church, where the Rev. Norman Thomas Jr. is pastor.

The 3-day session included a program led by each of the auxiliaries—Women, Young Women, Laymen, and Youth—the business session, a doctrinal sermon, and the Moderator Rev. Stanley Smith's annual address.

Youth from the eight member churches displayed their talents, participating in the King and Queen Contest.

Upholding the tradition of fostering education for which the associations were founded, a \$1,000 scholarship was presented to a young person from each church.

### The Hatter's Brunch

The 5th District Minister's Wives and Widows sponsored a Hatter's Brunch Oct. 27 at the Atlanta Community Food Bank.

The importance of hats in the history of the Black church has been the subject of a documentary on PBS, chronicled in a feature in Time magazine, depicted in the book *Crowns*, and heralded as Aretha Franklin's classic "church hat" became a focal point at President Obama's inauguration.

"Hat-a-tude" was very much present as women from member churches strutted the center aisle showing off

their hats as the narrator explained the history and cultural significance of hats in the African-American church.

### November Birthmonth

The 590 Building became show place for talent on Nov. 16th as the November Birthmonth spearheaded "Thanking God for the Gift."

Performing artists sharing their gifts included Bro. Adam Alexander, Sis. Joyie Carter, Sis. Clara Smith, and Sis. Bonita Williams.

Other Antioch members showcased their creative gifts: cake decorating, Sis. Tricia Hall; flower arrangement, Sis. Olivia Rencher; and artwork, Bro. Calvin Jones.

The best treat of the night, perhaps, was having Sis. Jayne, who turned 97 on Nov. 25, in attendance and giving strong words of advice to "follow God, just obey Him."

### Thanksgiving Service

For more than 60 years, eight churches have come together to celebrate Thanksgiving.

This year's service was held at the Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, where the Rev. Willie M. Bolden served as pastor.

Church choirs, including one from Antioch, rendered songs prior to the preached word, which was offered by the Rev. Dexter Johnson, pastor of

Higher Ground Empowerment Center.

"We must not wait for one day a year to think about being thankful," Johnson told those gathered. "it must be a lifestyle."

### GMBC Soul Bowl

On Dec. 1st, all roads across Georgia led to the Greater Zion Hill Baptist Church for the 35th annual General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. Soul Bowl.

Sisters Brenda Eason, Karen McKinney Holley, and Jean Jones were in attendance from Antioch. Rev. Wilbert Green, pastor of the Damascus Baptist Church preached a soul-lifting sermon entitled "Conversating Among Swines or A Hog Pen Conversation."

Nineteen souls were reported saved and baptized at the National Baptist Convention held in Atlanta in September, and five souls were brought to Christ and three were baptized at the Annual Session of the GMBC, Inc. held in November in Macon.

### Mission Breakfast

Antioch's various mission groups came together in December to provide a Merry Christmas for a family in need.

The family - including young children - expressed their gratitude for the generosity displayed by the mission groups during the morning held Dec. 16.



**OCTOBER**

# Fall Revival: Son of Antioch comes home

The Rev. Jermaine Simmons, a son of Antioch Baptist Church North and pastor of Jacob Chapel Baptist Church in Tallahassee, Fla., was the guest speaker Oct. 29-31 during Antioch's annual fall revival.

Below is a recap of the services:

## Monday, Oct. 29

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:1-10 *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.... Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*

**Subject:** "Heart trouble"

**Sermon brief:** If there was ever a time when we needed a revival, to hear from the Lord, that time, that season is right now. It is clear we are living in the last and evil days. The only way revival can occur is if you and I ask the Lord to take over our hearts for out of the heart flows all the issues of life. Revival is not for people who have it all together. I'm here because I need to be here, because I need to be restored. I got trouble at home, trouble on the job. How then do you restore a troubled heart? First, confess the indiscretion. Second, ask the Lord to create in you a clean heart and renew your spirit.

## Tuesday, Oct. 30

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:18-19 *While he*



*Rev. Jermaine Simmons*

*spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples.*

**Subject:** "It's worth the wait"

**Sermon brief:** Often in our Christian experience we're bombarded with new words, phrases and ideologies. Unless we commit ourselves to education and application, our learning won't have an impact on our living. It is critical to know what faith is and where to put it. That's why the Bible declares that without faith it is impossible to please God. Tonight look at your faith as a seed, which

will flourish only in difficult circumstances. Faith is cultivated by calamity, pruned by personal problems. It's knowing that blessings delayed are not blessings denied. Why did God make the woman with the issue of blood wait 12 years for healing? So when you come out you'll have no choice but to testify it was nobody but the Lord.

## Wednesday, Oct. 31

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:66-71 *Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments. Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. Thou art good, and doest good; ...It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

**Subject:** "Now I understand"

**Sermon brief:** In this life there will be situations and circumstances that will prove to be beyond human control. The reason that is so problematic is that many of us have been conditioned to believe that a life in Christ is without issues. But the reality is the life of the saint is full of suffering; that problems are par for the course. David didn't know what he knew until he went through what he went through. Now I understand that the blessings aren't always in the good things that happen but in the difficulty God brings us through. The blessings are in the lessons.

## ANTIOCH FAMILY!

Proud of the job you do or want to nominate your sister or brother in Christ to be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Church At Antioch*? E-mail your story idea to Sis. Gracie Staples at [gstaples@ajc.com](mailto:gstaples@ajc.com).



# ACE Expo: Preservation

The Antioch Christian Entrepreneurs hosted their annual ACE Business EXPO on October 6, 2012. This year, the event was partnered with the Atlanta Business League and focused on economic recovery and jobs. The theme for the event was Preservation.

The purpose of the *Economic Recovery Workshop & Job Fair* was to help people preserve their dignity and integrity while seeking to survive in a troubling economy. Experts offered professional counseling to help people get back on track after experiencing bankruptcy, fore-

closure, failed credit, and unemployment/underemployment. Several businesses were present and ready to hire any qualified applicants including Alorica/Ryla Teleservice, Aflac, Celine's Family Services, Inc., Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, Hyatt Regency Atlanta/Hotal, and Ucall &Ihaul Moving Services. A Youth Entrepreneurs workshop was also conducted by Sis. Olivia Rencher.

Our keynote speaker for the event was Georgia State Assembly, Senator Valencia Seay of Distric 34. We were privileged to have her join us for this special event.



*Keynote speaker Senator Valencia Seay and her grandson*

## Antioch's presence felt throughout GMBC session

During his 29-year presidency of the General Missionary Baptist Convention Inc, Pastor Cameron Alexander, now President Emeritus, reorganized the GMBC, initiated programs, and brought Antioch Baptist Church North members into full participation that continues today.

In addition to delegates, including Ministers Eddie Bright and Scott Copeland, familiar Antioch faces are involved in every phase of the convention's annual session. Sis. Dorcas Jones is assistant director of the Young People; Peggy Cooper and Rev. Ervin Richards serve in the finance department. Sis. Rosalyn Curington coordinates the Women's Auxiliary Prime Time session. Sis. Karen McK-

inney Holley was the speaker for the Agape Breakfast. And Sis. Brenda Eason is the Convention Planner and Coordinator of the Ushers and Health Ministries.

The Annual Session is an official business meeting with each auxiliary reporting and coordinating plans to serve the Lord. The Laymen's Department, for instance, oversees work with boys and young men to help them develop into strong Christian leaders, husbands, and role models. Saints With A Testimony take to the streets to witness and baptize those who come to Christ during the session. The work continues in individual churches, which provide disaster relief at home and abroad in places

## Let's tune out the world

In this day of instant messaging, emails, cell phones, twitter, podcasts, and 24 hour news, it is difficult to tune out the world - even on Sunday morning.



But let's be respectful to others around us, especially during worship and tune out the world. Please, remember to turn off your cell phones. If you are in law enforcement or a medical emergency person put your cell phone on vibrate.

like Tapio, Haiti.

One of the highlights of the 142nd Annual Session held in November at the Macon Centreplex, was the book signing of *Through the Looking Glass: Historical Reflections of the GMBC, Inc.* written by Mrs. Minnie W. Wimbish, Historian Emeritus, and co-authored by her daughter, Ms. Ethalyn Kirby. The book chronicles the history of the GMBC as seen through the eyes of Mrs. Wimbish.

In other business, the Rev. Curtis Raines, Sr. was elected president of the GMBC to succeed the Rev. Clarence Moore, son of Antioch and pastor of the Good Shepherd Baptist Church in Augusta.



# Ministering to the least of these

Antioch Baptist Church North's C.M.A. Male Chorus, Vessels of Praise Dance Ministry and Minister's Alliance joined forces on Nov. 15 to feed some 300 men, women and children at the Salvation Army's annual Thanksgiving celebration.

"This year represents the 10th year that the Ministers Alliance has hosted a Thanksgiving service and dinner for those who might otherwise be alone," said Minister Ken Jelks. "Our Pastor has trained us all to put 'feet to our faith,' and help

those in need and Minister Lester Duncan has led us well in our Salvation Army Outreach effort."

The resident hall was packed full of residents who took part in the service, which opened with a powerful devotion, prayer and performances by the Male Chorus and Vessels of Praise.

"We've always been excited about who Duncan will ask to come and preach, but we were especially excited to have him accept the call to preach this year's service as the

coordinator of this outreach," said Minister Scott Copeland, president of the alliance.

Four souls came to Christ. The residents, faculty and staff of the Salvation Army expressed their gratitude for what many considered to be the highlight of their holiday season.

Said one resident: "I loved the worship service and the food was great, but it just felt good to know that somebody cared."

## We've got a testimony

In the continued spirit of celebrating our 135th church anniversary, the theme "We've Got A Testimony" was used to highlight illnesses experienced by some of our members.

Antioch Baptist Church North members shared symptoms and their experiences with a range of illnesses, including diabetes, kidney disease and breast and prostate cancer.

The purpose of the testimonies was to promote awareness of the diseases, the effects they have on those who suffer, and how by God's loving grace, they were able to overcome.

"Everyone has a testimony and we wanted those testimonies to inspire others," said Deacon Rodney Floyd, who conceived the idea with his wife, Denise.

In addition to member's testimo-



*Cancer survivors ring the bell at the end of worship service*

nies, Floyd said the church partnered with the American Cancer Society and the American Diabetes Association to provide medical testing and health information to hundreds of Antioch members.

As a result, he said, several members received early diagnosis of disease and treatment.

The testimonies, he said, helped remind members they can survive addiction, financial struggles and illness.

"One member celebrated how God



*Kidney disease survivor, Eric Henderson gives testimony*

Gave him three job offers in one day after being unemployed for seven years," Floyd said. "Prayer does change things."

# Alexanders named "Family of the Year"

The Concerned Black Clergy of Atlanta has named the Cameron and Barbara Alexander clan Family of the Year.

The annual Salute to Black Families, hosted in November, is held annually to celebrate the positive contributions of African-American families - a campaign the CBC has waged for the past 29 years.

"Clearly, this is more than just an opportunity to pass out a few plaques and awards," said CBC president Rev. Frank Brown. "The Concerned Black Clergy truly understands the importance of family as being a vital part of the success of our communities."

The Alexanders were selected from a pool of African-Americans who've displayed strong values,



good work ethics and a commitment to making positive contributions to society.

"The black family is the backbone of the community; strong families, equal strong communities," Brown

said. "Without that strong family piece, our communities are fragile, weak and do an inadequate job of serving those who live and work within them."

## Remembering the past - Pioneers share their stories

As part of its 135th church anniversary, Antioch Baptist Church North held its annual Pioneer Recognition Luncheon Nov. 10 in the 590 Building.

Church of Antioch staff writer Betty Jo Cooke asked some of our pioneers to share their fondest memories. Here's a couple of them:

### **FALL TEAS**

"I loved those teas because I loved the spiced tea and the spices cider," said Sister Karen Walker. "Both tasted so good and I was allowed to drink it because it wasn't coffee. The decorations were always beautiful and the spiced tea gave the basement a wonderful, fragrant scent that I still remember to this

day."

### **FALLEN TOUPEE**

Sister Dianne Smith said she will always remember the Sunday when "one of our Male Choir members got a little happy and knocked another member's toupee off.

"When he put it back on it was backwards. Of course we were

laughing and Rev. Alexander was preaching and he got angry and in the middle of his sermon he said "People need to know when to laugh.

"When service was over, we apologized but when we explained to him what happened he laughed more than we did."

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# Ware, other war veterans, honored

Army veteran Thomas Ware, a long-time member of Antioch Baptist Church North, was among hundreds of military veterans honored during a Veterans Day observance at the wall of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Ware, who survived two tours of duty in Vietnam, was a forward observer. He rose through the Army's enlisted ranks to become an E-9, one of the few African American SGMs in the nation. Today he is one of only a few who survived that initial battle in November 1965.

"Between the beautiful setting and great food served at the Gala dinner to the actual dedication ceremony, it was a truly memorable weekend," said Ware's daughter, Pamela, who escorted him to the dinner. "I really appreciated the warmth and caring the volunteers showed to



*Thomas Ware poses in front of the vietnam Memorial with two friends.*

all of the veterans' families trying to find loved ones or lost comrades. One of the speakers mentioned that just touching the names on the memorial wall helps to bring closure. I believe that for my father, that indeed was the case."

## Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer

Believing that prayer changes things, Baptist women all over the world came together on the first Saturday in November to pray for the needy and lost everywhere.

Each of the 7 Continental Unions representing women from 136 countries making up the Baptist World Alliance submitted specific prayer requests for advantages and freedoms that American women often take for granted but are denied women in many other countries.

This year's program was coordinated by the Asian Baptist Women's Union, which emphasized joy in the Lord

despite the hard realities that two-thirds of the poor in Asia are women, who have been abused, are living with HIV, and are struggling to keep their families together in areas ravaged by war and natural disasters.

The gathering provided strong testimony of the power of prayer as attested to by reports of women gaining self-sufficiency through agricultural projects in Jamaica and Rwanda and medicines and education to stem the tide of HIV/Aids in several African and Asian countries.

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