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PLEASANT NEWS

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

A Joyous Thanksgiving

When someone asks what we are grateful for, most of us can recite an entire list of events, relationships, and possessions that we deeply appreciate. But sometimes, I'm afraid, the abundance of our lives may leave us a bit lean in the area of thankfulness—and can actually cause us to lose sight of the most important blessing we have.

When was the last time you were so joyous about thanking God for His provisions that you could barely contain your excitement? If you can't remember such a time, then it might be good to remind yourself about our most amazing gift from the Lord.

In the first chapter of Colossians, Paul describes the motivation for

believers to be "joyously giving thanks" – namely, the Father "has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light" (vv. 11-12). In other words, we not only have benefits now, like the ability to talk person-to-person with the Father through His Son, and the assurance of resurrection, which removes fear of death; we also know that everlasting glories await us, such as the splendor of heaven and eternal enjoyment of God's presence. Every single biblical promise the Father made to His children is a part of that inheritance.

But notice what the passage does not say – nowhere do the Colossians verses or any other Scripture give even the slightest reason to think that we qualify ourselves to receive these



blessings. Nothing we can say or do can make us eligible for the benefits of salvation. We are saved through what Jesus has done in giving up His own life to pay our sin-debt. It is through the Savior's sacrifice alone that God qualifies us to receive present and future blessings – a true gift from Him.

Mt. Pleasant Family, my prayer for you is to have a joyous thanksgiving.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Willie E. Robinson



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SAVE THE DATES

2018

November 24—Men's Financial Workshop

November 25—Mt. Pleasant Ushers Sermon

December 15—Senior Saints Luncheon

December 23—Christmas Play

December 31—Watch Night Service

2019

January 6—Daniel Fast Begins

Feb 2—The Great Debate



Get to Know Deacon Michael & Deaconess Angela Parker

By Laura Blenman

Michael ‘Mike’ Parker and Angela Jones were both born and raised in Chester, PA. They met at nearby Granite Run Mall where Angela was working at Sears. Mike accepted Christ in 2nd grade at his aunt’s church where he visited during summer months. Angela accepted Christ as a teenager at Murphy AME Church in Chester. Mike later joined Murphy after the pair started dating. They were married when the church split—Mike remained at Murphy and Angela went to the newly formed Emmanuel Temple. Eventually, the husband and wife decided to worship in unity and visited Mt. Pleasant Baptist when Rev. Levi Baldwin was pastor. Mike and Angela have been members of Mt. Pleasant since 1997 and are very active. Because of Mike’s servanthood, support and faithfulness to Mt. Pleasant, he was called to be a Deacon and Ange-

la said ‘yes’ to standing beside her husband in service as a Deaconess.

During the early days of their marriage while Mike was establishing his contracting business and Angela was obtaining her nursing education, they were raising four children—Nikiesha, Bryon, Mykeah and Alana. Mike, a general contractor, has been self-employed 27 years, specializing in structural and fire and water damage repairs for several insurance companies. He works with city agencies bringing their housing stock up to building code. In addition, Mike teaches “Construction Technology” part-time to 11th graders in the Red Clay School District and to adults in the evening at Delaware Technical Innovation Center. In 1999, Angela received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Widener Uni-

versity after attending part-time while working full-time at night as a nurse’s aide at Fair Acres Geriatric Center in Media, PA. She then began working at Christiana Hospital in Newark, DE. In 2014, she received her Masters of Science in Nursing Leadership. It was hard but rewarding. The couple recently celebrated 31 years of marriage.

Mike and Angela like to travel to beaches, their ‘happy place.’ In fact, they have been to beaches in Jamaica, Hawaii, The Dominican Republic, Canada, Puerto Rico, The Bahamas, Miami, and Myrtle Beach. While they think Oahu, Hawaii had the best beach so far, their favorite beach is Ocean City, MD. Angela loves to dance and take photographs while Mike thoroughly enjoys spending time in the garden, which he calls his sanctuary.



Senior Spotlight on Clarence & Wanda Armstrong

By Laura Blenman



Clarence “Brock” Armstrong grew up in Chester, PA and, later, his family moved to Linwood, PA where he met Wanda White. At an early age, he was baptized at Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Sun Village. Wanda has been a member of Mt. Pleasant all of her life. Clarence started attending Mt. Pleasant as a teenager because there were more youth there. He joined Mt. Pleasant when he was 17 years old.

Brock and Wanda were mar-

ried at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church by Rev. Levi Baldwin more than 47 years ago. They are the proud parents of three sons and four grandchildren. They both agree that communication and commitment to each other are keys to a long and joyful marriage.

In their early days of membership at Mt. Pleasant, both Wanda and Clarence were ushers and sang on the #2 Choir. Clarence previously served as a trustee for more than 30 years. He participated in the church’s mentoring program that visited local schools including the Main Street Elementary School in Upland, PA. Wanda, along with Terry Bishop, previously taught the Teenage Girls Sunday School Class. Wanda is now part of the Intercessors.

The Armstrongs have a strong work ethic of longevity. Clarence retired

four years ago from Scott Paper (now Kimberly Clark) after 41 years of employment. Wanda worked full time for 45 years as a scrub technician in the labor and delivery department at Chester County Hospital and, now that she is an “AARP” senior, she recently changed to a part-time schedule. After so many years of employment, this couple now enjoys watching sports together. In addition, Clarence really relishes landscaping and proudly displays his home work. Wanda enjoys journaling, a habit she developed as a teenager because from the 1st to 9th grades, she attended speech classes because she stuttered really bad which affected her self-esteem and confidence. Journaling connected her to God in a special way—God was a true deliverance for her.

Mt. Pleasant Women Re-Ignite at Annual Retreat

By Brenda Tildon

There are two words to describe the October Annual Women's Conference at the Eden Resort in Lancaster, PA—**SPIRITUAL** and **AWESOME**.

The conference opened on Friday evening October 19th with a spirit-filled message from Leading Lady Michelle Robinson who led everyone in prayer.

Dr. Cleo Townsend, 1st Lady and Co-Pastor of The Resurrection Center in Wilmington, DE, followed on Saturday morning with an upbeat presentation entitled "Built on Purpose-Designing the Life you Want". She gave her heartwarming testimony and taught us how to confess and confront our sins. She took us from physical fitness to good health and honoring

our God-given bodies.

Mt. Pleasant women started a "Courageous Women in the Bible" series, in which Tammy Barber and Eartha Barley depicted two famous biblical women--the woman with the issue of blood and the woman at the well--bringing their stories up to present times, which touched all of us in a special way.

On Saturday evening and Sunday morning we were blessed with a dynamic preacher, TV 5 News Anchor Danita Harris from Cleveland, OH. She relived the story of Hanna and Penniah in a way that brought everyone to their feet and a whole new understanding of what it means to love and forgive. She used the phrase "Just do it" when prepar-

ing for blessings.

Leading Lady led prayer time throughout the weekend. Mt. Pleasant women and their guests prayed, cried, hugged, met new people and left different than when they first arrived. Over 80 women attended some or all of the weekend conference.

"The weekend was totally awesome from start to finish," stated Leading Lady Michelle. "God showed up and showed out!"



Mt. Pleasant Men on a Roll

By Gwen Owens

Mt. Pleasant's Men's Ministry is on a roll—sharing all kinds of helpful information with our church family and with men from other churches as well.

Men, women and children came from all over the tri-state area in September for a free Health Fair. More than 30 health professionals provided resources and literature on everything from diabetes, cancer, heart health, weight loss, mental health, addictions, nutrition, physical health, tobacco use, and much more. For two hours during the fair, men were able to attend a

men's only forum in the church sanctuary and get some very important health questions answered.

"Men can be stubborn," admits Deacon Mike Parker, who organized both events. "We don't like to go to the doctors but we should be going annually, at the very least. We also need to know what our numbers should be for our blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol and prostate so that we can catch things early. The best protection is early detection."

Those who attended the Health Fair left with their crucial numbers as

various free screenings, including blood pressure, were given. CPR demonstrations were also enlightening for those who were never taught how to help someone in cardiac arrest.

All men should tell their friends about the next big event—a Men's Financial Workshop--on Saturday, November 24th from 8:30 to 11:30 am at the church. Come and learn the biblical financial principles when it comes to savings, retirement, debt, tithing, investing, and more.



A Christian's Heart

By Sylvia Ficklin

Oh Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. (Psalm 139:1 NLT)

The Lord alone knows what's in our hearts because the human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). People judge by outward appearances but the Lord looks at our hearts (I Samuel 16:7). He alone knows and examines our secret motives.

Why is the heart so significant? It reveals a person's commitment and direction in life. It is the center of our being. It represents reason, intelligence, will and passion. It reflects the real person (Proverbs 27:19). In condemning the religious leaders of that time, Jesus declared that whatever is in your heart determines what you say (Matthew 12:34). And, we all know that when the physical heart stops, death occurs.

God looks at our hearts for purity (Psalm 24:4-5). We are to have a **clean heart** (Psalm 51:10); an **undivided heart** (Psalm 86:11); and a **happy heart**

(Proverbs 15:13). We are to **bury the Word in our hearts** (Psalm 119:11); **guard our hearts** (Psalm 4:23) and love the **Lord our God with all our heart**, soul and strength (Deuteronomy 6:5). Remember, only a fool's heart says there is no God (Psalm 14:1).

In the Old Testament, God made several Covenants (binding agreements): With Noah (Genesis 6:18; 9:8-11); with Abraham (Genesis 15:18-19; 17: 2-21); with David (II Samuel 7:9-16).

He made a Covenant with the nation of Israel at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19-20). However, this covenant was broken by the people of Israel. In Jeremiah 31:31-33, God promised a **New Covenant** that would bring about an **internal change** in a significant way. He would write His instructions **deep in the hearts** of His people through the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:16-17; II Corinthians 3:7-8).

The Old Covenant **was external** and lacked the power to enable people to do

what it commanded (Romans 8:3-4). In the Old Covenant, God's instructions were written on stone. What the Law did was to reveal our wickedness. The Law required perfect obedience (Galatians 3:2-3). An example put forth is that the Law was like an x-ray machine; it revealed what was wrong but couldn't fix it.

Jesus is the foundation for the New Covenant.

We receive the power of the Holy Spirit when we confess our sins and accept Christ as our Savior, Lord, and Master. He is our mediator. His blood was the ultimate sacrifice to ratify the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:6-13). He makes His home in our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:17).

The stony heart would now become a tender, responsive heart, ready to serve the Lord. God had always intended to save the world through Christ. The Old Testament was just the preparation for the climactic moment of salvation.

PRAISE THE LORD



We are to bury the Word in our hearts (Psalm 119:11); guard our hearts (Psalm 4:23) and love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and strength (Deuteronomy 6:5).

“...man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

I Samuel 16:7

CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

By Rev. G. Joyce Bryant

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3:16.

"But God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

"Empire Gang!" someone shouted. Then another shout rang out, "Look out!" BOOM, BOOM, BOOM! Three shots were fired in rapid succession. The shooter, a guy named Lip. He and his gang were looking for someone who didn't belong on their turf.

Lip's friend, a guy named Scub, said, "Hey Lip, you shot Jay. He's not from the 'Hub' (the bottom of West Philly). He's a star athlete and basketball player. He's on our team. You shot the wrong guy!" Lip, who had been drinking, replied, "Oh wow, I didn't know that." Lip thought the guy walking down the street was a rival gang member named, Lil'Ray.

Jay and a friend were walking to the store between 7 and 8 p.m. He was hit with 14 pellets from a 12-gauge sawed-off shot gun in both lower extremities from his thighs to his ankles. Jay ran four blocks and collapsed. A rescue worker saw him sitting in the street, picked him up, and took him to the nearby Presbyterian Hospital.

Five years later, Jay's girlfriend invited him to her church, where he learned about the love of Christ, and he was baptized. But it wasn't until 20 years later, after living the fast life and feeling unfulfilled, that Jay accepted Christ as his personal Lord and Savior. Jay now lives for Christ, goes to church, and serves God daily. His life has changed for the better. God's vast spiritual treasures spoken of in the first chapter of Ephesians, make it possible for Jay to be transformed by renewing his mind to God's will.

Just because someone is on drugs doesn't mean he/she is worthless. If someone comes from the wrong side of town, it doesn't mean he/she is undeserving. Just because someone is of another race, doesn't mean that he/she is a low class or insignificant citizen. God loves us all so much that He gives the gift of an abundant life, an eternal life of indescribable joy, and eternal security all in one neat package for those who accept Him. This love cannot be matched. A great sacrifice has been made for all mankind through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory, **Romans 3:23**. If you, someone in your family, or a friend need Christ, never give up hope. God provides for you a brilliant display of love and giving.

This is Jay's true testimony as told to me. God is no respecter of persons, what He does for one He will surely do for another.



Buy a coat for
someone in need

Check in on a loved
one or neighbor

Give to a local food
pantry

Volunteer

Clean out your closets

Mt. Pleasant's Servant at the Door

By Brenda Tildon

Mt. Pleasant has something that most area churches don't have: a Music Ministry Leadership Team and a unique position, not like any other, held by our own Brother Creighton Richardson. He is the Music Ministry's "servant at the door". Creighton has an affinity of the mind and spirit, i.e., a connection, when it comes to the music ministry. He is a servant and has a servant's heart.

I'm sure you have all seen Creighton Richardson standing at the door of the choir loft and wondered what he does and why he is there. He has been standing at the choir loft door since 2008 when he saw a need to provide a service to all of Mt. Pleasant's choirs. Although he

loved singing on the choir, his work schedule prohibited him from attending rehearsals, so he took his place at the door.

Creighton doesn't just stand at the door, he provides a much needed service to the choir and to the Pastor. He helps keep the choirs on track by keeping them on schedule and by answering or assisting with questions or concerns. Creighton is instrumental in reducing movement in the choir loft during service. Prior to entering the sanctuary, he can be depended upon to have programs, envelopes, fans and lap scarves readily available. He protects the sanctity of the service and makes sure that everyone in the different

choirs have what they need.

Creighton is not only a servant to the choir but he also interacts with the treasurers, to ensure that the choir has baskets for offering, ensures that our musicians are cared for during the service and he keeps in touch with the Multi-Media team in the balcony to make sure that things are running smoothly in the choir loft. In addition, he works with our Deacons to ensure that everything that the ministry needs is in working order.

Creighton not only serves during morning worship services but also when the Music Ministry presents its Annual Workshops. He can be depended upon to use his culinary and decorative skills for a

wonderful table set up when refreshments are needed.

"Within our daily faith walk, God opens many doors of blessings for you and I," Creighton explains. "So I feel honored and blessed to be a servant and to stand at a door with God's keys, giving service to our Pastor and the various choirs of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church."

He is the music ministry Door Keeper and a servant well deserving of the title.



Devvyn Holloway Ministering at Moody and Beyond

By Gwen Owens

Devvyn Holloway is an old soul in a young body. The highly motivated 19-year-old is the youngest of Charles and Carmella Holloway's five children. If you've been a Mt. Pleasant member for a while, you'll remember him years ago not only singing on the Men's Choir as a child, but ministering as a soloist.

Now a sophomore at Moody Bible Institute, a Christian college in Chicago, IL, Devvyn is making his mark. He will leave a legacy behind in 2022 when he graduates with two degrees, in Music Ministry and Theological Studies. He's currently a Teaching Assistant at Moody for a course he helped develop after telling his freshman

voice professor that he strongly believed that Moody needed to offer Gospel music. Thus, The Gospel Ensemble was born. It is the first gospel group in Moody's 132-year history.

"Everything that Moody does is classical," Devvyn explains. "I felt that Moody needed to be more versatile, and if we offered gospel music, it would produce immense avenues of opportunities for students and the school. Plus, Chicago has diverse churches everywhere and it's one of the meccas for the birth of gospel music."

Born into a musically gifted family, little Devvyn began playing the drums at age two and singing a year later. He's cur-

rently learning how to play the piano. His paternal grandfather performed in an all-male gospel group, The Newberry Singers, two of his paternal aunts sing professionally, as do his own mother and father.

"I hope to have a career as a Gospel recording artist," Devvyn shares, "and I would like to create a global workshop ministry to educate people on what ministry is and how to effectively minister in manifold contexts and cultures."

He's already well on his way. He was recently hired as a part-time Worship Leader at The Orchard Chicago, a new church that will officially launch in January 2019. He also sang for the Moody Men's Collegiate Choir which went on tour last year in the U.S., China, Mongolia and Japan. In addi-

tion, he is a Music Instructor for a Community Music School in Chicago and teaches voice and drums. Devvyn is especially excited that his original song about God's Grace, based on the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32), will be released on an album in 2019.

His advice to young people: "Stay with God. Stay in his word and have a pure relationship with him. If you're outside of his will, you can't do what he's appointed you to do or walk through doors that he's opened for you. Seek him always and hold yourself accountable."



GUESS WHO ????

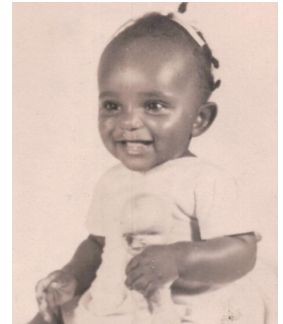


Some of you successfully guessed who this handsome little boy is. He's the one that you see behind the camera at numerous church events. His pictures help us document our church history. You also see him singing in the Men's Choir, helping serve communion and praising the Lord every chance he gets. He's none other than Deacon Charles Holloway!

Now, take a good look at this cute little girl. Do you recognize her? If you're the first one to email, call or text (after service) Gwen Owens at glonews@aol.com or 484-832-2104 with the right answer, you will win a very special prize.

And if you have a Guess Who picture for the next publication, email it to Gwen or place a picture in

the newsletter mailbox in the church office and include your name so that we can return the picture to you.



MUSIC MINISTRY OPENS FOR PASTOR JOHN P. KEE

BY BRENDA TILDON



On November 10, 2018, at The Cathedral of Fresh Fire in Wilmington, DE, Mt. Pleasant's Mass Choir represented us well as they opened the concert for gospel artist, John P. Kee. The most anticipated event (which was postponed from September 15, due to the arrival of Hurricane Florence in Pastor Kee's hometown), was well worth the wait!

Standing tall, and ready for ministry, more than 40 choir members, musicians and directors sang unto the glory of God and were also acknowledged for their "bringing the house

down" ministry by some of those in attendance. Mt. Pleasant was well represented in the crowd. Special thanks to Charles Holloway for always being there to take pictures when you need him.

As the choir prepares for upcoming engagements with the Pastor and the approaching holiday services, this November night will certainly be a reminder of the blessings and favor that God shows to his children and the Mt. Pleasant Music Ministry.



What will you do differently in 2019 and why?



"I will remain committed to the things that God has allowed me to put my hands on in 2018. As mother, grandmother, sister, friend, co-worker, co-laborer, I value each aspect of who I am, who I have become and who I am becoming! I will continue my pursuit for excellence, pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14)

Carolette Holmes



"Physically, I want to focus on staying healthy and strong; eating right and exercising more. Spiritually, I will work harder to keep my spirit from the contamination of the world. In turn, my faith in God can continue to grow and I'll be that light for Him."

Diane Fisher



"In 2019, I will focus on being more health conscious. In Romans 12:1, The Word urges us to make our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God."

Gail Small-King



"I want to join more sports and become a better athlete so that I can get a scholarship to college one day. I also want to keep getting good grades because I want to go to Harvard."

Jasmine Smith



"I will continue to try to do better in school and also try being a better listener."

Jayden Bennett



"I will spend more time improving my drawing skills. I also want to focus hard on my education so I can do well in the future."

Kevin Beaver