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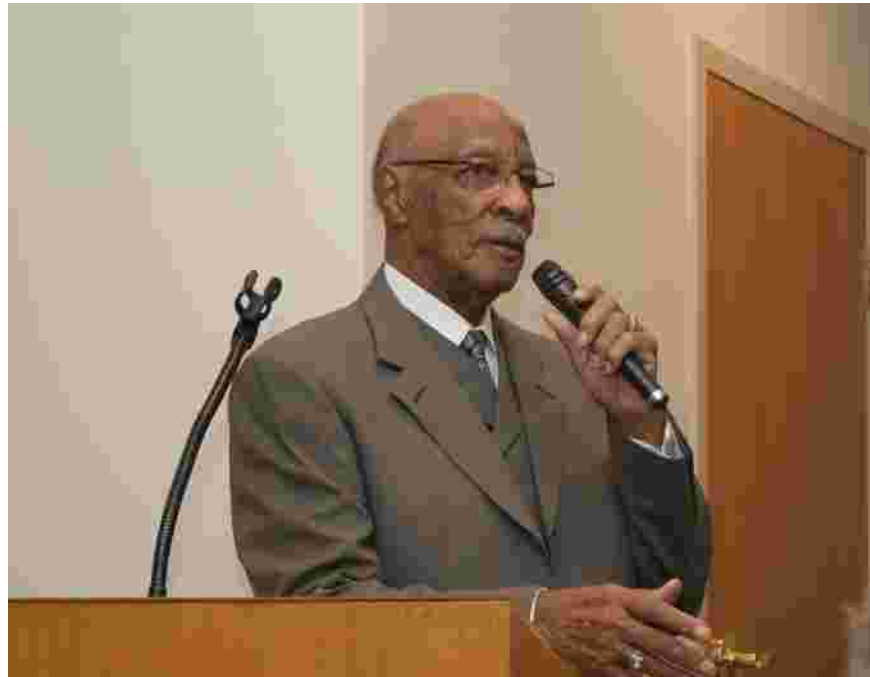
Inside this issue:

- The First Christmas 2
- Building Up One Another 3
- Crossroads of Life 4
- Choir Member Recognition 5
- Ten Practical Ways 6
- Shepherd's Song 7
- Performers in shepherd's Song 8
- Church Ministries ... 9
- Building Up One Another 10
- Become Like Christ 11
- Farewell to Countees 12
- Contributors 12



## St. John's Informer

### Building Up One Another



Pastor John J. Nicholas, Jr.

#### Newsletter Committee:

God has blessed St. John's Baptist Church in many ways. Ministries, auxiliaries, committees, assorted groups and individuals are all contributing to spreading the gospel. Much goes unrecognized, except in the eyes of our Heavenly Father.

## The First Christmas

<sup>10</sup> And the Angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

<sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

<sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

<sup>14</sup> Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2: 11-14



## St. John's Theme: Vision for the Church

The Pastor has set the vision for the church as it has been given to him by God. It has thus far begun by training one another as a habitation to the fruit(s) that will and are to be produced through God. The vision and purpose has a focus to be used as Service Technicians for Jesus Outreach Healing Network System. The vision is encompassed each year with a theme. Themes are as follows:

Celebrating the Marvelous Works of God

Cherishing our Past

Celebrating our Present

Cherishing our Posterity

An Enduring Presence with An Exalting Purpose

Building Together an Habitation For God

Experiencing God through the Holy Spirit

Building Up One Another.

It is our spiritual responsibility as members of the church to follow, help, aid and assist the Pastor in helping him to achieve this vision that the Lord has bestow upon him. Because in the end we will all answer to the Lord.

(Disciple Developing Institute homework assignment, Dr. John L. McCoy, instructor)

## Building Up One Another

Want to know how you can build up one another? Here are just a few ways that you can contribute to help others enjoy everyday living!

1. Esteem others higher. Have high regards, great respect, and favorable thoughts of the people in your circle of trust and influence.
2. Be wise in your speech. Communicate more effectively by thinking before you speak. Start with praise. Never confront others. Instead, point out how both of you can make things better.
3. Be encouraging. Encouragement is an expression and assurance of one's hope and future in words, presence and sincerity.
4. Be quick to forgive. When others make a mistake, be quick to forgive and forget; releasing them from guilt and shame that may take root in one's heart when not dealt with over time.
5. Be understanding. Wisdom and understanding go hand in hand. Understanding starts by being an active listener (not planning a reply as one is speaking), asking intelligent questions to gain insights, and being accepting of what the speaker is saying.
6. Zero gossip. Keep other's secrets. Never speak stuff that causes unnecessary hurt to others by speaking unclaimed rumors behind their back.
7. Share knowledge. Sharing has been made easier thanks to the accessibility of sharing tools on the web, along with help from the social media sites such as "Twitter and Facebook." They have immediate applications for better results in our work and life, edifies our soul and improves our daily conversations.
8. Stay humble. Humility and maturity are synonymous. A dignified person accomplishes much, but brags little.
9. Be positive! Positive thinking goes beyond having the drive and motivation for personal success. Positive thinking is explicit, definite and outspoken. It's contagious. Build up your loved ones with your positiveness, allowing them to be open for better things to come.
10. Love. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy. it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves. Love never fails. . . .And now these three remain: faith hope and love. But the greatest of these is love". (1Corinthians 13, NIV) Building up a person with the nine mentioned is only effective when done so together with love. Care for your loved ones how you would want to be cared for. Build up one another how you would like to be inspired. As a result you will move up to a whole new level of breakthroughs in life!

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# The Crossroads of Life

-Anonymous

Our life is a journey. In the many stages of life, also come different challenges that precede one's life on earth. The journeys that you are faced with may seem impossible, unbelievable, thought provoking, and difficult. Whatever the situation, concern, issue or circumstance it has led to a crossroad(s); without direction. You cannot move forward. These crossroads are the turning points in one's life. These crossroads could determine the entire view or perspective for the mission and purpose for your life.

I have heard it said; that in this journey we call life, we come to some crossroads. Perhaps for some of us, we have reached a crossroad(s). However, we must keep in mind that wrong paths of life chosen could damage God's plan for our lives. The choices we make are the one we will have live by at times.

What are crossroads? Crossroads is a point where you seek the right direction, path or action one need to achieve perhaps a specific assignment given in order to complete the mission or task that has been set before you, called purpose. Crossroads are presented as issues, circumstances or situations with no direction at that stage.

Crossroads are not always pleasant, kind, easy and can be at times unbelievable experiences. They can challenge the very fabric of your being and everything that you believe in. Yet they are there. Nonetheless, to pursue the task that has been set before you, one must proceed based upon the purpose that was established for you. It has to be clear, yet other times it is not. This is where the crossroads have appeared and the real questions begin to ponder within your spirit what to do.

You finally stop and ask yourself several questions that come to mind. Do you have the necessary tools to achieve or proceed ahead for this task or mission? Is this part of the vision that God has given you? How will this change make a difference? Who will it effect and Why? Will others understand whether in the body of Christ or out? In order to determine what Crossroad to take that will stay in line with God's vision and plan which leads you to the right path one must ask oneself some of these questions if not more. There are so many questions that need addressing before the wise or appropriate decision is answered. If one is to success in this journey of life, a change must occur.

So now you ask yourself who can I turn to for help? God is the director. God will guide and direct us to exactly the right path, if only we will let him with patience and endurance. The scripture that helps me through is "Proverbs 19:21".

In closing, I too have reached some crossroad(s). I have pondered the above questions with thoughts of how to proceed. I have learned that crossroads are songs, churches, logos, books etc. all with a common goal, direction toward the right path. I have seen it written that it is not aptitude that determines altitudes but it is attitude. Sometime we don't always have to know the plan, just the direction for the purpose. The answers will not be disclosed with this one article for my crossroads. Hopefully this is just the beginning of a series of articles from the congregation that set the stage for the purpose of your mission. I invite you to give your views on your Crossroads of Life. I hope and pray that you join me on this journey. My next article hopefully will be a Life Purpose Statement. Amen

## Choir Members Recognized for Their Long-Term Service

Choir members who have served more that 25 years were provided special recognition. The October 14, afternoon program honored eleven members who answered the call. They included Inez Buchanan, Charles Bynum, Eunice Cobb, Elaine Green, Caleen Greene, Julia James, Mark James, Lydia Peele, Veronica Sanford, Ann Smith-Keene, and Elaine Trivers.



Each honoree received a certificate of appreciation presented by Rev. John Nicholas, Jr., and Sharon Gregg, president of the Sanctuary Choir. Mark James (below) was recognized as the longest serving choir member:

## Ten Practical Ways To Build Up One Another:

1. Find and leverage what you have in common.
  - Christ and the Church
  - Male
  - Black experience
  - Eating – go to lunch
2. Work at it – persevere when your attempts are not readily accepted.
  - Build a relationship before mentorship.
  - Learn about the person – know their likes and dislikes, know their temperament.
  - Be prepared – they may not want your help...
3. Show humility
  - Don't assume – ask to verify.
  - Identify with the person and their struggles – perhaps sharing our struggles.
  - Start with the current state of the person.
4. Be attentive and dependable
  - Keep appointments.
  - Keep promises.
  - Meet obligations under scrutiny.
5. Set desired outcomes – yours and your brother's
  - Seek mutual benefits.
  - Seek behavioral changes – not just conversations.
6. Be real
  - Face the reality of the situation.
  - Tell the truth.
  - Be consistent.
7. Encourage in failures and success
  - We will all experience disappointments.
  - We are all flawed.
  - We are all fallen creatures.
8. Pray before engaging
  - spiritually prepared.
  - Listen.
  - God has the final say.
9. Acknowledge progress
  - Say what is working.
  - It is a journey.
10. Love is required.

# The Shepherds' Song

by Bobbie Fisher

Hark, Do You Hear What I Hear? The sounds of the holiday season are upon us. December starts the most festive season in all the year where family and friends come together in fellowship to celebrate the birth of Jesus. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.



At St. John's Baptist Church, the Sunday School, Dance Ministry and Sanctuary Choir presented, "The Shepherds' Song," produced by Dennis and Nan Allen, under the music direction of Damon Watts, on Sunday afternoon, December 2. The sanctuary was well attended by church members, friends and first-time visitors who traveled from Maryland, Washington, DC, and Virginia. All came to experience the spiritual message through music, inspirational dance and performance. The music included Christmas favorites such as "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" and "Silent Night." The Sanctuary choir performed beautifully. You could see the smiles on the faces of the audience. Special thanks to Caleen Greene, Minister of Music, Damon Watts, Sanctuary Choir Director; Angel Austin, Dance Ministry Director and Rockefeller (Rocky) Twyman, pianist; for their incredible musical gifts and performance accomplishments.

The annual Christmas program opened with a celebratory praise and worship dance. It included an array of young adults, teenagers and children beautifully draped in white flowing costumes, who moved creatively together in dance expressing their praise of God.

A performance cast of nine members re-enacted the Good Shepherds and Nativity biblical story with two shepherds tending sheep at night just outside of Bethlehem. Jacob, the young shepherd, was played by Brandon Williams, selfishly wishing to have "fame and fortune." The elder shepherd Eli, played by Deacon Robert Taylor, expressed his displeasure to the young shepherd's selfish goals. Suddenly, a bright light appeared in the sky. They became afraid. It was an angel sent by God. The angel told them, "fear not, for behold I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. The son of God has been born and you will find Him in Bethlehem."

The two shepherds left with haste for Bethlehem encountering a pair of local women along the way. When they finally arrived at the stable, they were filled with joy at seeing the baby Jesus lying in the manger. They knelt down and worshipped Him. Returning home the shepherds again met the same two women in the marketplace telling them of the wondrous things that they had heard and seen.

Shepherds' Song teaches us that Jesus came to this world as his gift to us, and that material things do not represent the true meaning of Christmas. God's gift did not come wrapped in ribbon and bows. Likewise our best gifts are those of our time, effort and God-given talents given through mission work.

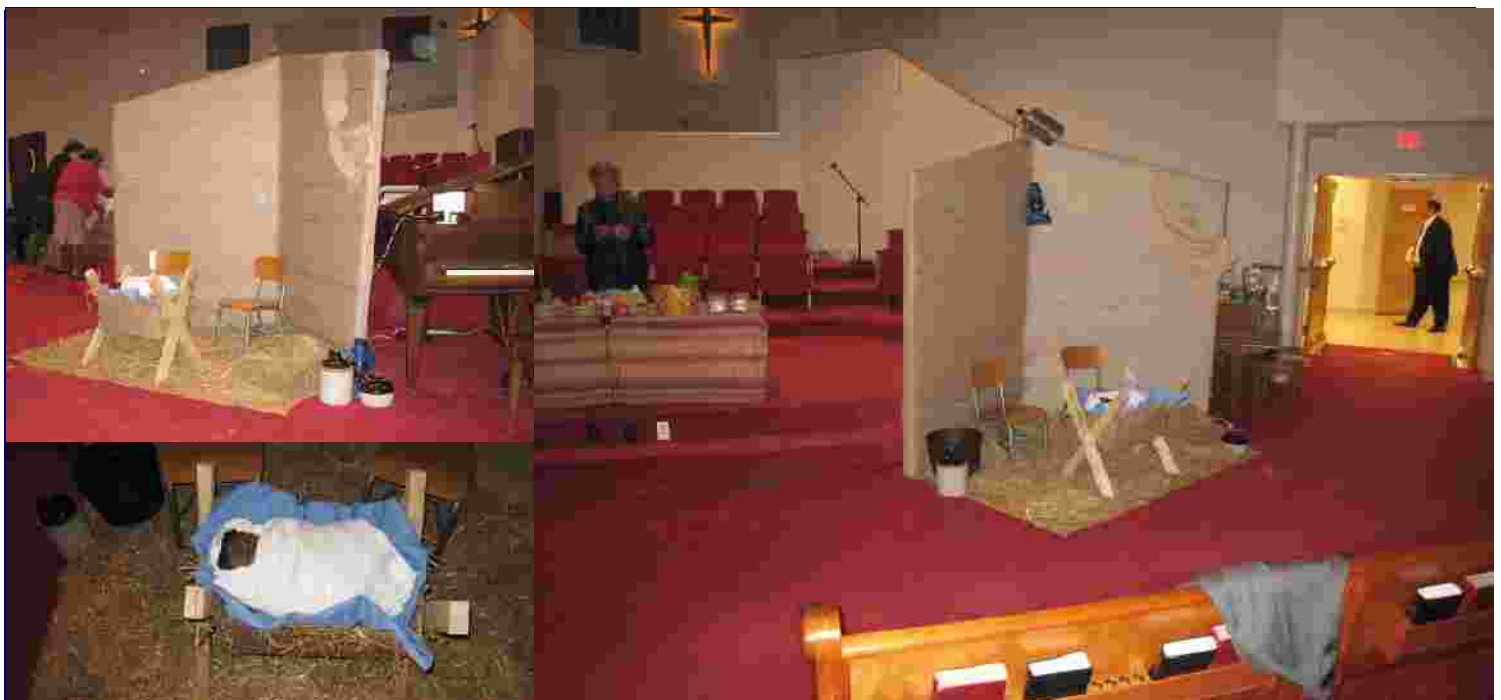
The Christmas program concluded with standing applause. Pastor John Nicholas thanked everyone involved in the successful production.

Wishing you a healthy, joyous and blessed 2013 New Year. May god bless you all!

## The Shepherds' Song Performers



Performers Brandon Williams, Charlotte Stokes, Karen Keith and Rpbert Taylor





## Church Ministries, Auxiliaries & Schedule

St. John's Baptist Church  
1905 South Columbia Pike  
Arlington, VA 22204  
Pastor John J. Nicholas, Jr.,  
Pastor's Study (703) 920-8766  
Church Office, (703) 920-4228  
James W. Woodard, Chairman,  
Deacon Board, (703) 664-1340  
Veronica Sanford, Chairperson,  
Deaconess Board, (703) 971-4626  
Charles W. Bynum, Sr., Chairman,  
Trustee Board, (703) 615-3973  
Vernice Mitchell, Church Clerk/  
Secretary, (703) 979-2351

### Ministry and Auxiliary Directors:

Audio Visuals - Leslie Cameron  
Bulletin - Doris Branch  
Culinary - Sharon Hopkins  
Dance - Angel Austin  
Deacon - James Woodard  
Deaconess - Veronica Sanford  
Evangelism - Min. James Countee  
HHH - Anne Smith Keene  
Hospitality - Michelle Jackson  
Music - Caleen Greene  
Newsletter - Gerald Stokes  
Nursing - Maxine Thomas  
Prison - Robert Taylor  
Sunday Church School - Ernest Martin  
Ushers - Aletha Frost  
WEB Site - Bridgett Dole  
Youth - Ernest Martin

### Schedule of Services

Sunday School  
Continental Breakfast 9:00-9:25 AM  
Sunday School 9:30-10:45 AM  
Sunday Worship Service 11 AM  
Prayer & Praise, Wednesday 7-7:30 PM  
Bible Study, Wednesday Noon and  
Wednesday 7:30-9 PM  
Baptism, Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
Communion, Every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday

## Building Up One Another - Gene A Getz

- Members of One Another
- Devoted to One Another
- Be of the Same Mind with One Another
- Accept One Another
- Admonish One Another
- Greet One Another
- Serve One Another
- Bear One Another's Burdens
- Bearing with One Another
- Submit to One Another
- Encourage One Another

## You were created to become like Christ. (Spiritual Growth) Colossians 2:7

You were created to become like Christ. This is your destiny and one of the purposes for your life. It has been God's plan from the very beginning of time after the fall of man to make you more like his Son Jesus. You were created as a spirit being...

God's ultimate goal for your life on earth is to develop your character before you reach heaven. In doing so; it will not be comfortable. This means you will be taking on the form of his values, attitude and character. This character is the kind of character that is expressed in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12); and the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) with the characteristics for an effective and productive life here on earth (1Corinthians 13).

Therefore, we must cooperate with the Holy Spirit in order for God to release the power of the Holy Spirit to make this change in our lives. God waits for you to act first. Further we must let go of our old ways that is a choice. The choices that you sometimes make determines the outcome (Ephesians 4:22), change the way you think by a renewing of the mind. We are changed inside out not outside in (Romans 12:2) and last put on the character of Christ by developing new godly habits. Your character is essentially the sum of your habits; it is how you habitually act.

It is the Holy Spirit that will produce a Christlike character in you and not yourself. It is not about you! This process of change that occurs is called sanctification (2Corinthian 3:18). Spiritual maturity is long and slow process. It is not instant or automatic; it is a gradual, progressive development that will take the rest of your life. It will be finished when you get to heaven or when Jesus returns. God is far more interested in your character and spiritual growth than anything else. While on earth this is preparation before reaching heaven which is the transformation of completion.

In summary once you decide to get serious about becoming like Christ, you must begin to act in new ways, a different mindset. You will need to let go of some old routine, habits and intentionally change the way you think. You can be certain that the Holy Spirit will help with these changes for spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is a collaborative effort between you and the Holy Spirit.

Words of Encouragement and things to remember:

It is God's word, people and circumstances that helps to mold us. His word produces the truth we need to grow. The people to provide the support needed to grow. The circumstances to provide the environment we need to practice Christlikeness. It is God's purpose and not our plans.

Words taken from the book "The Purpose Driven Life" by Rick Warren

## Farewell Dinner for the Countees

The church gave a farewell dinner for Minister James and First Lady Doretha Countee. On November 18, St. John's Baptist Church ministries, auxiliaries and church family celebrated the many years of service and dedication the Countees have given to St. John's. Numerous presenters in succession expressed the impact both have made on the work of church and in their lives. Minister Countee is the Pastor-designate for St. Job Baptist Church, Clinton, MD which he will officially assume in March of 2013. He will replace Dr. Fred N. Crump who will retire from his pastoral obligations. Many of the St. Job church family participated in the farewell dinner. St. Job and St. John's have grown closer as a consequence of the Countees.



Official St. John's WEB Site: [StJohnsArlington.org](http://StJohnsArlington.org)

## An Open Invitation - to You!

The SJBC Informer is published periodically to serve the church family. Your contributions are essential. Please submit ideas and articles to the newsletter staff for consideration. All praise to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## Special Contributors to this issue of The Informer:

- Anonymous
- Bobbie Fisher

### Service Technicians for Jesus' Outpatient Healing Network System

EMERGENCY CELL PHONE NUMBERS TO BE  
USED FOR CHURCH-RELATED ISSUES:

Deacon Terry Tyler: 202-744-8959

Deacon James Woodard: 703-597-6997

We are thankful for God's grace and mercy.



## St. John's Informer Newsletter Committee

This newsletter is brought to you through the collective efforts of Sandra Browne, Doretha Countee, Robert Taylor, Annette Scott, Tena Smith, Elaine Green and Gerald Stokes. Articles for consideration can be contributed by any St. John's Baptist Church member. E-mail Gerald Stokes ([stokes.gerald@gmail.com](mailto:stokes.gerald@gmail.com)).