



# WHITE ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

**THE PRAYER MINISTRY IS PRAYING  
FOR YOU**



**DR. REGINALD VAN STEPHENS  
PASTOR**

**WHITE ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH'S  
SECOND LONGEST SERVING PASTOR**



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## *From the Newsletter Editor*

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Greetings to All in the Name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

There are many blessings that each day brings us. Life is all about our resilience and our ability to go through difficulties in the journey with a positive attitude. Despite the current challenges of almost unbearable hot temperatures, it reminds us that nothing lasts forever. Therefore, as we soon begin to bid farewell to these hot summer days and usher in what we hope to be a cooler fall, it is an excellent time to reflect, rejuvenate, and reorganize ourselves grounded in His words.

It has been said that relationships are the centerpiece of the human experience. Without them, life seems to lose its meaning. Our lives consist of an entire portfolio of various types of relationships. Family, friends, neighbors, rivals, and even strangers all contribute to the delicate blend of relationships that shape the way we experience life. The same is true with God. Experiencing a relationship with God is a crucial part of the equation. Therefore, let us foster the relationship with God and fellow beings.

A meaningful life is not being rich, being popular, being educated or being perfect. It is about being real, being humble and being able to share ourselves and touch the lives of others. Each moment of our life is God's gift to us, and God has a plan and purpose for our lives. Let us live our lives in a more meaningful way.

May the Almighty God empower all of us with His blessings to stay safe and fill our hearts with hopes for a brighter tomorrow. Let spirituality, fostering relationships and meaningful life be a part of our purpose going forward. Moreover, let us all work together for the betterment, or enhancement, of the White Rock Baptist Church family and build a good relationship with one another rather than fighting each other or hating each other. Let us build good relationships, communicate properly, and respect each other. Let us work as one to do God's amazing work and to carry out the Great Commission!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

**Deaconess Joyce Blackwell, Ph.D.**

WRBC Newsletter Editor

Director, WRBC Media Support Ministry Cluster

Deacons and Deaconesses Ministry



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# ADULTS LEARNING FROM EZRA



**DR. BRENDA F.  
ALLEN, SUNDAY  
SCHOOL**

"We are not makers of history. We are made by history," said Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Considering this quote, people world-wide will learn how we are made by history when they visit the International African American Museum that recently opened in Charleston, South Carolina. Surely, for over 20 years the planners benefited by some quotes and proverbs. Perhaps biblical proverbs were used by some of the Museum planners to impart knowledge, offer advice, teach, or reinforce morals, make an argument, relieve interpersonal tensions, aid in understanding, or inspire others.

A useful example is, "Teach the wise, and they will become wiser; inform the righteous, and their learning will increase" (Proverbs 9:9 CEB). Our Life Application Sunday school class for adults seeks to teach the wise and inform the righteous. So, five assumptions about how adults learn are being applied. These are by Malcolm Knowles, the father of adult learning theory. These assumptions are that: (1) adults are self-directed learners; (2) adult learners bring a wealth of experience to the educational setting; (3) adults enter educational settings ready to learn; (4) adults are problem-centered in their learning; and (5) adults are best motivated by internal factors. These assumptions apply to our Christian learning communities and other settings.

Speaking of learning in the Christian community, some contemporary adult learners find the Book of Ezra a challenging book for study. So, Deacon Kurt Merriweather is teaching Ezra to help us understand how people are made by history. Our lessons focus on what we can learn from Ezra. Our lessons are related to the need for more Christians today to return to our Christian community now. This is to **fellowship, learn biblical truths** and **worship God**, after more than three years since COVID-19 was designated as a pandemic. It is time to return to all that it means to be in Christian community. Ezra provides for us an account of the Jews' regathering, including their struggle to survive and to rebuild what had been destroyed. Through it all, Ezra declares that they are still God's people, and God has not forgotten them. These truths apply today to all Christians.

Our Sunday school lessons began with basics like the Hebrew meaning of the name, Ezra, which is help. Considering this, our gathering gospel music has focused on emphasizing the help we need from God. For example, *Jesus Is My Help* by Hezekiah Walker has blessed us before beginning the class. Our African proverbs have focused on a theme of help, like Hands wash each other, a proverb from South Africa. Also, two object lessons using band-aids have focused on understanding the Holy Spirit's help and our dependence on God for everything. Some exhortations from our discussion include: (1) Trust in God's deliverance; (2) Take time for rededication and renewal; (3) Go boldly and confidently into God's presence; (4) Stay rooted In God's Word; and (5) Be righteous through faith and faithful actions. You are invited to come in-person or virtually to learn with us in the Life Application Sunday school class. Join by Bible Basics/Proverbs Class, Meeting ID:823 9000 3283, Passcode: basics (276841 if dial in).



# THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY IN STEPHEN MINISTRY



**DEACONESS ALETA S .  
BROUSSARD, STEPHEN  
MINISTRY**

(Reprint from Grace Community Church blog, September 16, 2014)

Confidentiality is a cornerstone of Stephen Ministry because it is absolutely essential for building safe, healing, caring relationships. **Stephen Ministry is confidential.** Stephen Ministers do not reveal what their care receivers have told them--not to the pastors, not to the Stephen Leaders, not to their spouses or friends, and not to other Stephen Ministers.

Why? Because trust is vital for a caring relationship to be effective. Care receivers are experiencing difficulties that leave them feeling very vulnerable. Discussing their innermost feelings is an important step in the healing process. But in order to open up and discuss that which is troubling them most, care receivers need complete trust in their Stephen Minister and the assurance that what they say will not be circulated to others and become news for gossip.

This assurance builds trust and creates a safe place where care receivers can risk revealing their most painful issues—problems they might not even discuss with close friends or family. Confidentiality helps create a relationship that promotes healing and hope.

Another aspect of confidentiality is that nobody—except the Stephen Minister, the care receiver, the pastor and/or Stephen Leader who matched the two together—even knows that a care receiver has a Stephen Minister. Care receivers, of course, are free to tell others about the relationship and who their Stephen Minister is, but the Stephen Minister never tells. This means a care receiver can choose to have complete anonymity so that if he or she does not want people even to know that he or she has a Stephen Minister, nobody will ever know.

One final point involving confidentiality involves the Stephen Ministry model of supervision, where confidentiality is also a key element. (Supervision, done twice monthly, is vital to Stephen Ministry so that Stephen Ministers can provide the best quality care possible to their care receivers.) In supervision, the focus of discussion is on the relationship between the Stephen Minister and the care receiver, rather than the details of what is going on in a care receiver's life. By not revealing a care receiver's name or any significant details, confidentiality is maintained, and supervision becomes a place where Stephen Ministers can support and encourage one another in ministry while they provide the best quality care to their care receivers. It is a model that has enabled life-changing ministry to happen in thousands of Stephen Ministry congregations since 1975.

Why this talk about confidentiality? It is to build your trust in Stephen Ministry. It is a high-quality caregiving ministry that you can count on should you ever have the need. Confidentiality is a cornerstone of good ministry and of our Stephen Ministry.

If you or someone you know needs a Stephen Minister, please contact Reverend Regina Mitchell or Sister Shirley Davis-Kidd.

# DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CARRY THE LIGHT

In the Bible, light is equated with good. For instance, Jesus called Himself light. He said, "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."

"I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes and trusts in Me [as Savior—all those who anchor their hope in Me and rely on the truth of My message] will not continue to live in darkness." John 12:46 Amplified Bible (AMP)

In contrast, the world we live in is dark ("This is how the judgment works: the light has come into the world, but people love the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil." (John 3:19 , Good News Translation). However, once we trust Jesus as our Savior, He lives within us through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Therefore, when we are saved, we have the light with us (Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you will not have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." (John 8:12, New Living Translation).

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He instructed His followers to "make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19-20). This charge, known as the Great Commission, still applies. In other words, as disciples of Christ, we must carry the light to a dark world. But how do we do this? Here are three ways:

- God will send some of us abroad to share the truth of Jesus Christ. There are people in other countries who have never heard how to receive salvation, and we can go as missionaries to tell them.
- The Father also calls disciples of Christ to spread the good news of the gospel right where they are—in their neighborhoods, families, and workplaces.
- The Lord asks His followers to give of the resources He has provided—whether money, talents, or gifts—so His message of salvation can be shared with the world.

Are you willing to tell others about Jesus in whatever way the Lord has in mind? Ask God how He would like you to shine His light into the world. Then be available and obedient to carry out His plan.



**DEACONESS JOYCE  
SPIVEY, DEACONS AND  
DEACONESSES MINISTRY**

# The Prayer Ministry is Praying for You

The Prayer Ministry was charged by Pastor Reginald Van Stephens to help develop and maintain a culture of prayer at White Rock Baptist Church (WRBC). This church-wide culture includes a set of shared prayer-related attitudes, values, goals, and practices derived from the Holy Bible that characterize the disciples of Jesus. A guiding Scripture is "My house will be called a house of prayer" (Matthew 21:13, NIV).

**PRINCIPAL FUNCTION:** The primary purpose of the Prayer Ministry is to help ignite a commitment, provide guidance, and sustain a delight for prayer, within the congregational life and ministries of WRBC, so that the power of the love of Jesus is made manifest in who we are and what we do.

**ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Prayer Ministry is accountable to God, the Pastor, and the Church with a myriad of responsibilities.

More specifically, the Prayer Ministry's responsibilities include the following:

- Study Scriptures and obey the Holy Spirit to pray to God first and without ceasing, both individually and jointly;
- Encourage filling of the Holy Spirit for power, praising God and witnessing;
- Receive and intercede for individual prayer requests and church-wide needs, honoring all requirements for confidentiality;
- Partner with the Ministry of Deacons and Deaconesses to facilitate prayer meetings and address the needs of the congregation;
- Plan, implement and evaluate intercessory prayer and fasting for specific needs, such as revival, an annual prayer retreat, prayer education, training events, and holiday observations;
- Assist church ministries with their prayer leadership and areas of concern;
- Write newsletter articles and distribute literature to encourage prayer;
- Teach and review the biblical history of prayer in the church;
- Learn from and participate in local, regional, state, national, and international prayer events;
- Nurture a team of disciples who believe they have been called as intercessors to provide guidance for a prayer-driven church focused on witnessing, worshipping and working; and
- Pray for natural and spiritual leaders.



**DEACONESS TRANNIE  
MEEKINS, PRAYER  
MINISTRY CHAIR**



## **GUIDELINES FOR INVOLVEMENT**

### ***Qualifications for Members of the Prayer Ministry:***

- Be disciplined in personal aspects of prayer as well as corporate (group) aspects;
- Be an active Christian disciple in good standing at White Rock Baptist Church displaying the fruit of the Spirit as in Galatians 5:22, 23;
- Tithe, make sacrificial offerings, and be a good steward of God's resources in all areas of life; and
- Maintain an ongoing commitment to the work of the Prayer Ministry by attending congregational prayer on Wednesdays and Sundays, monthly business meetings, annual prayer retreats, and other gatherings.

### ***Characteristics of Members of the Prayer Ministry:***

- Obey Romans 12 by presenting self as a living sacrifice, providing humble service in the Body of Christ, and displaying love by action;
- Practice spiritual disciplines such as consistent Bible Study, worshipping, prayer, fasting, meditation, witnessing, etc.;
- Respect authority;
- Show compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, as instructed in Colossians 3:12;
- Support unity by bridge-building and peace-making; and
- Practice regular confession, self-examination and repentance.

### ***Objectives of the Prayer Ministry:***

- Raise the awareness of the need for all kinds of prayers;
- Encourage the disciples of Christ to focus their efforts on praying for others and sharing Christ with others;
- Seek to involve each disciple of Christ in a meaningful prayer life.

## **White Rock Baptist Church to Celebrate Its 157th Anniversary**

The church will celebrate its 157th year in existence on October 22, 2023. There will be a meeting of all committee members within the next couple of weeks. We pray that those who served on the committee last year will return this year. We also pray that those who did not participate as a member of the committee will do so this year.

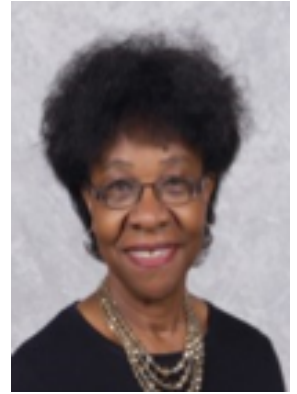
Everyone is welcome!

If you are interested and would like to serve, please provide one of the following co-chairs (alphabetical order) with your email address: Deaconess Joyce Blackwell, Ph.D.; Sister Minnie Forte-Brown; Dr. Tina Hester; and/or Sister Cynthia Traynham.

# SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY

I invite our entire White Rock Church family to join us in our virtual Sunday School classes at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday morning. We also have one Sunday School class for adults that is taught in person. You will find that the Sunday School experience greatly enhances your Christian journey.

Paul gives us a good reason we should attend Sunday school. He tells us in 2 Timothy 3:15-17 (KJV), "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."



**DEACONESS DELORES  
SHIRLEY, ASSISTANT  
SUPERINTENDENT,  
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Here are several good reasons why you should participate in Sunday School:

- Sunday School provides a structure for teaching God's Word (Acts 5:42), and meets our needs for spiritual growth!
- Sunday School gears Bible teaching to specific age groups (Deuteronomy 31:12). A four-year-old and a senior adult both leave Sunday school with specific applications for the week.
- Sunday School mobilizes and trains members for leadership. Students learn and are challenged. But how much more is that true in the life of the teacher?
- Sunday School is discipleship! Every teacher must have a desire to see each student have a spiritual life change. Since many people who attend church are not in a one-on-one or small group discipleship, an effective Sunday school is a form of "Discipleship 101."
- Sunday School is convenient. With work, family, and activity schedules of many church members, it is easier to attend virtual Sunday School during the pandemic. Children and adults can both learn.
- Sunday School organizes the church into caring groups. Teachers know when someone is absent or hurting and can express love personally.
- Sunday School leads the church in prayer and relationships. From the preschool class through all the adult classes, prayer is directed toward the specific needs of the class members.
- Sunday School focuses on outreach to peers and friends in a small group setting, where warmth and love flows.

Sunday School lets the church do all the above with consistency. It does not stop for the summer and rarely for holidays. Each Sunday, dedicated staff leads the church in this most important ministry.

Remember, Sunday school is forever . . . a lifelong pursuit. Let us commit to "Have a Fresh Start with God, Every Day!" and let it begin on the first day of every week with Sunday School!

# August

## BIRTHDAYS



**Willeta Dantzler, 1**

**Ina Tillman, 2**

**Joan Brown, 2**

**Shaun Harris, 2**

**Selena Hunter, 3**

**Theresa Ruley, 3**

**Avra Lewis, 4**

**Vida Sneed, 4**

**Alfred Woods, 4**

**Shirley Arrington, 6**

**Edith Birl, 7**

**Michelle Boyette-Rouse, 7**

**Shaniiq Davenport, 7**

**Sherri Hill, 7**

**Rodney Henderson, 8**

**Lizzie Cofer, 9**

**Cecilia Moore, 9**

**Harold Andrews, Jr., 11**

**Christopher Hale, 11**

**Gloria Smith Blue, 12**

**Patricia Crayton, 12**

**Althia Scriven., 12**

**Helen Featherson, 14**

**Sam Harrison, 14**

**Terilyn Hester, 14**

**Edward Clemons III, 16**

**Mina Forte, 16**

**Aserlee Wyche, 16**

**Susan Vann, 17**

**Mary Foster, 18**

**Bethany Stafford, 18**

**Louis Romney, 19**

**Marion Miles, 20**

**Ann Penn, 20**

**Tanisa Little, 21**

**Mildred Page, 21**

**James Williams, 21**

**George Bridgers, 22**

**Tonya McCrae, 23**

**Kelly Page, 24**

**Keith Hersey, 26**

**Charles Lassiter, Jr., 27**

**Symone Lee, 27**

**Valerie Parker, 28**

**Reginald Stewart, 28**

**Ina Tillman, 29**

**Pamela Doxey, 30**



## Ready for a Website Upgrade?

The Media Support Ministry Cluster's Communication and Information Ministry (CIM) has begun updating the church's website. Ministry Cluster chairs will be contacted soon to provide content information and photos.

[www.whiterockbaptistchurch.org](http://www.whiterockbaptistchurch.org)



# The Couples Ministry



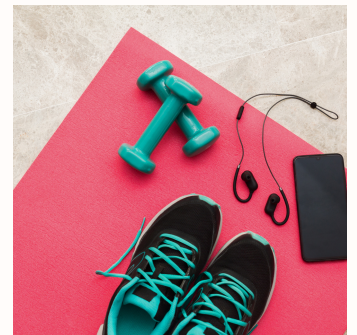
## “Build Strength and Balance with Vivo”

### A New Exercise Class Being Offered at WRBC by Duke OLLI

Join your fellow members for an exciting new fitness class presented by Vivo (teamvivo.com). Vivo sessions are live, online, and interactive fitness classes led by a personal trainer. Sessions focus on strength, balance, and mobility to give you a full-body workout in just 45 minutes. These classes are led by expert trainers and designed for older adults. **Classes meet once a week for 8 weeks, at 11:00 AM, on Mondays, starting September 18, 2023.**

The class will meet in the Fellowship Hall at White Rock Baptist Church. Classes are limited to 15 people. Therefore, register today by either: (1) picking up a registration form from the WRBC office, completing and placing it in the box (located in the church office) marked “*Completed Registration Forms for the Vivo Class*”; (2) downloading the QR code on the registration form to complete your registration; (3) registering online at [www.wrbc.org/Vivo](http://www.wrbc.org/Vivo) register; or (4) registering after Sunday Morning Worship Service, on **August 6, 2023**, in the Philathea Classroom. **The deadline to register is Friday, August 11, 2023.**

Participants will be asked to sign a waiver of liability electronically before the class begins. **For more information, join us for an Information Session about Vivo on Monday, August 21, at 11:00 AM, in the WRBC Fellowship Hall.** Try out this new, fun Vivo exercise class and get more fit this fall! **For more information, please contact either Meredythe Holmes, WRBC Health Ministry Chair, or Deaconess Joyce Blackwell, WRBC-Duke OLLI Liaison.**





**“COMMITTED TO  
LOVING CHRIST AND  
EACH OTHER!”**

**White Rock Baptist Church**

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**Newsletter Editor and Design—Deaconess Joyce Blackwell, Ph.D.**

Schedule of Services

Sunday School . . . . . Sunday, 8:30 a.m.  
New Disciple Orientation/Bible Study. . . . . Sunday, 8:30 a.m.  
Worship Service . . . . . Sunday, 9:30 a.m.  
Mid-Week Prayer . . . . . Wednesday @ 12 Noon & 6:00 p.m.  
Bible Study . . . . . Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.  
The Lord’s Supper (1st Sunday during 9:30 a.m. Worship Service)