



THE VOICE

Mount Ephraim Baptist church
610 Largo road upper Marl boro, md 20774

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www.mountephrain.org

Just How Deep Is Your Religion?

Ezekiel 47: 1-5

Many of us view the New Year as a time of beginning afresh, of setting new goals for ourselves, and making changes in our patterns of living. Some of us began the New Year by saying to ourselves, as well as to others, "I'm going to do things differently this year. I'm going to make some needed changes that I've been neglecting for too long. I'm going to be a different person than I have been in the past."



Co-Pastor Joseph A. Gilmore, Jr.

Others of us don't see our-

selves making too many radical changes in our lives, no drastic alterations from the previous year. Though everything in our lives is not perfect, we are basically satisfied and reasonably content. Last year wasn't that bad for us so we just hope that things will go on as before, that we will continue in the way that we've been heading.

Whether we see ourselves making many or few changes, we all have at least one goal in common. Every one of us, from the youngest to the oldest, from the richest to the poorest, from the least to the most educated, from the pious to the worldliest, should have this as our goal. Each of us needs to strive for more depth in the Lord and more growth in God's grace.

Our prayers and goal should be that at the end of the year, we find ourselves stronger in the Lord, with more depth in the Spirit, more understanding of God's Word, more commit-

"Our prayers and goal should be that at the end of the year, we find ourselves stronger in the Lord, with more depth in the Spirit, more understanding of God's Word, more commitment to doing God's will."

ment to doing God's will.

As we are all aware, there are still unplumbed depths in the Lord that we haven't yet reached and there are heights of Joy that we haven't yet attained. The Spirit of God ought not be finished with any of us yet. No matter how much we have experienced or think we know, there is still much that God's Spirit can teach and reveal to us.

The Christian journey is something
(see Co-Pastor on page 8)

Church Preparing to Observe 23rd Anniversary This Month

Mount Ephraim is preparing to commemorate the church's 23rd anniversary on January 14, and the celebration this year will be different than any other year, says Anniversary Chairman, Deacon Larry Sarratt. For the first time ever, the church's Anniversary (founded in January 1984) will be separated from the Pastor's Anniversary, which is actually in April. Both anniversaries have traditionally been observed in April.

"This is a new year and as Pastor Gilmore has stated, Mount Ephraim is moving in a new direction," said Dea-

con Sarratt about the change in the anniversary observances. The celebration of the Pastor's and Church anniversaries took place jointly for the first 22 years of Mount Ephraim's existence. The theme for the 23rd anniversary is "The Church With a Vision Based on a Firm Foundation." The Scriptures for this occasion are Proverbs 29:18 - *Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he*" and Hebrews 11:10 - *For he looked for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

The Rev. Patrick Walker of New Macedonia Baptist Church, Washing-

ton, D.C. will be the 10:45 a.m. speaker and the Guest Minister for the 7:30 a.m. service will be the Rev. Lanier Twyman, of the St. Stephen's Baptist

(see Anniversary on page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Co-Pastor Honored	2
Family Life Seminar Update	3
Men's Day Rousing Success	4
Fall Revival Reflections	5
Golden Agers' Ministry	5
News You Can Use	6
	7

Co-Pastor Honored With Special Anniversary Program

Members of the Mount Ephraim congregation bestowed love and appreciation on Co-Pastor Joseph A. Gilmore, Jr. and his family during a spirit-filled Co-Pastor's Anniversary during worship services on Sunday, October 8, in observance of Co-Pastor's Anniversary. Rev. Gilmore, Jr., a graduate of Morehouse College and the Howard University School of Divinity, thanked the church for its support and for growing with him in his ministry through the years.



Rev. Gilmore, Jr. (left)

"Let me thank God for another year of being alive. Let me also express my love and my gratitude to my wife of 13 years. God has blessed me with a good wife. She is a good mother to our daughter," Rev. Gilmore, Jr. said to the church in an emotional thank-you, referring to wife Deborah and daughter Alia.

Co-Pastor's Anniversary was led by guest minister, the Rev. Anthony Maclin, Pastor of The Sanctuary at Kingdom Square In a rousing message, Rev. Maclin implored the worshippers at Mount Ephraim to stay focused on the assignment they are given from God, regardless of circumstances and obstacles. "One of the most difficult challenges in life is to stay focused on the assignment that the Lord has given us for our lives," Rev. Maclin said.



Rev. Maclin

"We need to stay in the Will." The title of his message from Luke 2:48 was, "Don't Bother Me, I'm On Assignment."

During the service, Co-Pastor Gilmore, Jr. was presented with a plaque from the church's new Family Life Ministry, which he and his wife, Deb-

orah, started earlier this year. First Lady Ethel Gilmore also made a special presentation to her daughter-in-law, Deborah – a dozen roses.

During his career at Mount Ephraim, Rev. Gilmore, Jr. has shepherded many of the church's building projects including the revamping of the gym, second-story library addition and the sprawling Joseph A. Gilmore, Sr. Adult Day Care complex next to the church. He has also spearheaded a refinancing for the church and is leading the current 20/20 church refurbishing drive as well as the new Family Life Ministry that is steadily drawing more couples and families to Bible study and workshops during the week.

Our Pastor

Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Gilmore, Sr.



Anniversary from page 1

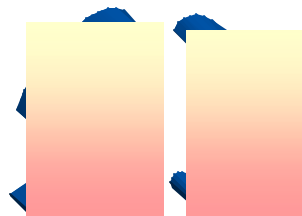
Church, in Temple Hills, Md. Also, Minister of Music Phillip Carter is bringing a special guest, and the church will recognize members who are 90 years of age and older in 2007.

As Mount Ephraim continues to grow and expand its offerings beyond the church's immediate location to the broader community, events like the Anniversary help facilitate that mission.

"The anniversary is very important to the church's future since it reflects on how God has brought us through. Also the anniversary will show clearly how good God has been to Mount Ephraim, and it will help give a sense of the history of the church. It will be indeed a time to

praise the Lord and give thanks to the Church and all its accomplishments," said Deacon Sarratt.

Members of the committee are Co-Chairperson Linda Sitney, along with Pat Davis, Carol Gilmore, Lucille McAllister, Virginia Davis, Annie Brown, Deaconess Marie Austin, and Deacon Jimmie Jennings.



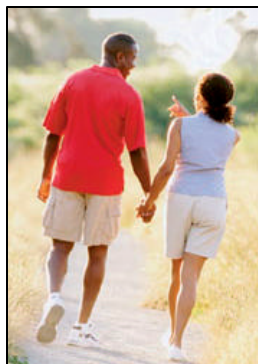
James Alexander, Jr., *The Voice* Editor * First Lady Ethel Gilmore, Adviser * Pamela Day * Ola Hill * Erica Kennedy Patricia Shelton * Linda Smith * Erika Thompson * Denise Washington.

Photographers: Robert Eubanks, Arthur Scott and Willie Roberson

Family Life Turns Focus to Helping Couples Communicate

Mount Ephraim's Family Life Ministry continues to expand its offerings and attract new participants as it closes in on completing its first year in existence. The most recent focus has been on improving communication in relationships, and if you missed the kickoff of this series on the weekend of November 10, you missed out on a blazing start to what is turning out to be an exciting and uplifting time in the Family Life Ministry.

Under the tutelage of the Rev. Johnny Parker, a Christian-based "relationship fitness" expert and radio personality from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, couples from Mount Ephraim interested in expanding their horizons are learning the



purpose of relationships and how to behave in them in order that they might reap the benefits that God has ordained for male-female relationships. The ultimate benefactor of healthy male-female family relationships is the Kingdom of God.

"What is the reason for companionship?" Rev. Parker asked rhetorically at the outset of the series. "What is the purpose of relationships?" He went on to state clearly and directly: God desires relationships. God's the one who says to Adam, 'It is not good

for you to be alone. A man cannot accomplish his purpose and destiny without a woman. She's not following him. She's beside him."

Rev. Parker told the group that relationships are a critical component of God's design. The way we treat people in relationships is how we are all going to be measured spiritually – not according to how many times we attend church, or by how much money we donate to our church or other religious causes.

In a humorous way, Rev. Parker went through a list of "lies" about relationships and dispelled those lies one by one, evoking laughs as participants recalled their own versions of these games that people tend to play in their

(See Couples on page 5)

Leadership Workshop Helps Officers, Ministry Heads See the Big Picture

It is said that leaders are born and not made. But when it comes to the church and God's work, it is important that leaders are trained, and that was the impetus for Mount Ephraim's daylong leadership training seminar held at the church on Saturday, November 4. The leadership workshop provided an opportunity for elected and appointed officers to fine tune their leadership skills as Mount Ephraim prepares to go into a new year.

The training was led by the Rev. Ronald K. Hill, of Philadelphia. About 40 officers and ministry leader participated in the classroom-style training. Using handouts and a flip chart at the front of the room, Rev. Hill covered some key principles of leadership and church membership that had participants thinking and asking questions. Mixed with humor and a professorial approach, Rev. Hill focused the training session on several key themes that help define a

church's direction and growth. Among those themes were Stewardship, Priorities, Vision and Infrastructure. For example, on Stewardship, Rev. Hill discussed strategies for "taking the stew out of stewardship" by providing support that sustains (tithes and offerings) and learning to "give and grow" as a leader, whether elected or appointed.

Setting the tone for the leadership workshop, Rev. Hill told participants, "Church education is a priority. It is so important that we lift that up."

One of the threads running through the many subjects addressed during the three-hour workshop was how leaders in the church are part of the church's evangelism ministry. These days, there is more of a push toward "worship centers" and away from the definition of traditional churches, where user-friendliness is the byword. Another church trend today is the growing number of "church gypsies" who hop from congregation to

congregation. All leaders must be aware of these trends to lead effectively and to effectively evangelize for Mount Ephraim and the greater Kingdom, Rev. Hill said.

"As leaders in your various ministries, you are change agents ... You are the people who go back with the vision and the leadership of the Pastor. We need a mission statement. We need a vision statement. And then we need a commitment statement."

Mount Ephraim has sponsored leadership training each year for the past several years. Pastor Gilmore has seen it as a way to energize the church into a new year through getting ministry leaders and officers on the same page spiritually as well as ensure that the vision of Mount Ephraim's leaders is in sync with the church's greater plan.

Congregation Energized by Mount Ephraim's Men's Day Speakers

By Erica Kennedy

The Mount Ephraim congregation and, in particular, its men were richly blessed during the annual Men's Day celebration on October 22nd when two of its very own brought powerful messages for both its 7:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. services.

At the 7:30 a.m. service, Dr. Luther Burse, Sr., a Mount Ephraim member and highly respected national adviser on higher education, kicked off Men's Day with a rousing talk that expounded on the theme selected for Men's Day 2006: "Men Standing Boldly for God." In his message, Dr. Burse challenged Mount Ephraim's men to lead the way in addressing rampant social instability – "an unending cycle of pathologies"—plaguing African-American communities, and Black men in particular.

Dr. Burse stressed that while those pathologies are many in number, it is also true that, "If ever there were a time when African-American men need to be standing boldly for God, it is now."

"There is a growing sense of not being in control of our lives and our own destiny, and we lead a precarious existence," Dr. Burse said. "Let God's wisdom guide our lives. We must all stand boldly for God. When we are standing boldly for God, we are standing for something."

Through a sermon filled with Civil Rights-style vigor that mixed social responsibility with Christianity, Dr. Burse reminded men that "great issues of the human soul" can only be handled through standing boldly for God in the ongoing struggle for basic human dignity, changing our circumstances, raising our expectations as a people, and having abiding love in our hearts for our children and youth.

"Far too many of our children are rejecting education ... and

far too many of our own community streets are just as unpaved as the streets of war-torn Iraq," Dr. Burse stated, a notion which resonated strongly with many in the congregation.

Dr. Burse brought the church to its feet when he closed his message with a quote from the late great poet, Langston Hughes and his list of the things a man who wants to stand boldly must do, including think clearly without confusion, and love his fellow man sincerely.



Dr. Burse

"This is God's Day; Men's Day at Mount Ephraim," Dr. Burse concluded.

That notion and the joyous spirit of Men's Day continued to move through the 10:45 a.m. service as the Male Chorus brought the congregation to its feet with "I'm on the Lord's Side," [Get up and] Take a Stand," and "I'm Still Holding On." After the welcoming of several visitors, who chose to fellowship with Mount Ephraim for the day, Pastor Joseph Gilmore presented Men's Ministry chairman Allen Gilliam, Sr. with a service award but was surprised when Gilliam presented one to him for his years of service and dedication to the church.

"Thank you, Pastor, for doing the stuff a lot of pastors don't do and for bending over backwards so many times [for us members]," said Bro. Gilliam above thunderous applause. Pastor Gilmore thanked Bro. Gilliam for his service as well and stated that he trusts him with helping to take the Men's Ministry in a new direction.

Bringing the message of the hour was another of Mount Ephraim's own,



Dr. Moki

Dr. Samuel Moki, who used Matthew 25: 14-27 as the focus of his message, "Give an Account of Your Stewardship." Dr. Moki used the passage of scripture, which is best known as "The Parable of the Talents," to emphasize the importance of making the most of what God entrusts you with.

"Most [people] would think this parable is about money. This is about how diligently we do the Lord's work in his absence," said Dr. Moki. "Men of Mount Ephraim, the Lord is speaking to you today. What are you going to do with the talents God have given you?"

With a humorous touch yet deep conviction, Dr. Moki instructed the men to love their wives, love their children, and get involved in working with the church.

"I was a member of the 'Pew Warming Ministry'

for a long time. I *loved* that ministry. But Pastor pulled me out of it, and I thank God for where I am now."

At the conclusion of Dr. Moki's message, which was met with a standing ovation, Pastor Gilmore lavished praise on him whom he called "his fruit."

"I am so happy today. Samuel Moki is indeed my fruit," said Pastor Gilmore. "He's proof that you don't have to be a preacher to bring a message. This church will not be the same after today because of Brother Moki."

After an Invitation to Discipleship that brought forth numerous new members, the church erupted in praise and song for those who had come forward, making the Men's Day theme of "Men Standing Boldly for God," indeed a reality.

Mount Ephraim's men also held a prayer service the Friday night before Men's Day and a dinner program following the 10:45 a.m. service.

Reflections on the Fall Revival: *Growing in Grace*

Contributed by **Thelma Taylor**

Awesome is the best word to describe the 2006 Mount Ephraim Baptist Church Revival held September 26-28, 2006. In fact, Pastor Joseph A. Gilmore Sr. said "this year's revival was one of the most spiritual." The theme of the revival was "Growing in Grace" with supporting scripture "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord," 2 Peter 1:2.

A major contribution towards the success of the revival was the guest preacher, Dr. Donte' L. Hickman, Sr. D. Min., of the Southern Baptist Church in Baltimore, Maryland. When Pastor Gilmore, Sr. announced to the congregation Pastor Hickman would be the guest preacher, he was excited and said we were in for a treat. He heard Rev. Hickman preach several times in Philadelphia, Pa. and wanted the Mt. Ephraim Baptist Church family and friends to hear and be blessed by this extraordinary preacher.



Rev. Hickman

The first night of revival, Rev. Hickman blessed our souls with scripture taken from Judges 16: 28-31 (NIV) under the subject *Recovering the Me That I Messed Up*.

He carried us through the life of Samson, a hero noted for his great strength. Samson was anointed by God, but didn't make the right decisions in relationships, romance, retaliation, and rebellion. Samson prayed for the strength to do God's will and to live as God wanted him to live. Like Samson, we are imperfect and can recover from the mess we create in our lives.

The message for the second night brought by Rev. Hickman was, *There is a Selah in my spirit*, under the scripture Psalm 3:1-3 (NIV), a musical note taking place in the text.

David teaches us that he encountered problems when he was anointed by God. Rev. Hickman said, "We have to be careful who we entrust at the gate of our life. Everybody you trust is not your friend." When you feel like giving up say, Selah which is a musical note, a pause, and think of the

things the Lord has done in your life. David didn't give up and the Lord protected him and fulfilled his needs.

On the last night of revival, Rev. Hickman spoke from the subject: *Hang in There*. The scripture reference was John 19:23-24. He told us there are three truisms in life: (1) Trust that God knows what he is doing. (2) We must live within the tensions of life. (3) Learn how to take a licking and keep on ticking.

In addition, he told us the devil will mess with us just as he did with Jesus in the scripture. The Bible says, Jesus went into the wilderness to defeat the devil. The devil couldn't get Jesus to compromise. The message was whatever the devil is doing in your life, *Hang in there*. God will be with you while you go through your wilderness situations.

Another contribution to the success of the revival was the music. The music provided by Mount Ephraim's choirs, under the direction of Phillip Carter, Minister of Music moved the congregation and left a lasting impression. The choirs inspired the congregation with a variety of harmonious songs with the likes of *If I Don't Praise the Lord, the Rocks are Going to Cry Out*.



SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT FOR YOUR FLU SHOT

Prince George's County Flu Vaccination Appointment Line

301-883-7879 (301-883-7877 TDD for hearing impaired)

Couples from page 3

relationships. These "lies" Rev. Parker pointed out included "I'll Change You," "A Relationship Will Heal My Brokenness," "It's All About Me," "You're Supposed to Make Me Happy" and "Two Can Play That Game."

Rev. Parker used as a biblical foundation texts from John 10:10, Mark 8:34, James 1:19 and Ephesians 4:26 to make his case for relationship building among couples.

The Friday night opening session was followed by an all-day seminar on Saturday, November 11. About 50 people from Mount Ephraim – mostly couples – participated in the opening workshop. The entire series culminates with a couples retreat to Northern Virginia scheduled for the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend in January.

For additional information, call the church office at 301-808-1584.

**JOIN US FOR SUNDAY
CHURCH SCHOOL**

EVERY SUNDAY ...

9:15 a.m.

Golden Agers' Ministry Looking to Big Ideas for 2007

By Patricia Shelton

As 2007 moves into full force, Mount Ephraim's Golden Agers' Support Ministry is busy planning activities for the seniors of the church in the coming year. We had a very successful year and are looking forward to even greater heights for 2007.

Looking back to 2006, the Ministry sponsored Fellowship Day and a Senior Fellowship Dinner. Activities for 2006 also included a trip to Lancaster, PA for the production of the play "RUTH," after which everyone enjoyed a delicious buffet meal. The Golden Agers' also traveled to New York City for the Broadway production of the popular Oprah Winfrey play,



"The Color Purple".

The upcoming trip to Lancaster Pa. (early April) is scheduled to see the play, "In The Beginning" and another trip to New York City is being planned for long-running Broadway hit, "The

Lion King.". The Golden Agers' Ministry is also setting its sights beyond the shores with a Caribbean cruise that would leave from nearby ports in either



Baltimore, Norfolk, or New York, which would allow travelers the opportunity to enjoy a cruise without having to fly to the cruise port. So stay tuned. The Ministry is looking to sponsor more outgoing projects so that our seniors can enjoy many exciting activities as a group.

In the meantime, the Golden Agers continue to stay in touch with seniors through cards and phone calls.

Anyone needing assistance from the Ministry is welcomed to contact the Golden Agers through the church office at 301-808-1584.

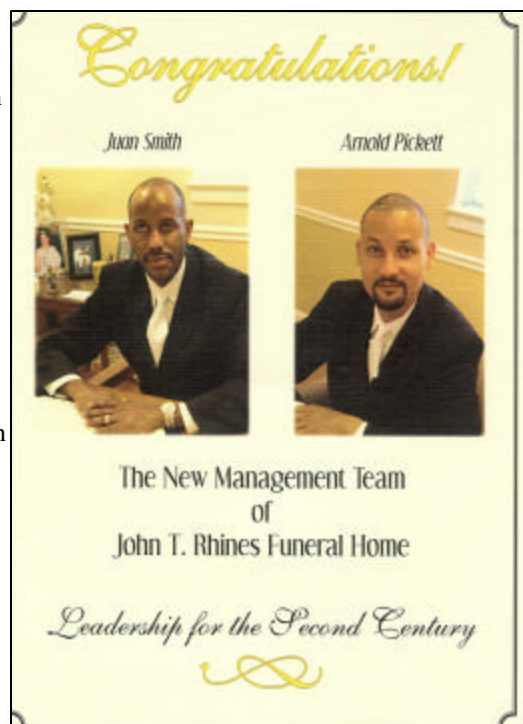


Mount Ephraim "Family" Realizes Success In Many Ways

Members of the Mount Ephraim family have watched young Arnold Pickett, son of member Romella Pickett, grow and mature into a productive and prosperous young man. Trustee Pickett is a founding member of the church. Recently, he celebrated a major business milestone when he became a principal of the John T. Rhines Company Funeral Home in Washington, D.C.

Pickett and his partner, Juan Smith, who form the new management team for the Rhines Company, were honored at an October 7 100th Anniversary program held at a restaurant on the Southwest waterfront in celebration of the Rhines Company as one of the leading and historic African American businesses in the Washington, D.C. community. When you see Arnold Pickett, congratulate him on a wonderful accomplishment.

Shellee A. Mitchell, daughter of



Patricia and James Shelton, recently published a Christian novel -- the *Divine Madness*, which introduces Sonya, a young woman determined to become who she hears on the inside and not who she sees in the mirror. *Divine Madness* is a fiction novel which reveals the hardships of Sonya's abuses and how her pursuit for righteousness not only propels her into a greater destiny but is also a catalyst for others to achieve their purpose.

Novice author Mitchell credits this writing to her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She always wanted to write but her responsibilities weighted her faith and she suppressed her dream. One day, Jesus publicly called forth her purpose and commissioned her to "write the

(see **Success** on page 8)

Selecting a Nursing Home for Family Can Be a Tough Undertaking

By Denise Washington

Making the choice to put your loved one in a nursing home and having piece of mind at the same time is not easy for some of us to make when it's time. If you are caring for a loved one, no matter what illness they may have, you may find yourself and family having to make a choice of how best to care for him or her. For most, this may be the deciding factor of having piece of mind because you can no longer care for them or they cannot care for themselves.

We are all accustomed to grooming, bathing and dressing ourselves. However, some of us have loved one's that can no longer do these things. And it may come down to making the only decision you can by putting your our loved one in a nursing home.

Nursing homes can be used for short and long term care depending on your loved one's need. What one



needs to keep in mind is that each facility is different and may not serve or provide the specific needs you seek for your loved one? Below are some tips on how to start your search from an article entitled "How to Select a Nursing Home," which can be found on the following Web site: www.drugs.com:

1. Make a list of nursing homes a half an hour from your home; 2. Contact each and find out what kind of care they provide, i.e., basic, after surgery care and rehabilitative; 3. Ask if the facility is licensed and if they take Medicare or Medicaid are accepted. Keep in mind the requirements for both vary by state. 4. Don't be afraid to ask questions and do additional research.

Additional resources that can be used to find information on nursing homes include:

Church; Friends and Family; Office on Aging at:

<http://www.hhs.gov/aging/index.shtml>;

Better Business Bureau at: <http://www.bbb.org>; and Hospitals, providers, and even caregivers who work with the elderly. Most important pray, have faith and know that God will not lead you in the wrong direction.

Tips On When to Dial "911" - What You Should Know About Cell Phones

When a 911 call is received from a phone other than a cell phone your name, address and phone number is displayed as the phone company reports it, so please be sure to verify all the information with the 911 operator/dispatcher.

Cell phones that are pre-programmed to dial 911 take a lot of time away from the 911 operators after you have accidentally dialed, either by dropping the phone or sitting on it. While emergency operators are answering your accidental phone call, someone who has an emergency will be unable to get through.

When to Use 911

Call the emergency line to report an incident that requires immediate assistance of Police, Fire or EMS personnel. Give exact location and details of any injuries or deaths. If you are reporting a crime, pay particular attention to the suspect's physical characteristics; height, weight, hair color, clothing. If a vehicle is involved, give

a clear description of the color, make, body style, license plate number and direction of travel. Do not attempt to apprehend or detain suspects.

911 Do's

- Use 911 for the dispatch of Police, Fire and EMS.
- Teach your children how to use 911 wisely in case of an emergency.
- Use payphones to report crimes in

someone is in jail.

- Don't call 911 if your cat is stuck in a tree or on top of the house. Call your local animal control at (301) 499-8300.
- Don't call 911 for directions.
- Don't call 911 to report a crime such as a theft, burglary, use of credit card, or phone complaint unless these crimes are in progress or have just occurred.

Community Corner

By Ola Hill

progress. (A 911 call is free.) Use your cell phone only to report an emergency. (Not as a convenience for a toll free call).

911 Don'ts

- Don't call 911 when the power goes off or the weather is threatening. Call the utility that services your area, and monitor television and radio for weather information.
- Don't call 911 to see how much a traffic ticket is or to check and see if

The following are some but not all types of reports that should be called into the Public Safety Communications Center on the non-emergency phone number (301) 333-4000:

- Theft or Attempted Theft of or from an auto (unless in progress or just occurred)
- Accidents (unless there are injuries)
- Thefts of bicycles, lawnmowers or small items, when no suspects are in the area
- Burglaries, if not in progress
- Harassing phone calls
- Noise complaints

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Under HIS Direction”*

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Co-Pastor from page 1

that we must grow into. One does not reach the highest heights or deepest depths by wishing it or wanting it or claiming it. I try not to judge anyone's religion, but I become suspect of people who become so holy and sanctified overnight. Such people often come in to the Christian life with a bang and go out with a whimper. Rather than waning and weakening with time. True religion proceeds from strength to strength. Time takes it toll on all we know and everything we use except religion and faith.

In Ezekiel's vision as recounted in our text, the land was nourished by a steam of water that flowed from the temple. As Ezekiel walked along the banks of the stream, he was directed at certain intervals to step into the water to ascertain its depth. At one point the water was ankle deep, and at another point he was knee deep into the stream. He followed the stream a little further, and the next time he stepped into the stream, he was waist deep. When he stepped into the water a little further

downstream, he discovered that the stream had become a river so deep that he could not stand up and cross it on foot; he had to swim across. At the beginning of the New Year, each of us should ask ourselves, “How deep is our religion?”

Walking through water that is ankle deep is generally no problem and requires a minimum of adjustment on our part. There are others who have knee-deep religion. Knee-deep religion is not quite as convenient as ankle-deep religion. It slows us down a little more than ankle-deep religion does, some, but not too much. Waist-high religion requires greater commitment than the others.

We have to go a little farther to get it and we can't get out of it so easily. We can run through ankle-deep water and walk through knee-deep water, but when it becomes waist deep, all we can do is wade through it. Waist-high religion has some depth to it.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

7:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

Success from page 6



Mitchell

book”. With her faith now ignited, she delved into her private life and exploded with imagination to create a story from Life to Death to Destiny.

To avoid a commercialized process Shellee decided to self publish her book under Thirst for Bread, Inc. She also creates Precious Ruby – Encourage Cards, she is a worship liturgical dancer, a single mom, and a licensed Evangelist.

As her ministry develops she is inspired to open a home to minister to the abused, establish a scholarship award program, travel around the world with her children, and be a spokeswoman for the Kingdom of God - an average woman achieving impossible dreams. For more information visit www.thirstforbread.com.

SUNDAY SCHOOL 2007

Where We Stand ...

During my tenure as Sunday School Superintendent, it was my responsibility to assess the progress of our Sunday School from an administrative point of view. At the beginning of the year, I created an Action Plan to be discussed with our staff and teachers. That Action Plan had two items for discussion and they were: 1) How can we improve attendance in our Sunday School and 2) How can we increase our giving and offering to our Sunday School.

Improving Our Attendance

The goal was to get at least 100 members to participate in Sunday School every week. We were able to average between 60 and 70 members each Sunday. Approximately 10 per-



cent of our members attend Sunday School each week. The adult men and women are coming in great numbers with our women winning the attendance banner each Sunday. Our children are not coming to Sunday School. The Bible states in proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." As the church Sunday School Superintendent, I am asking for your help to increase our children's participation. If you can think of any incentives we can use to attract our children to Sunday School, please contact me.

Improving Our Giving

I am well pleased with our giving to Sunday School. The Men's Class has won the banner each Sunday.

Summary

I know that all members of Mount Ephraim Baptist Church will help us to in-

crease our children's participation in the Church Sunday School with a renewed sense of commitment toward studying God's Holy Word. To gauge our progress, we need your input and feedback so we can improve our teaching methods and impact the learning process.

Robert Dickerson
Sunday School Superintendent

LaNita Roberson (below) and youngsters (far left) participate in Sunday School Christmas 2006 program.



Quarterly Lessons for Sunday School

Jesus Christ: A Portrait of God (The Letters and the Gospel of John)

Theme: God's Glory Within Us

Unit 1: Christ: The Image of God

December 3	Reconciled through Christ
December 10	Jesus' Absolute Supremacy
December 17	Living with the Light On
December 24	God Reached Out

Colossians 1:15-23
Hebrews 1:1-9
I John 1:1-2:5
John 1:1-18

Unit 2: Christ Sustains and Supports

January 7	Set Free!
January 14	The Authority and Judge
January 21	Bread and Water
January 28	The Light of the World

John 8:31-38, 48-56, 58-59
John 5: 19-29
John 6:34-40; 7:37-39
John 8:22

Unit 3: Christ Guides and Protects

February 4	Listening with Discernment
February 11	Life After Death
February 18	The Way of Life
February 25	The Key to Fruitful Living

John 10:1-5, 7-18
John 11:17-27
John 14:1-14
John 15:1-17



THE YOUTH PAGE



B	A	B	Y	J	E	S	U	S	W	B	C	P	R	T	L	J
C	M	S	D	O	Y	L	A	R	G	P	O	Y	V	I	G	C
S	H	L	V	T	S	W	H	G	U	F	I	B	J	M	T	O
N	P	R	A	I	M	J	M	A	R	Y	S	D	G	I	H	D
A	E	E	I	Y	F	X	L	E	I	T	R	E	Q	S	R	M
T	A	J	H	S	B	A	E	G	H	N	A	W	F	T	X	Q
I	C	O	R	A	T	N	G	P	U	E	E	Q	B	L	O	I
V	E	I	E	R	Q	M	N	Q	R	Q	L	U	Q	E	V	N
I	O	C	I	P	R	A	A	H	A	B	J	H	L	T	R	N
T	N	E	N	O	U	N	X	S	I	R	Y	K	T	O	A	K
Y	E	W	D	J	C	G	F	H	G	Y	N	G	K	E	N	E
W	A	P	E	M	V	E	A	E	L	V	E	S	A	I	B	E
N	R	X	E	S	D	R	B	P	A	O	B	C	Q	L	Q	P
J	T	N	R	T	O	S	G	H	S	P	V	B	W	M	X	E
R	H	A	H	M	B	J	B	E	Q	D	A	E	T	H	V	R
K	G	S	A	V	I	O	U	R	T	S	M	A	D	I	W	B
L	N	A	E	A	Y	S	C	D	W	A	E	C	A	S	T	A
O	B	N	K	R	N	E	M	E	S	I	W	E	H	T	P	R
M	D	T	G	J	R	P	T	C	N	R	E	G	G	N	O	G
D	X	A	N	H	I	H	E	N	A	C	Y	D	N	A	C	W
F	R	O	S	T	Y	T	H	E	S	N	O	W	M	A	N	T
H	S	E	A	S	O	N	O	F	G	I	V	I	N	G	L	C
L	E	N	K	I	H	S	M	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	S	J
H	C	R	U	H	C	B	T	R	E	O	M	K	P	R	T	X

Find the Holiday-Themed Words Below in the Seek-and-Find Puzzle Above

**CHRISTMAS
SHEPHERD
SAVIOUR
JOSEPH
BETHLEHEM**

**ANGEL
MARY
REJOICE
NATIVITY
THE WISE MEN**

**BABY JESUS
ISRAEL
PEACE ON EARTH
INN KEEPER
MISTLETOE**

**FROSTY THE SNOWMAN
SEASON OF GIVING
CANDY CANE
REINDEER
CHURCH**

Contributed by Linda Smith