

ECGMBA BAPTIST INSPIRER

THE MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

Reverend James Isaac, III, Pastor, New Hope Granville Missionary Baptist Church

"Proclaiming the Changeless Christ to a Changing World" (Hebrews 1:1-2; 13:7-8)

Thank You

"in everything give thanks..."

(1 Thessalonians 5:18)



It has been my privilege and honor to serve as your moderator for these past four years. I am grateful to God for the wonderful opportunity to lead the East Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Association. Leadership is a team effort and I have had the pleasure of serving with an awesome team of dedicated people who dearly love the Association. I would like to acknowledge the leadership team of our Association, who faithfully undertook the business of the Association during a most challenging time. I thank God for our First Vice Moderator, Reverend Dr.

George Crews, III; Second Vice Moderator, Reverend Dr. Alvin Downing, Sr who are partnered with me in serving our great Association.

I am grateful for the chairman of the Executive Board, Reverend Dr. Langston Logan and all the members of the Executive Board who exhibited a love for this great association by dedicating their time, talent, and treasure. I am thankful for the dedication of our Treasurer and Executive Board Secretary, Deacon Linda Thomas Brasher, our Recording Secretary and unofficial Association historian, Deacon Johnny Pettiford; our Financial Secretary, Sister Sharon Vincent and Reverend Dr. James Smith, Parliamentarian. I cannot say enough about the dedication of Reverend Shelton Harris, Chairman of the Trustees and the faithful men and women who served as stewards of the Association's real properties. The work of this Association would not be carried out if it were not for the people who lead our auxiliaries, many members but one body. Reverend Marcellus Moore, President of the Ministers Deacons Deaconess Union; Reverend Annie Gibson, Woman's Auxiliary President; Deacon Larry William, President of the Congress of Christian Education; Deacon Ronnie Robinson, President of the Ushers Union; Minister Carlos Lewis, Laymen's League President, Thank you for your kingdom service.

Many others worked behind the scenes to ensure that our great Association continued in the service of our God. Special thanks to Reverend Joyce Clayton, editor of our newsletter, for her tireless service to her beloved East Cedar Grove to keep us informed and inspired. May God reward you openly for that which you have done in secret!

Finally let me thank the New Hope Granville Missionary Baptist Church, the church I have been privileged to serve as pastor for the past twenty-one years, for their support during my tenure as moderator. Also, let me express my eternal gratitude to my immediate family, wife, Cheryal; children, Jasmine, James, and Jessica; grandchildren, Jayden and Kennedy for their love and support!

I am excited about what God is going to do through our incoming moderator, Reverend Dr. George Crews, III. Let us all lift Dr. Crews and his cabinet in prayer as they lead us to serve this present age.

Grace and Peace,
Reverend James Isaac, III,
Moderator 2017-2021

A Pastoral Thought

“Let’s Break Down Those Barriers”

Written by Reverend J. Eric Morgan, III, Former ECGMBA Moderator, Pastor, Mount Vernon Baptist Church



There is a story written about two friends who grew up in the 1960s in Raleigh, North Carolina. They were known as Jack and Joe. Jack was a white young man who lived with both of his parents in the suburbs. He was their only child. Joe was a black young man who lived with his mother and seven other children in the inner city. They both were nineteen years old. They met at a factory where they both worked as janitors. Jack was preparing to go to college at NC State and he wanted to earn extra money. Joe, on the other hand was working to help his mother with the bills for him and his other siblings. They befriended each other and begin to talk about their lives and experiences. This they enjoyed doing.

One evening, Joe invited Jack to dinner at his home in the inner city and to meet his family. Jack without thinking got excited and said yes. In the 1960s, white people from the suburbs did not travel to the inner city at night, especially to the projects. However, Jack did travel to Joe’s home. When he arrived and knocked on the door and Joe answered the door, he had the surprise of his life. Two of Joe’s younger siblings jump in his arms. Three others questioned him. They said to him; “You are in the wrong place. White people don’t belong here”.

Joe explained to his mother that Jack was his friend and he wanted him to see where he lived and meet his family. Joe’s mother, like every kind black mother, invited Jack to her home and shared the little food she had with him. After the visit, Joe’s mother made sure Joe and his older brother walked Jack out of the projects to a safe location where his parents met him.

During Jack’s visit to Joe’s home, Joe’s mother talked through the evening about their life in the inner city. One thing she said to Jack that stayed with him was this. “I told all of my children, if you’re ever lost and can’t find your way home and you see the police coming toward you, you need to duck and run”. Jack listening to this thought about what his mother told him. She said; “If you’re lost and can’t find your way home, look for a police officer and he will help you get home”.

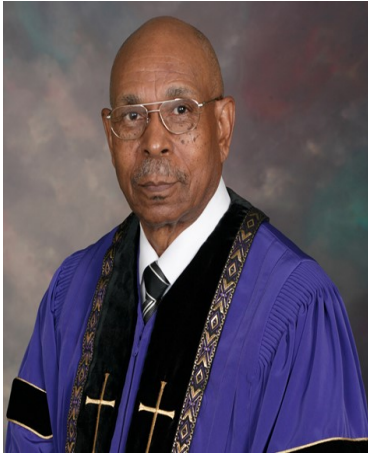
Thinking about what Joe’s mother said to him and what his own white mother told him confused him. He thought to himself, “the police officer should be there for all of us. So, why should some of us cherish them while the others are afraid of them?” This thought stayed with Jack for the next four years, while he was in college. After college, he became a police officer and helped clean up his neighborhood. His life’s work was to break down the barriers that separate us by race.

This story reminds me about a story in the Gospel of John chapter 4. In this biblical story, Jesus and His Disciples were traveling to Galilee one day. On their way, He felt the urge to go through Samaria. Now, this was out of their way, but He felt like going that way. Near Samaria was a well. Jesus and His Disciples had been traveling a long way. He was tired and needed to rest. The Disciples decided to go into the city and get some food while Jesus sat at the well. At noon time, a woman from the city came to the well to draw water. When Jesus saw her, He asked her to give him some water to drink. In verse 9, the woman was surprised that Jesus asked her for a drink. Her point was that the Jews refused to have anything to do with the Samaritans. Listen to how the Scripture records it. “Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, ‘How is it that you, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?’...” (verse 9, NKJV).

It’s important for you to know that societal prejudices, along with cultural expectations, can have a strong influence on who we can become. For too long we look at people by their race and not who the Lord says they are. When the woman met Jesus at the well, automatically she identified Him by the color of His skin and His nationality. Wouldn’t it had been proper if she had seen Him as another person who needed water just like she did? She came to the well to get water, while He was sitting at the well asking her for what she could provide Him. The irony about this is that the well was built by Jacob. And Jacob was the ancestor of both the Jews and the Samaritans. This is the same thing for us. The God **that created the black person is the same God that created the white person. Why can’t we accept the fact that we all are children of the same Father?**

Discernment of My Retirement

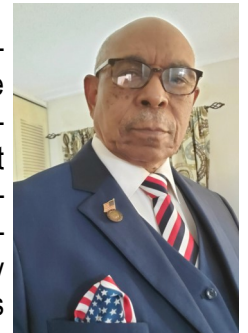
Written by Dr. James A. Richmond, Sr., Ph.D., D.D., Senior Pastor Emeritus
Shady Hill Missionary Baptist Church, Inc., Roxboro, NC 27573



I am frequently asked, “How is your retirement going?” My answer is always, “great!” I retired from pastoring after thirty years (10/1988-12/2018) at the historic and renowned SHMBC. The decision to retire was difficult but made easier because of feeling ready while needed, wanted, and loved by the church members and community friends. I realized that there would be no finishing, completing, and resolving the minor problems common to church work nor an end to the evolving projects or the perfect timing. Also, I had seen too many pastors stay beyond their season of effective preaching, teaching, counseling, and leadership. Some of them lost the respect of members and allowed the church to enter a downward spiral. My rapport with the church remains strong and it was probably enhanced by retiring when least expected and when everything was apparently aligned in terms of funds, infrastructure, programs, growth, outreach, community support, and members satisfaction. However, I stayed three additional months to help with pastoral transitions and even returned to

preach and lead for another eleven months (07/20-05/21) during the protracted pastor’s search process due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indeed, retirement for me is going “great!” I have been asked to become the interim pastor at several churches, of which I declined. I have been humbly honored and highly delighted to participate in churches to deliver sermons for Homecoming, Founder’s Day, Veteran’s Day, Pastor’s Anniversary, Church Anniversary, and Vacant Pulpits; for installation of pastor and officers; to conduct workshops on church leadership and administration, and to deliver eulogies. I find relaxation in visiting nursing homes; learning to play golf; fine-tuning my bowling game; engaging in a highly structured exercise and dance program called Gerofit with the Veterans Administration; learning to play the keyboard, a gift from the children; experimenting with foods in the kitchen; penning my memoirs without a deadline; proctoring parliamentary exams; and socializing with family members, friends, veterans, and a special companion by eating out, going to theaters and concerts, traveling, listening to music genre, attending church functions, and dancing for health, heart and happiness.



Beyond those ventures, I find enjoyment in attending the grandchildren’s extramural, intramural, and collegiate games of football, basketball, volleyball, bowling, tennis, and track. While the monetary compensations may be minimal for what I am doing, the personal rewards of profound appreciation by people for my services and presence are huge. Is retirement biblical for a pastor is another question frequently queried? I’ll let others ponder and glean their answers from the Holy Writ. As for me, retirement is like a perpetual vacation without plans that’s enjoyably blessed, and “great!”

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*“know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.”*  
- Philippians 4:12

## ***What can we learn from the Prayer of Jabez?***

Written by Deacon Ronnie G. Robinson; Usher Union Chair



Many years ago, I heard a song entitled "Bless Me Indeed". A previous Minister of Music and an Organist presented the song to us one evening at rehearsal. At first, the organist played the song in its entirety. Then, we rehearsed our parts. As we began to get in tuned with our parts. God's presence was surely felt in the choir loft and in the sanctuary. Subsequently, as I looked to my Bible for guidance, I was connected with people who became Servants of God through his Son Jesus Christ. And while I approached God's word with a much different perception than our musicians (at that time), I draw from their inspiration. With that in mind, I want on to explore the biblical figure known simply as, Jabez.

### **Who was Jabez?**

As I went through my bible, I found it difficult to find Jabez as he was a minor Bible character in the Old Testament. I soon learned that the word "minor" does not mean lesser in importance. It means lesser in size. He is first mentions Jabez in 1 Chronicles 4:9, where he is described as "more honorable than his brethren" as he had a close relationship with God.

As I began to learn a little more about him, the short verses revealed some golden nuggets of information. For instance, his name came from the pain he caused his mother in childbirth. His name meant "he makes sorrow" in Hebrew. But, his name did not set any limits on his ultimate destiny. His greatest breakthrough came when he surrendered to God. He was a man who understood what God had in store for his sincere worship and prayer.

### **What is the prayer of Jabez?**

It's a prayer that Jabez presented to God in a time of great need. It's a short, meaningful and powerful prayer. Just as is the case with all true believers, Jabez understood God's power. He also showed an awareness of God's intent for prayer.

While Jabez operated in his level of understanding; God heard and answered him. To us, this should serve as a reminder that it is God's will that we all should pray like Jabez.

### **Prayer of Jabez Scripture:**

As stated earlier, you can find the prayer of Jabez in 1 Chronicles 4:10. It reads as follows:

"And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."

### **What does the Prayer Mean?**

Before we dig into what is the essence of this prayer, let's put it into "bit-sized pieces. There are four key parts to Jabez's prayer.

- First, Jabez asks God to bless him, ("*oh, that thou wouldest bless me indeed..*")
- Next, Jabez asks God to enlarge his territory by asking that God "enlarge my coast." It's more than likely that he was not referring to land or property. H was referring to enlarging him both spirituality and in his capacity to worship God here. Jabez then asks that God stay close to him, "and that thine hand be with me."
- Finally, Jabez ends his prayer by yielding himself completely to God and asking to be delivered from pain. Here, he says, "that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me."

## ***Happy New Year; Its Tax Season***

Written By Reverend Dr. James Smith, Pastor, Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church



Greetings and peace be unto you my brothers and sisters:

As we reflect over the year 2021 and enter the year 2022, it is my hope that all of us will experience a blessed year and look forward to the challenges ahead as we prepare to do the ministry that has been set before us. The past year has been both exciting and challenging for all of us. Over the past two years, many of us have learned to use new technological skills; such as, Zoom and Facebook. So much has happened in our country as well as our communities that has affected our lives and ministry.

This is also the season of taxes. Finances and taxes are sometimes a difficult issue for churches and pastors. Many do not want to treat the church as a business, and therefore the issues of finances and taxes are taken lightly. Whenever I talk about this issue at workshops with churches and pastors, I always hear someone say, "We don't have to worry about that, churches don't get audited." My response to this is that there is always a first time for everything. Finances relate to everything from counting Sunday's collections to financial record keeping. Pastors and officers of the church should not hesitate to make sure that safe guards are in place. We need to be concerned about the finances of the church because in the final analysis, it is not our money- we serve as stewards of God's money.

Numerous changes take place regularly on the national level that impact the rulings of the Internal Revenue Service. Churches need to consider the advantages and disadvantages of Faith Based Initiative monies. In addition, tax code changes and tax court decisions make it necessary for the church to keep up with those areas, which will affect her work. At the state level decisions are made concerning day-care centers, and school operation, which will affect those churches that offer such services.

There are also many local ordinances, which affect a church's building program and operation of church activities. Many of these situations will require the church to secure competent legal advice. We must be aware that ignorance of the law will not be a valid excuse if the church is guilty of failing to abide by her legal responsibilities. Again, my each of you be blessed and have a happy and prosperous New Year.

Dr. James W. Smith, Pastor  
Mt. Calvary Baptist Church

### ***Disclaimer***

*The views and opinions expressed in the articles in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of East Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Association of NC, Inc.*

### **What Can We Learn from the Prayer of Jabez From Page 4.**

#### **What we can learn from the prayer of Jabez:**

In the last sentence of 1 Chronicles 4:10, God grant's Jabez's prayer, "And God granted him that which he requested." From his prayer, we gather:

1. God is the only one who truly gives blessings: We see that he prays to God alone. We must carry this message with us daily to remind us that we should prioritize God and His will for us over any temptation that Satan tosses at us. This is of paramount importance when we become vulnerable and stressed. For example, it's easy to fall into the temptation of anger when your child (or spouse) makes a mess. But we must resist because it does not come from the Holy Spirit.
2. We should ask God to lead us: Here we find Jabez's asking God to lead him with "thine hand" instead of just asking God to grant his wishes. From here, we must ask God (through His Son) to direct us instead of just asking him to give it to us. Just as God answered Jabez's prayer, he wants us to seek his guidance and to work for our earthly blessings  
A good example would be if you were having a difficult problem with a friend or co-worker, you should pray for the spiritual strength to properly address the matter instead of praying for God to fix it for you.
3. We should give up our fear and trust God: In his prayer, Jabez gives himself totally to Gods will. This is a major move for him, as he places everything in God's hands. As born-again believers, we need to give up trying to fix things that are out of our control. Just as Jabez submitted himself to God, so must we. When we trust God in our daily prayers, he will guide us.
4. We should let ourselves be vulnerable: We see that Jabez asks God to "keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain." He is asking for God's guidance. We must allow ourselves to be vulnerable as we pray. Like Jabez, we should let go of our fear and pride and admit our vulnerability to God through bold prayer. How we can connect to Jabez's prayer as Christians: We must submit ourselves to God, seek blessings from the Kingdom of God only, allow ourselves to be broken as we ask God for guidance, not blessings.



#### **Words of Wisdom for Today's Challenges**

By Sister Magdalene Ragland

Former President of Woman's Auxiliary 2005—2009

#### ***"Theme, "Standing in the Gap"***

*God is looking for people who are willing to stand in the gap for others through intercessory prayer. God can take something that is ordinary "Extraordinary." God needs a few good men, women and youth to be the difference in the world today. God has perfect timing- neve early ,never late. It takes a little patience and it takes a lot of faith; but it is worth the wait." Embrace the inspirational hymn, Precious Lord And listen to His voice. (Excerpt from Profiles of Women in Leadership, in Woman's Auxiliary and Woman's Federation Booklet, 2013)*

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## **God's Time and the New Year 2022**

By: Dr. Warren L. Herndon, Visiting Minister, Mt. Zoar Baptist Church; Chairman, Special Events Committee, Durham Community Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Steering Committee; Founder/President, The Triangle Youth Leadership Institute



We find in the book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, Verses 3 – 8, “God’s Sovereignty” and Solomon teaching about “Time” and the different “Seasons we will go through, on our Christian Journey.” The Lord has blessed us and given our families grace, mercy and favor throughout these last 24 to 28 months. All over our communities, states and nation, on a daily and weekly basis, we have been watching television and reading newspapers to stay informed with the struggles our nation is going through. As many of us have been praying and seeking covering in the name of our Lord, He has carried us into a New Year of 2022. All over our states, our faith communities, Assemblies and in the Black Churches, God’s people have been affected by these challenging times such as: 1) Pandemic and other Health Disparities, 2) Housing Evictions and Predatory Lending, 3) Over Aggressive Law Enforcement and Police Brutality, 4) School Segregation, Inequality in School Funding and “Critical Race Theory”, 5) Teacher Pay, Classroom Management and Reduced Parental Involvement, and 6) Closing of “Historical Black Schools” 7) Voter Education and Voter Suppression, and the list goes on. We are living in some “Difficult Times” but we need to remember that we have the “Hands of God Protecting Us.”

Today, we must all agree that there are some leaders and working groups that are showing signs of being self-serving and seeking capitalistic gains. Some are planning monthly, how to take advantage of individuals and families living on the margins of life, seniors and the other people who have been left out in our communities. We can also see the work of the enemy and deeds of leaders and their workgroups working to cause confusion. So, the question becomes; Why is there so much chaos, pain, confusion and wrong going on?

Throughout all of these issues, crises and challenges; the “Black Church has withstood all these times.” We just celebrated the “Life and Legacy” of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s National Holiday. He was a man who fought for justice through peaceful means. As quoted by Dr. King, “Injustice anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Additionally, as a Cultural Historian, please be reminded that other Theologians, such as Dr. Howard Thurmond and Dr. James Cone, wrote about how the Black Church must lead the people. Other famous leaders such as Mahalia Jackson, Maya Angelou, Ella Baker and many others prayed, sang songs and led in our churches and communities against inequalities and acts of social injustice.

In these years of our Lord 2022 – 2025, Clergy Leaders, Educational and Social Justice Leaders, must seek to work in partnership to love, bring unity and respect for all God’s people, in these “Tumultuous Times.”

In our neighborhoods, we must “Hold onto our Faith” and continue to be encouraged. As the Old Saints would say: 1) God has got it all in control, 2) Keep your hands in God’s Hand, 3) The enemy is trying to cause confusion and sow seeds of doubt, so, 4) We must stay on our knees. As “Believers” in this new year of 2022, we are still in a season of challenges, but just know that the Lord shall hear the cries of his people.

I am excited to write this article to encourage each of us to share with other Church families and Elders, that in “These Times” we must “Go After the Harvest” the (Lost, Unsaved and Next Generation) at all cost. The Bible teaches us that in these times of despair, challenges and uncertainty, we must follow the “Word of God and the Wisdom of our Elders.” We must continue to let our “light shine” as the Lord gives us Blessings, Favor and Peace in these years of 2022 through 2025.

***Appreciation & Gratitude  
The ECGMBA LEADERSHIP TEAM  
2017—2021***



1st Row: Moderator, Rev. James Isaac, III; First Vice Moderator, Rev. Dr. George Crews, III; Rev. Dr. Alvin Downing, Sr., Second Vice-President; Deacon Johnny Pettiford, Secretary; Linda Bradsher, Treasurer; 2nd Row, Rev. Dr. Langston Logan, Chairman, Executive Board; Rev. Shelton Harris, Trustee Board Chairman; Sharon A. Vincent, Financial Secretary; Rev. Dr. James Smith, Parliamentarian; Sister Judy Jacobs, Secretary, 3rd Row, Rev. Annie Gibson, Woman's Auxiliary President; Deacon Larry Williams, President Congress of Christian Education; Deacon Ronnie Robinson, President Ushers Union, Minister Carlos Lewis, President Laymen's League; Rev. Marcellus Moore, President Ministers, Deacons and Deaconess Union

***The Giver***

The giver devotes so much energy and time  
 On a mission that Our Lord assigns,  
 Dependable being there providing help,  
 Bearing burdens and building, molding and shaping,  
 Putting desires and agendas on hold,  
 Multi-tasking- squeezing a minute for all its worth.  
 Offering encouragement with a smiling face  
 Being blessed with God's amazing grace.  
 A labor of love filled with joy,  
 Serving with zeal pleasing The Master.  
 Contributing, assisting and lifting  
 Lending a helping hand and shoulder to lean on-  
 The giver just keeps on giving.  
 Not enough hours in the day,  
 But Almighty God, He always makes a way.

Written by Rev. Joyce Ann Daye Clayton, October 2, 2019





## ***Words of Encouragement for the New Year***

By Sister Queen Earle, First President Woman's Auxiliary, ECGMBA  
(Message to Woman's Auxiliary, January 1, 2022)

As we begin another year, I want to take the opportunity to share some words of encouragement with you from the Word of God.

### **1. Be an inspiration for others.**

God created you with a great purpose – to advance His kingdom and reach out for more people. As you live to honor and glorify God, it can become an inspiration and a blessing to other people around you.

### **Some encouraging words from the Bible to remind you about the purpose you have are:**

**Proverbs 31:20-21** <sup>20</sup>She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy. <sup>21</sup>She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household is clothed with scarlet.

**1 Corinthians 16:14** <sup>14</sup>Let all *that* you *do* be done with love.

**2 Timothy 1:7** <sup>7</sup>For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

### **2. Trust God's plan.**

There are times when things go way beyond your control. Knowing God oversees your life gives you the confidence to continue moving forward.

#### **Some encouraging words about God's plan are:**

**Proverbs 3:5-6,** <sup>5</sup>Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;<sup>6</sup>In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

**Jeremiah 29:11** <sup>11</sup>For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

### **3. Find strength and courage in God.**

Life is not always easy. You don't have to be afraid because God is always with you.

#### **Some words of encouragement are:**

**Exodus 14:14** <sup>14</sup>The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

**Joshua 1:9** <sup>9</sup>Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

### **4. Strengthen your faith.**

**Psalms 28:7** <sup>7</sup>The LORD is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, And with my song I will praise Him.

**Psalms 9:1** <sup>9</sup>I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.

### **5. Know God loves us unconditionally.**

The best words of encouragement are knowing that there is a Higher Being (God) who loves us unconditionally. He sent Jesus Christ to die for us, not because we were good enough, but because He loved us more than enough.

**Romans 5:8,** <sup>8</sup>But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

### **So, in summary:**

Believe in yourself. Believe you can and you will.; Stay strong. Dream, believe, and achieve; Never give up. A little progress each day adds up to big results.; Be grateful. A grateful heart is a magnet for miracles. Work hard. Good things come to those who hustle.; Stay humble. Work hard in silence; let success make the noise. Be kind. Kindness makes you the most beautiful.; Keep smiling. Because of your smile, you make life more beautiful. As we let go of 2021 and begin a new year, let's move forward focusing on God (God's future plans for our lives). keep focus on Him. He will be with us in the new year. He promised never to leave us. He will direct our paths. He will Strengthen us and help us because He cares. May God be with you through the new year and fill your life with comfort, love, and cheer. May this day and days ahead hold many blessings for you and your family.



***In Loving Memory  
Leader, Servant, Teacher***

***Mrs. Elizabeth Strater Marrow***

***September 27, 1940 ~ January 6, 2022***

***Reflections From the Woman's Auxiliary, ECGMBA***

***Sister Elizabeth Strater Marrow, teacher, mentor, leader, and servant of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was a woman blessed by God with many gifts and talents. She was an orator, second to none; an encourager just like a mother, and a no nonsense straight shooter, honest in her words of support. Serving as President of the Woman's Auxiliary of East Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Association of NC, Inc. from 1990 -1994, she was a trailblazer, leading with boldness, professionalism and submission to the will of Almighty God. During her tenure as president, she operated under the theme as found in Deuteronomy 6: 7; "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." Sister Marrow and the vice presidents carried out that commission with training workshops and other programming stressing the importance of family- equipping God's people for leadership in his vineyard, while standing on the shoulders of the great leaders that had come before- always giving God and the people who served praise.***

***Sister Marrow was a woman of boldness and humility. Even when she became active as one of the officers and President of the Woman's Baptist Home and Foreign Missionary Convention of NC, she continued to embrace the Woman's Auxiliary. She remained involved in it meetings and workshops, never forgetting her roots. Sister Marrow was an example to emulate, a godly woman. She had presence and possessed dignity. When she spoke people listened. Her work was organized and on point, and her message delivery kept listeners on the edge of their seats as she poetically told her story. Sister Marrow was indeed a role model, always immaculately and appropriately dressed, ready to lend a helping hand performing her duties with decency and order, and most of all acknowledging Jesus Christ as Our Lord and Savior. Without a doubt, Sister Marrow distinguished the Woman's Auxiliary in profound ways, doing as the Lord requires, preparing his children- missionaries for leadership and service. She was serious about doing the Lord's business. We, the officers and members of the Woman's Auxiliary, thank God for blessing us with her fragrance and influence that will linger strengthening the Woman's Auxiliary. (Excerpts from Resolution of Love and Respect, Rev. Annie Gibson, President, January 6, 2022)***

***Reflections From Sister Emma Daniels***

***Former President Woman's Auxiliary & Woman's Federation, Secretary Executive Board***

***Sister Elizabeth Strater Marrow, a Granville County product was a Christian, wife, mother, grandmother, great grand mother, educator and above all a woman who loved the Lord. She loved Biblical History and loved sharing and inspiring her sisters, brothers and Sunday School students to read and study. That was the "teacher" in her. She and I shared the education field together at G.C. Hawley High School, Creedmoor, North Carolina. She was a High School English and History teacher. Daily, we would speak, but she always gave me that beautiful smile. We would shares stories about our family, students, teaching, working and God. She loved The Lord, her family and the word "teaching." I am happy that I had the opportunity to work with her in the Missionary Department and other church functions. I love her for all the things she said and did to make the Woman's Auxiliary of the East Cedar Grove Missionary Association stay focused on righteousness. She believed *all things work together for good to them that love God.****



***In Loving Memory  
Leader , Servant , Teacher***

***Mrs. Mary Ida-Lucille Bailey Vanhook  
August 20, 1928 ~ January 7, 2022***

***Reflections from the Chair of the Ushers Union, ECGMBA  
Deacon Ronnie Robinson***

The Ushers Union of East Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Association mourn the passing of one of God's committed soldiers, but not as those who have no hope; for we believe to be absent of the body is to be present with the Lord. Sister Mary Ida-Lucille Bailey-Vanhook (affectionately known to many as "Miss Mary"), professed a hope in Christ and was a regular supporter of her church, Mount Zoar Missionary Baptist Church, the Durham and East Cedar Grove Ushers Union and The East Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Association (Where she was both our usher unions first chairperson and a founding member) until her health declined.

Sister Vanhook was a reverent woman of prayer who loved the Lord. A very loyal person whose examples others followed. She loved everyone with a gentle, yet stern spirit. Not only is this a loss of a devoted Christian, but also a confident counselor and closest of friends. She was a person who was always available to share an encouraging word and demonstrate strong support to those in need.

We are encouraged and consoled in the words of Jesus who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake them". We cannot replace Sister Vanhook, but will attempt to demonstrate the love she had for us to others. Our loss of her is Heaven's gain. (*Excerpts from The Resolution of Love and Respect from the Ushers union, ECGMBA, Deacon Ronnie G. Robinson, Union Chair, January 15, 2022*)

***Reflections from Reverend Shelton Harris  
Trustee Board Chair, ECGMBA***

"Mrs. Mary Vanhook (Ma Mary) was a loving, respectful, wise and knowledgeable lady that believed in serving the Lord; not man's way, but God's way. She was a mentor and a woman of integrity. She was a joy to be around and loved the Lord. Ma Mary enjoyed seeing young people work and succeed. She sought to inspire them. Ma Mary was a mighty warrior for the Lord."

***"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."  
- Galatians 6:9***



***LET US REMEMBE TO PRAY  
FOR THE SICK, BEREAVED & SHUT-INS IN ECGMBA & BEYOND ;& FOR OUR  
COUNTRY AND THE WORLD***

***“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. “  
(Phil. 4:19)***

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**From**  
**Rev. Joyce Daye Clayton, Editor**  
**ECGMBA BAPTIST INSPIRER**

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