



Antioch Connection



New Birth;
New Beginnings

Embracing New Beginnings:



A Message of Gratitude and Anticipation from Pastor and Lady G

Can I have a few minutes of your time? As we stand at the threshold of a new chapter, Lady G and I wish to express our deepest gratitude for the privilege of serving alongside you during this significant transition. Our hearts are filled with thankfulness for the love, support, and cherished memories that have marked our time with you.

Through seasons of joy and challenge, your unwavering faith and commitment have been a source of inspiration. It has been an honor to share in the spiritual journey of this church, and we are truly humbled by the warmth and love you have showered upon us.

As we bid our farewells, we extend a warm welcome to Reverend Dr. Taylor and Sister Leona Taylor, the incoming Senior Pastor and First Lady of this beloved flock. May your hearts be open to receive the abundant blessings they bring, and may this transition be marked by the grace of God.

As we shift from Thanksgiving to Christmas time, our theme for December is "New Birth; New Beginnings," and the Scripture that guides us is from Isaiah 43:19 (NIV): "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." As we embrace this theme, let us anticipate the fresh and exciting work that God is preparing for Antioch.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your lives. We are filled with hope and anticipation for the future of Antioch Baptist Church. May God's grace continue to abound in your midst, guiding and blessing each step of your journey.

With sincere love and gratitude,
Pastor Gaines and Lady G

With sincere love and gratitude,
Pastor Gaines and Lady G



Greetings Antioch,

Lady Leona and I are excited to be a part of the Antioch family. We want to build on the great works you've accomplished in 2023. We believe with our whole hearts that *Greater is Coming...* Greater work shall we do together. John 14:12 says, "Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." Antioch, let's go to work. 2024 will be a time for new beginnings. We will be constantly moving, evolving, and making an impact in our church and our community. We will fulfill our purpose and achieve all that God has planned for us. Taking the words of Jesus Christ and putting them into action with greater service; greater praise; greater worship; more souls saved, and more families ministered to. We will not be defined or confined, there are limitless possibilities in what God can do.

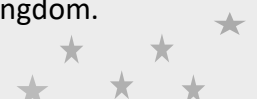


Lady Leona and I are passionate about serving. Our hearts are for the underserved and the underprivileged. We especially have a tender spot for kids, orphans, those in foster care, and those that are sick. Matthew 25 is about feeding the hungry; quenching thirst; inviting strangers in; clothing the needy; and visiting the sick or imprisoned. We want to serve in a manner that brings glory and honor to Our Father so that "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" – Matthew 25:40.

In 2024, my priorities will be preaching, teaching, building relationships, and serving our members and our community (In-Reach and Outreach) while growing our church and God's kingdom. Greater is Coming!

Greater is Coming!
Pastor Taylor and Lady Leona

Greater is Coming!
Pastor Taylor and Lady Leona





**Antioch
Connection**



**New Birth;
New
Beginnings**

Getting to know Pastor Taylor and Lady Leona

We sat down with Pastor Taylor and Lady Leona to ask a few questions. See their responses below.

Pastor Taylor, what can Antioch do to support you in the first 100 days and beyond? 1. Pray for me and my family and for Antioch, our church family. Pray that what we do will be pleasing to God. 2. Be intentional about working together. 3. Have a mindset for serving. 4. Think, I am second; Think of others first.

Lady Leona, how would you describe Pastor Taylor? He is a leader and a servant; He is down to earth, a hard worker, and an encourager; He is one who empowers and brings out the best in others; He is a man of great integrity; He is just 'That Guy'!

Pastor Taylor, how would you describe Lady Leona? She is creative and crafty; She has a huge heart; She's a giver; She is intuitive; She loves to sing, serve, and make people smile; She is beautiful.

What are your favorite scriptures? Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." and Acts 20:24, "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."

Over the next several months, the Antioch Connection will share additional information about Pastor Taylor and Lady Leona as a fun and interactive way for us to get to know them better; all are invited to participate in this prize winning trivia pursuit activity. Each edition will include facts, clues, and/or questions. At the end of the pursuit, whoever submits the most correct answers will be treated to dinner with the Pastor. Members can submit answers online via the Antioch website within the first seven (7) days of the newsletter release. The correct answers will be published in the next edition of the newsletter along with the next set of questions. This edition is Round 1 with two questions — R1Q1) What is Pastor Taylor's favorite scripture? R1Q2) What is Lady Leona's favorite scripture?

The Joy of Christmas: New Birth

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:11-14

Luke 2:14 expresses the joy of the shepherds and the angels on the birth of Jesus, and the message of peace and favor for all people. Christmas is not joyful because of the decorations, lights, food, gifts or the celebrations we attend. Christmas is joyful first and foremost because we recognize that Jesus was born to save us.

Some of us already are counting down the days to Christmas when we'll gather around the tree to open presents. When you open your gifts this Christmas, remember that God sent his son—a gift wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. Jesus is His Christmas gift to all believers.

In the words of the angel to the shepherds in Luke 2:10: "Fear not, for behold I bring you good news of great joy which shall be for all people." And what is the source of that joy? A Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Jesus' birth gives us hope that no matter what we face, God is with us, and has made a way for our forgiveness. Joy to the world, the Lord is come.



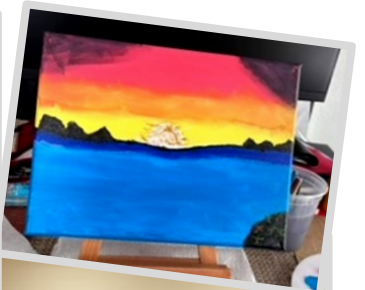


Antioch Connection



New Birth;
New
Beginnings

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



Women’s Ministry Prayer, Praise, & Paint Fellowship. Reflecting on "Sitting at the Feet of Jesus", and identifying a word that is descriptive of our precious time with our Heavenly Father, well over 100 sisters joyfully engaged while praying, praising, and painting both in person and virtually. We pray that your beautiful painting is a reminder of your quiet time with Him!



ABC Seasoned Saints: The ABC Seasoned Saints debuted during our Intergenerational Worship Service on fourth Sunday (11/26). They reminded us that "Everyday is a Day of Thanksgiving" and rendered "He Touched Me" during the invitation.



"Honoring All Who Served", Antioch’s sixteenth annual observance of Veteran’s Day, opened with bagpipes playing "Amazing Grace" followed by an oration of "Old Glory" by Trustee Lonnie Williams. Keynote speaker, Major General Retired Byron Bagby shared inspiring personal experiences and the history of his family’s military service. He indicated that the Bible verse he uses in difficult times is Ephesians 6:13. Brigadier General Retired Lawrence Gillespie shared moving tributes for the 50 Year Anniversary of the Vietnam War end and a tribute for Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action.



Antioch’s Thanksgiving Basket Project 2023, led by Sister Jessica Horne, was a tremendous success. This year we made monetary donations to six community organizations. We were able to bless multiple families at seven local schools in Fairfax and Prince William County, families within the Antioch congregation and in our local community with grocery gift cards. We thank the church family for your continued support as we shared our love for others this Thanksgiving season!





**Antioch
Connection**



**New Birth;
New
Beginnings**

NOTEWORTHY



Congratulations Antioch! As mentioned in the October 2023 Connection, Antioch team members identified invasives that are affecting the existing tree canopy near the church sanctuary. Audubon awarded mini-grants to ten home owner associations (HOAs) and faith communities in October. This grant, given by Fairfax County Tree Preservation and Planting to Audubon at Home and Plant NOVA Natives to fund these mini-grants, requires a \$1,500 match being satisfied by either money or volunteer labor. Join us in congratulating Antioch Baptist Church on being awarded an Audubon at Home and Plant NOVA Natives \$3,000 mini-grant for removal of invasive plants.

Don't Get Ready, Be Ready *by Delores Witcher*

"So always be ready, because you don't know the day your Lord will come." -- Matthew 24:42



The Christmas season is upon us. Are you ready? Don't get ready. Be ready. Be ready for the busyness and stressors of shopping for gifts, spending time with non-preferred relatives and co-workers at dinners and holiday office parties, waistline extending extra fattening holiday foods, and after-Christmas debt. Be ready for sad feelings that may come from loneliness or missing lost loved ones. Awareness of these things and planning can help you BE READY. Start by praying daily and reflecting on Christ the reason for the season. Practice saying no to stressful people and events. Exercise more and eat less. Set a budget and do not waiver. Find a reason to serve or help someone else to take the focus off your loneliness or sad feelings. Then you will Be Ready!

New Birth

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." — **Matthew 1:21**

New Beginnings

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." — **Isaiah 43:19**

Pray with Us



Tuesday Morning Prayer from 7:00—7:30am. Dial (945) 218-0090, access code 1846260.
Churchwide Virtual Prayer Third Wednesday each month at 6:00pm via the ABC website.

December

*Save
the
Dates:*

- Dec 2: Women's Ministry Christmas Fellowship 10:00am Sanctuary
- Dec 3: Knitting & Needlework Fellowship 12noon Ministry Center
- Dec 10: Pastor and Lady G Appreciation 12:00 Noon MPR
- Dec 10: Christmas Giving Tree: Choose a Star and/or make Donations by 12/10
- Dec 11-13: Help sort, shop & package gifts MPR
- Dec 14-15: Help Deliver Giving Tree Gifts

- Dec 14: Business Meeting 7:00pm & 15 ABC Bylaws—Sanctuary
- Dec 17: Rising Above Ministry (RAM) 1:00pm
- Dec 24: Worship Service (10:00am only)
- Dec 28: Caring for the Caregivers 6:00—7:30pm
- Dec 31: 10:00am Worship Service & 6:00pm Watch Night Service



**Antioch
Connection**



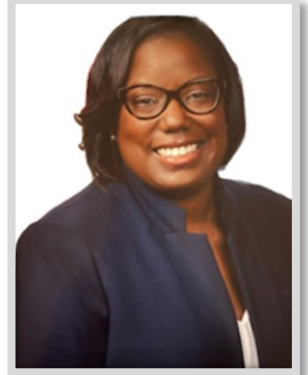
**New Birth;
New
Beginnings**

Tis the Season For Giving

Each year Antioch supports its mission of Loving God and Loving Others through its commitment to giving back to the local community by providing gifts and gift cards to the underserved and those in need. The Christmas Giving Tree Ministry is a part of the overall Missions Ministry and is one of Antioch's oldest and longest serving ministries.

The Christmas Giving Tree Ministry was established in the 1990s by the late Sharon Parker. The purpose of the ministry is to minister to families in need during the Christmas Holiday season by spreading the love of Jesus Christ through giving. The ministry is guided by 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." The Christmas Giving Tree Ministry is open to everyone who has it in their heart to give and spread a little cheer during the holiday season as this is oftentimes a difficult season for many due to financial challenges, the loss of loved ones, and just the overall stress the season can sometimes bring.

The Giving Tree Ministry is currently spearheaded by Sister Tiffany Horne who was led to join the ministry and encourages Antioch members to join because "it is an opportunity to serve and give back to Antioch members and those in the local community in need during the holiday season."



Drop off gifts or make donations by December 10th. Come out December 11th – 15th to help sort, shop, package and distribute gifts to the recipients.



The 2023 Christmas Giving Tree efforts will provide gifts to a number of individual families as well as families at Freedom High School (HS), Woodbridge HS, Key Middle School (MS), Luther Jackson MS, and Rose Hill Elementary. Organizations include Prince William County's Clinical Behavioral Health Program, Youth for Tomorrow, Key Center, Birmingham Green Nursing Home and Woodley Hills Elementary. Please consider supporting Antioch's Christmas Giving Tree by picking a star, making a donation by **December 10th**. The Giving Tree Ministry invites everyone of all ages to come out **December 11th-13th** to help sort, shop, package and distribute gifts to the recipients on **December 14th and 15th**. For more information on the Giving Tree Ministry, please contact Sister Tiffany Horne, 571-215-1486 or abcgivingtree@gmail.com.