

SEPTEMBER 2021

The Epistle

First Baptist Church of Vienna, Va. | Fast Forward: Unfinished Business. *Phil. 3:13-15*



From
Pastor
Walton's
Desk

Grace and Peace from God our Father!

I am always filled with excitement at the changing of seasons. There is always a sense of newness and a fresh start. This Fall season is no different. I am delighted to share some of the new things happening in the life of our church.

This month we are will be adding to the diaconate with the ordination of Dr. Michelle Walker and Bro. Andre Carpenter. In addition, Sis. Teresa Lane, Sis. Monica Evans, and Sis. Marcia Taylor will be consecrated as Deaconesses. They have exhibited dedication to the church and excellence in leadership in various areas of ministry. On Sunday, Sept. 12, they will be elevated into their new roles. Please join me in congratulating them.

In addition to church leadership, we will also be welcoming a new member to the pastoral staff. Dr. Jacquie Hood-Martin will be joining us as the new Director of Discipleship and Ministry Formation. Dr. Jacquie brings a wealth of experience, knowledge with her,

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ORDINATION/CONSECRATION SERVICES

First Baptist will welcome new Deacons and Deaconesses this month. The Ordination and Consecration services for these new deacons and deaconesses will be held on September 12 at 1 p.m. at First Baptist Church. **In house seating will be by invitation.** The services will be available on live streaming for the general membership.

Detailed information will be provided via flyer by the church office prior to the event. I know that we all join together to welcome these new servants with open arms and will dutifully keep them in prayer as they start this next journey in their life as an officer of First Baptist Church. If you have questions, please contact Mrs. Stacey Seay at the church.

HOMECOMING
SUNDAY
FOOD + FELLOWSHIP + FUN
SEPT 19 10AM
OUTDOOR WORSHIP
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA
Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Senior Pastor
450 Orchard St NW, Vienna, VA 22180



What Homecoming Means to Me?

By Andrea B Logan
Epistle Staff Writer

As the name implies, Homecoming is a time set aside to welcome former members back to visit and worship together. When asked what homecoming meant to them, members had this to say:

"In my church Homecoming is a traditional time set aside for family and friends who have moved away from the community to come together to fellowship with each other. Among the Black churches in my community, the month of August had always been set aside for the Homecoming celebration. When I think of Homecoming, I'm reminded of Luke 15:11-32, where the prodigal son one day found himself at his lowest point in life and decides to go back home to his father. In going home, he finds love, restoration, and a big celebration in his honor. And so, it is with our Heavenly Father who rejoices when we come home to him!"

—Loreina Brown, mother of
Andrea B Logan)

"It means a chance to reconnect with old friends and to also meet new ones. Most importantly, I look forward to connecting spiritually and worshipping collectively with the body of Christ." —Tim Jones, FBCV Member

As Christians, our hope is rooted in the belief of reaching our heavenly home one day. In the meantime, we will continue to serve God while celebrating where our journey has brought us.

Welcome Home Saints, Let the Celebration Begin!

Quotes that Inspire Our New Deacons and Deaconess

DEACONS

Andre Carpenter

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully." Romans 12:6-8 NIV

Michelle Walker

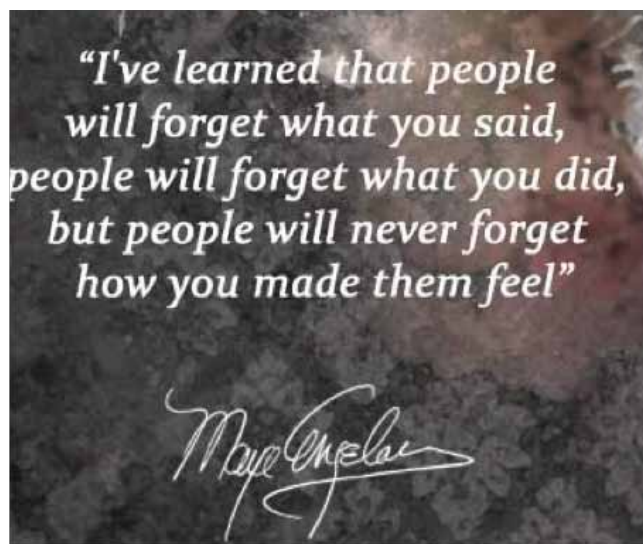
"Education is the most important weapon which you can use to change the world." —Nelson Mandela

DEACONESSES

Marcia Taylor

"Sometimes the bravest and most important thing you can do is just show up." —Brene Brown

Teresa Lane



Monica Evans

"No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted." —Aesop.

FBCV has a Marshal in its Midst

By Rick Taylor
Epistle Staff Writer

FBBCV member Lamont Ruffin has successfully handled his steps ordered in God's Word and maintained law and order with the U.S. Marshals Service. Ruffin was sworn in as acting United States Marshal for the federal court district for the District of Columbia on Aug. 4. He supervises 55 deputies and 58 special deputies in the region and is one of 94 U.S. marshals—one for each federal court district.

The Durham, N.C., native, his wife Natalie, and their sons Preston, 11, and Aaron, 8, have been FBCV members since joining virtually in December. They began attending in November 2019.

"We visited several churches in the area, but we felt like First Baptist was home," Ruffin said.

He said the U.S. Marshals Service is a bureau within the U.S. Department of Justice, operating under the direction of Attorney General Merrick Garland. The service was created in 1789—it is the nation's oldest federal service agency.

Ruffin explained that the service's duties include protecting the federal judiciary, apprehending federal fugitives, managing and selling seized assets acquired by criminals through illegal activities, housing and transporting federal prisoners and operating the Witness Security Program. Deputy U.S. marshals also escorted Ruby Bridges, the first African-American child to desegregate New Orleans schools in 1960; and James Meredith, the first African-American student at the University of Mississippi two years later.

A North Carolina A&T graduate, Ruffin has been with the U.S. Marshals Service for 21 years. He is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., and a Prince Hall Mason.



Marshall Ruffin with his wife Natalie and sons, Preston and Aaron.



Kwan McKnight and family
for the loss of his brother,
Marquis Neal



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Dr. Jacquie Hood-Martin
*Director of Discipleship
and Ministry Formation.*

but most importantly she will bring her love for God and her passion for ministering to the needs of people. I am thrilled to have her and pray that you welcome her with open arms and embrace the things she will do in this new chapter.

Lastly, I want to personally invite you to our annual Homecoming Celebration. Third Sunday, Sept. 19, we will celebrate here on the parking lot. Homecoming is always a chance to fellowship with our members, old and new alike. This year we will have musical guest, Felecia Farrah, and food available on site. It is my desire for us to come together to worship God and enjoy fellowship with our First Baptist brothers and sister—past and present! Bring your lawn chairs, masks, and even a friend or neighbor and let's praise God together!

Money Matters: Don't let a home maintenance surprise ruin your finances

By Terri Robinson

There are many different places in the Bible where we learn the importance of being prepared. Whether it is when Joseph tells Pharaoh that there will be a famine, and to store grain today for the trouble to come tomorrow, or when Jesus says in Mark 13:32:33: *"However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows. And since you don't know when that time will come, be on guard!"*

It's ridiculous to compare the possessions of this world to the treasure that is in heaven, but the Bible's warnings about preparation do have a place in our daily financial lives, especially when it comes to our homes, often the largest financial investment we have.

Here are a few preparatory tips to keep in mind to help you avoid financial catastrophe as the seasons change.

Check Roof and Gutters

Have the roof and gutters of your home checked as the season turns colder. Leaves and other windswept debris can clog gutters, while summer and autumn hail storms can lead to roof damage. Bringing in a licensed contractor to give these items a once-over and, if necessary, effect minor repairs, can save thousands of dollars in the future.

Review Homeowners Policy

At the same time, review your home owner's insurance policy to ensure that you have the coverages that you need, and the potential discounts that you deserve. While it may seem obvious, bundling home and auto coverage can save money. Meanwhile, with many of us working more from home these days and perhaps having invested in new technology, checking your homeowner's insurance policy for if it covers home office equipment may also be a money saver.

Check Heating and Air Systems

Because you're probably not regularly going up on your roof, it's easy to ignore potential trouble. Similarly, with your home's indoor systems such as heating and air conditioning tucked away in a room, it's not hard to forget that they need maintenance, too. This means checking and changing your air filters and vacuuming vents, especially if you have pets. None of us wants to have the heat go out on a cold winter day because a simple system check-up wasn't done.



Prevent water damage

Jesus is living water, and in fact, water is mentioned more than 700 times in the Bible—and that is a good thing. But water in your home where you don't want it is a bad thing. So, in addition to checking your roof and gutters for problems, check your home's main water systems, too. Take a look at your sump pump and the drain line to the outside to ensure they are working properly. If not already in effect, consider purchasing exterior water line coverage. The insurance is separate from your homeowner's policy, and often available from your utility provider. Having it in place in case of a water line problem could save thousands of dollars.

Watch out for unwanted guests

I'm not referring to family during the holidays, but animals that might want to take up home inside your house or nearby. Inspect attic, basement and vents for signs of birds, squirrels, bats and other unwanted guests. Seal potential entrance points around the home, and trim back tree branches that could act as a 'super-highway' for squirrels to easily get to your home. Removing these critters and remediating their presence can be very expensive and especially a surprise when you're thinking of selling your home.

Check your smoke detectors

Replace smoke detector batteries in the fall when the clocks turn back. It's one of the easiest things to do to help ensure against emergency, and the potential catastrophic loss of your property, home and even life.

By taking these few preparatory steps, thinking ahead, you'll be able to maintain the safety and value of your home through the next season and for many years to come.

If you have any questions about your financial management, please feel free to contact your First Baptist Church Federal Credit Union —Submitted by Willie Boykin

The College Connection Wants to Connect with You

Attention All College Connection Students...

Many thanks to the College Connection Scholars who have already registered for the 2021-2022 academic year: Jayden Seay, Dunni Oni, James Ricks, Eric Morgan, Stephen Wilson, Gianni Phillips, Jonathan Williams, Dezire Duverglas, Evan Neal, Alyssa Neal.

Calling all college FRESHMAN, SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS, and SENIORS. Your College Connection Family wants to connect with you and share in prayer, celebrate your collegiate accomplishments, recognize your birthdays, and keep you connected to your First Baptist Family. Please complete the 2021-2022 College Connection Scholar questionnaire by clicking this link: <https://forms.gle/DH9mwz9rYsfPEG4QA>

Deadline to complete the database questionnaire is **Sept. 10.**

The College Connection Prayer Circle

The College Connection Ministry is praying for you. Every month, during our monthly ministry meeting, college connection lifts your needs in prayer. College Connection students should submit their prayer requests to Benita Parks (benitaparks@verizon.net) by the 10th of every month. Please send your September prayer requests by Friday, Sept. 10. We look forward to hearing from you and pray for you.

August and September Birthdays

May God's blessings be upon you today and every day. May you be guided by His love for you and find comfort in His care. May you grow to know and love Him more each day. Amen

Happy Birthday to our September Scholars

Siabella Mangum and Alyssa Neal

Happy Belated Birthday to our August Scholar

Kelsey Parks

—Submitted by Jennifer Spriggs

Self-fulfilling Prophecies

"Children have this amazing way of becoming exactly who we tell them they are," writes Amy Weatherly. "If we tell them they are strong, they become strong. If we tell them they are kind, they become kind."

Jesus tells his disciples, "You are the salt of the earth [and] the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13-14). Clearly they haven't already mastered sharing Jesus' goodness with everyone! They are works in progress, as are we. But Jesus, teacher that he is, seems to set the bar high so his followers will strive to meet his expectations. "You are Peter," Jesus tells Simon, "and on this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18).

We can hear Weatherly: "If we tell them they're faithful, they become faithful." And when Jesus declares, "You are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:31), we believe in our worth and live it out. We become what Jesus tells us we are. —*Newsletternewsletter.com*



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