



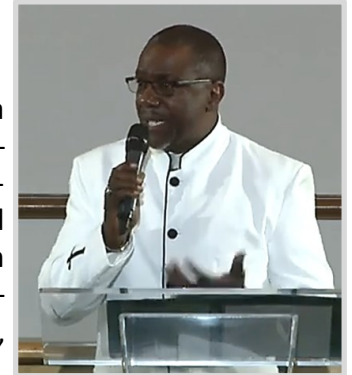
Antioch Connection



Words of Encouragement from Reverend G

Your Testimony Matters

Can I have a few minutes of your time? It is my belief that each one of us has a unique testimony about what God has done in our lives - a story that can encourage, uplift, and strengthen the faith of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Your testimony matters. Revelation 12:11 says, "And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." Your personal experiences of God's grace, deliverance, and transformation are powerful. They are the living testimonies of God's love and faithfulness, capable of impacting lives and leading others towards Christ as their Savior.



I want to encourage each of you to step forward and share your testimonies, whether big or small. Each story, each moment of grace, is a beacon of hope and a source of encouragement for others. By sharing, we are not only acknowledging God's work in our lives, but we are also building one another up and inspiring faith in the hearts of our fellow believers. For the month of October you can share your testimonies during our Sunday services by connecting with me at jgaines@antioch-church.org, and we will find a suitable platform to share them with our Antioch family. Remember, dear brothers and sisters, we are a body of believers, and when one member is strengthened, the whole-body benefits. Let us not be hesitant but let us be bold in declaring the wonders and miracles God has performed in our lives. We are excited to hear about the marvelous works God has done in your lives and are praying that as you share, you'll experience even greater depths of His love and grace. "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus". Philippians 4:7



Reverend Rochella Marable Answers the Call to Ministry

Antioch licensed Reverend Rochella C. Marable as its first woman preacher on September 17, 2023. Reverend Marable took the Oath of Affirmation supported by her loving family, dear friends, and church

family along with the Antioch deacons, deaconesses, and clergy. Pastor Jeffery Gaines, Sr. presented her with a license to preach the gospel and Antioch members pledged their congregational support.

Reverend Marable delivered an inspiring message titled "Faith the Size of a Mustard Seed Can Move Mountains" from Matthew 17:14-20. She drew upon her pilgrimage to the Holy Land and her visit to Mount Tabor where Jesus was transformed. She said, "With faith as small as a mustard seed, you can get through whatever is in front of you, but you must believe. Mustard seed faith persists and grows; with mustard seed faith, you can move mountains."

She revealed that it was mustard seed faith that helped her persist on her journey. "I did not ever think I would preach at Antioch," she said, remembering a comment from the late Deacon Howard Boone 20 years ago, that one day she would preach at Antioch.

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My Testimony

1 Corinthians 2:1 KJV

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God."

Pray with Us



Tuesday Morning Prayer from 7:00—7:30am. Dial (945) 218-0090, the access code is 1846260.

Churchwide Virtual Prayer Third Wednesday each month at 6:00pm via the ABC website.



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SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Reverend Rochella Marable

Answers the Call to Ministry *continued from page 1*

"I was content serving the Lord at Antioch where God had planted me. It was never about a position. It was never about a title. It was always about bringing glory to my God." she said. Twenty years later, Reverend Marable is exactly where she should be.

In a very personal introduction, Sister Brenda Gaines described Reverend Marable as a Godly force, a mentor, and a friend, as the ultimate encourager, steadfast and tenacious. The service ended with Sister Tanya Easley singing a song, "I'm Available to You," deeply connected to Reverend Marable's call. Reverend Marable remembers exactly

where she was at the moment of her calling and specifically these lyrics playing in the background, "Lord, I'm available to You, My will I give to You, I'll do what You say do, Use me Lord to show someone the way and enable me to say. My storage is empty, and I am available to You."

Reverend Marable is a 2006 graduate of Antioch Bible Institute. Following the lead and guidance of the Holy Spirit in January 2007, she entered Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, then Graduate School to continue her study of God's Word. Upon completion of her course study in 2009, she received a Master of Arts in Theological Studies. Additionally, she completed courses in Hermeneutics and Exegesis at The John Leland Center for Theological Studies in Arlington, VA. She served as Antioch's Director of Women's Ministry for 12 years; as God's servant teacher for Friday Morning Bible study (since 2010), Usher, People Care Coordinator, World Vision Volunteer Coordinator, Tour Coordinator for overseas study tours; and a member of the Provisional Leadership Committee. As God's faithful ambassador, she shares the Gospel at home with her family and neighbors, the women at the Fairfax County Detention Center (since 2008), and abroad on short-term mission trips to countries such as Kenya, Senegal, Ghana, Brazil, and Antigua, West Indies. She has also traveled to the Holy Land, Greece, Egypt, and Turkey to further her biblical knowledge.



Women's Ministry

The September Women's Ministry Fellowship under the leadership of Sister Sandra Streeter was focused on the "Prayers of Women of the Bible" with keynote speaker, Reverend. Dr. Negleatha Jones Johnson. Her message was both powerful and moving. She preached on the stages of temptation that "Mother Eve" experienced in Genesis when lured by the enemy, Satan. She shared the importance of Christian women, remaining acutely alert of the tricks of the enemy and being grounded in God's Word.



Congratulations! Anthony and Candice Gaines-Cunningham on the dedication of Anthony Cunningham Jr., aka "Ace". Congratulations to the proud grandparents, Pastor Jeffery Gaines Sr., Sister Brenda Gaines and Brother Phillip Knight Sr. and Sister Pamela Knight. Babies are truly a blessing from God.



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REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS, AGAIN I SAY REJOICE!

Thank you to all of our Ministry leaders and volunteers who joined us on Saturday, September 30th to lend a helping hand with the Antioch Day of Rejoicing (churchwide BBQ). The chilly overcast skies soon gave way to clear blue skies and a campus delightfully prepared to receive our church family. Our peaceful prayer garden allowed for reflection and prayer. Master Chess, BINGO, and line dancing were a big hit for the young adults and the young at heart. The GameTruck, XL Moon Bounce and Turbo Obstacle Course along with facing painting and Connect 4 were popular with our children and youth. We rejoiced and had a glorious time in the Lord with delicious food and great fellowship!



Antioch's Retirees Saving Trees

Most U.S. adults – including a solid majority of Christians – consider the Earth sacred and believe God gave humans a duty to care for it, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. Plants (trees, shrubs, vines) are not optional. With few exceptions, neither we, nor anything else, can live without them. They are the only organisms capturing the sun's energy and, through photosynthesis, turning that energy into food for the rest of us.

Anna Dixon, an Antioch member and recently certified Virginia Master Naturalist (VMN) and Audubon At Home Ambassador, noticed Asian Wisteria aggressively choking dozens of trees near the church sanctuary. With the authorization of Antioch Leadership, she, along with trustees, Derrick Savage and Beverly Wilson and a fellow VMN, Margaret Fisher conducted a survey/assessment and developed a near-term and longer-term plan for remediation and maintenance in an eco-friendly manner.



The team identified several hundred trees on Antioch's twenty plus acre campus that are in imminent danger of being "choked off". Trees are the tallest, largest, longest-lived freestanding organisms in the world, and they are not able to move away from potentially dangerous and destructive conditions. They increase shade to cool the landscape, intercept stormwater runoff to slow down erosion, protect nearby streams and reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Antioch is now considering an effort to immediately remove threatening invasives choking their existing tree canopy, and then plant native trees to 1) feed the wildlife while also cooling and cleaning the environment and 2) capturing carbon and slowing down stormwater runoff. These retirees are taking advantage of this invaluable opportunity to save and support the earth and to "give back".



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Antioch's Cancer Exchange Ministry is now Rising Above Ministry (RAM)

The Cancer Exchange Ministry (CEM) was started on February 21, 2016 under the leadership of the late Deacon Larry Hester. Upon his transition, Sisters Joyce Best and Brenda Moore carried the baton. On October 1, 2023, the CEM was renamed to Rising Above Ministry (RAM). Sister Janice George, Leader of RAM said, "RAM supports members impacted by cancer on their journey of faith, health, temple maintenance, wholeness, and purpose. RAM encourages members to focus on Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith and our Supreme Healer." It is a forum for praise, prayer, encouragement, comfort, and an open dialogue for information exchange. The Antioch RAM is NOT a substitute for professional medical care, advice, and assistance and in NO way suggests that any current medical protocols be terminated or changed without consultation with one's medical staff.



"He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others."
2 Corinthians 1:4 NLT

Two key Scriptures for RAM's mission to rise above the challenges, focusing on God, and encouraging others on the journey:

"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28 NASB

"He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." 2 Corinthians 1:4 NLT

Sister George said, "My husband, Tom, and I joined the ministry to encourage and help others on their journey. Our trial has helped us to better understand and relate to people facing similar challenges, and we want to use our experience for God's purpose and glory." The

ministry is open to anyone (including those outside of Antioch) who is impacted by cancer (patients, survivors, caregivers, family, and friends). The ministry meets on third Sundays at 1:00 PM via Zoom. RAM Planning Team includes Sonja Sulcer, Renee Toyer, Leonard Toyer, Ella Lattimore, and Janice George (leader). To learn more about this ministry, go to the website or contact: ram@antioch-church.org.

Early Screening and Diagnosis is One of the Paths to a Better Prognosis by Leonard and Renee Toyer

Generally, October is observed as Breast cancer awareness month. However, this year at Antioch, we would like to focus on encouraging members to pursue early prevention and screening measures for all types of cancer. According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States second to heart disease. The (ACS) has published prevention guidelines for diet and physical activity. They have also published early screening guidelines to prevent or detect cancer in its earliest stage. Having access to credible information can help you to know when to see your health care provider. Your health care provider can schedule you for screenings and counsel you on prevention strategies. Early screening can often identify cancer in its earliest stages and facilitate better treatment outcomes. Neglecting to pursue annual screenings can limit or change your treatment options. The ACS states that a lifestyle that includes healthy eating habits and exercise may help to prevent cancer. Approximately 18% of all cancers diagnosed in the US are related to excess weight, physical inactivity, excess alcohol consumption and/or poor nutritional habits. For more information on screening guidelines go to: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/screening/american-cancer-society-guidelines-for-the-early-detection-of-cancer.html> and to read the full article Diet and Physical Activity go to <https://WWW.acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.3322/caac.21591>





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Antioch's Oasis Youth Ministry and Encounter Sunday School Grow in Faith and In Love



Antioch's Oasis Youth Ministry and Encounter Sunday School offer our youth a focused, friendly, and loving space to grow in their faith.

"Oasis signifies a safe place of refuge, sustenance, and growth in the midst of busy and even harsh conditions and environments, and this is exactly what we want the youth to find and feel about Antioch's youth ministry," said Brother Thad Coleman, the ministry leader. "Encounter indicates a meeting, and we extend it to making a connection with God and each other through Jesus Christ, the living waters, the true vine."

Oasis and Encounter are intended for and open to middle and high school students in grades seven through twelve who are typically teens (ages 13 - 18). Our mission is "to train teenage hearts to love God and love others," Coleman said. The ministries are part of the Youth and Young Adults Ministry lead by our new Director, Reverend Daniel Simpkins.

In line with Ephesians 4:15 "But speaking the truth, let us grow", all youth are invited to join the ministries. Our purpose is to help our youth grow in Christ alongside other youth who are also on the journey; to engage in a ministry that promotes Christian beliefs and wholesome activities; and have a safe place to question and seek knowledge about living as a Christian teen in today's world. We aim to build friendships, connect with other youth and have a voice in shaping the ministry and our church community experience. The goal is to have them share and live out their faith through service to others and our community by using their God-given spiritual gifts, Brother Coleman said.

Reverend Simpkins said the ministry is important "because the youth are important. Our teens face a lot of challenges and issues and are going through highly transitional and significant stages of life that greatly impact their futures, so coming alongside them during these times is critical." But they also have fun "by building relationships with each other while growing in Christ through study, service, and socializing," Reverend Simpkins said. The teens recently enjoyed a roller-skating party and participated in Antioch's Day of Rejoicing.

To join Oasis or Encounter, contact Brother Thad Coleman at thadcolman1911@gmail.com.

An Apple a Day! *By Deloris Witcher*



"Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing." (Ezekiel 47:12)

Will an apple a day keep the doctor away? No, but an apple a day with a healthy lifestyle will help. Choose to add an apple daily for better health. Apples are loaded with fiber, potassium, vitamins K and C but most importantly phenols and flavonoids. The red delicious apple is the most nutritious of all apples because it has the most of these ingredients. According to research, phenols help prevent cancer and the spread of cancer, and flavonoids help keep blood sugar levels stable. Eating apples regularly also has been researched to help decrease the risk of cardiovascular diseases like heart attacks and strokes. Do not insult the Lord who made apples by peeling and discarding the skin. The greatest concentration of the healing components is in the peeling. Wash thoroughly then eat the entire raw apple.



Oct 7: Women's Ministry Prayer Fellowship
10:00am—Noon Virtual Only

Oct 8: Clergy Appreciation Day

Oct 9: Indigenous People's Day

Oct 13: Ultra Zone Laser Tag

Oct 14: Singles Walk Talk and Pray 10:00am

Oct 21: Sip and Cider w/GenC
12:00-3:00pm

Oct 22: Student Visitors from
Holy Comforter

Oct 22: Men's Forum 8:00am

Oct 28: Trunk or Treat



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When Justice Calls, Antioch has an Empowerment Ministry To Lean On!

Our church has over thirty active ministries that are committed to serving God and serving others through selfless work and concern for souls beyond our own. The Justice Empowerment Ministry (JEM) is one of those ministries!

The Justice Empowerment Ministry is currently led by Deacon Kevin Tann and Spiritual Advisor Reverend Michael Coppedge. Formerly the Community Awareness Ministry (CAM), under the purview of Reverend Michael Coppedge, the mission of CAM was taking A.C.T.I.O.N. (Act, Commit, Tangible Results, Inform, Organize (people and events), and Narrate (tell the story)). Some fundamental principles of the Community Awareness Ministry were to call out, educate, activate, and empower, *first the members at Antioch*, on the importance of getting involved and how to peacefully and effectively champion community engagements with results on social, political, and economic issues.



Deacon Kevin Tann and Reverend Michael Coppedge

For example, through programming efforts such as a community forum entitled “Let’s Talk About It”, spearheaded by the late Rev Lou Phillips and Brother Frank Austin, local Law Enforcement Officers, Elected Officials, and various Advocate Leaders from Fairfax, Prince William, Loudoun, and Prince George’s Counties accepted an invitation to come to Antioch for a transparent and honest conversation towards building trust and community relationships through partnerships. While there was mounting excitement and energy within the Community Awareness Ministry, the ministry faced a turn during the COVID Pandemic and the decision was made to absorb elements of CAM into other ministry events, instead of having a separate ministry in entirety.



JEM: Shirley Norman-Taylor, Kein Tann, Kenya Savage, Kiah Spinks, Jean Jones, James Jones, Lori Austin. Not pictured Michelle Griffin, Thad Coleman, and Terry Lee

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." Proverbs 31:8-9

As world issues continued to evolve, the more the calling for a Justice Empowerment Ministry grew. Antioch could not remain silent! Our church needed to be a voice of social justice, reform and restoration, community advocacy and outreach. Through prayer and our diligent leadership, who remained committed to this calling, the Justice Empowerment Ministry was formed. JEM chose for its foundation scripture: Proverbs 31:8-9. Guided by this verse and other scriptural principles such as Isaiah 1:17, JEM vows to tackle issues and not run away from them. While there are boundaries to manage, specifically the separation of church and state, (e.g., the Johnson Amendment—for more information see: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/charities-churches-and-politics>), the need for individuals to be aware, educated, and understand how to fight for what we believe in and to be armed with the right information is key.

"Learn to do right; Seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case the widows." Isaiah 1:17

Antioch remains poised to correct narratives designed to disproportionately impact communities of color through systemic processes. A few JEM initiatives and ongoing hot topics include Antioch’s Congregational Business Directory; voters’ rights, education, and registration; gun rights and gun control; understanding the importance of the Black vote; engaging through food insecurities, and many more. Stay tuned as JEM is planning some exciting events in early 2024! To join the ministry or learn more contact Deacon Kevin Tann at ktann@gwmail.gwu.edu .



James Jones, Kevin Tann, Kiah Spinks, and Lori Austin