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The Weekly Challenger

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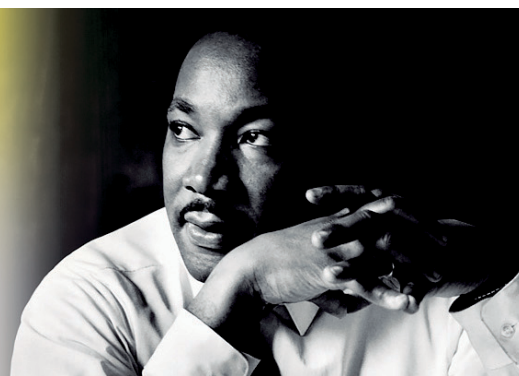
VOL. 52 NO. 10

JANUARY 23 - JANUARY 29, 2020

50¢

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day - January 20, 2020

St. Pete Celebrates Dr. King



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Assistant Professor of Theology and African American Religion at Yale University Divinity School Rev. Dr. Eboni Marshall-Turman headlined the 34th annual MLK Leadership Awards Breakfast on Monday at the historic Coliseum.

34th annual MLK Leadership Awards Breakfast

BY RAVEN JOY SHONEL
Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG – The St. Petersburg Metropolitan Section of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) held their 34 annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Awards Breakfast Monday, Jan 20 at the historic Coliseum.

In welcoming the more than 1,000 attendees, Mayor

Rick Kriseman said his administration has “created a vision of a city of opportunity where the sun shines on all who come to live, work and play.”

He went on to say that addressing systemic failures starts with opening doors of opportunity for all, and this effort will “help rectify some of those transgressions.” Kriseman acknowledged there is much more work to do going forward, “but it starts with a

bold vision.”

The leadership breakfast is the first stop for many on the King Holiday. Day of Service projects took place all around the city later that day, but Kriseman asked the audience to look beyond the holiday. Look for those who need help throughout the year, such as an elderly neighbor, a child needing guidance or an empty pantry.

See **AWARDS**, page 8/9

2020 Interfaith Memorial Service



Civil rights attorney Hassan Shibly

BY HOLLY KESTENIS
Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG – Held last Sunday at First Baptist of St. Petersburg, the 2020 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Interfaith Memorial Service was themed “Vision for Humanity in 2020.”

Newly elected City Councilwoman Deborah Figgs-Sanders presided over the afternoon while Interfaith Tampa Bay president Rev. Doral Pulley and First Baptist of St. Petersburg Associate Pastor John Rice offered opening remarks.

Civil rights attorney Hassan Shibly headlined this year’s memorial service, speaking on defusing antagonism, ignorance and distrust through educating one another to share a common humanity.

“Our diversity is a gift from the most high,” he said. “[There are] many nations and tribes, not so that you hate each other, but so that you learn from each other.”

Shibly emphasized that it is not one’s outward form, nor their wealth or titles held that determines success, but instead the ability to take action and to help those in need that determines self-worth. By uplifting humanity, fighting for the oppressed, and striving to serve the purpose for which we were created, people of all races can achieve the goal set forth by Dr. King so many years ago.

“An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a white person have any superiority over a black person, nor a black person any superiority over a white person,” explained Shibly, who is also the chief executive director of the

See **FAITH**, page 6

The 37th annual MLK Essay Contest

BY RAVEN JOY SHONEL
Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG – Each year, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday weekend is kicked off with the MLK Essay and Oratorical Contest. In its 37th year, once again, it attracted some outstanding participants that promise to make a significant impact on the world in the years to come.

“Believe me, some of these kids have much to say, and that’s what we want,” said Virginia Scott, president of the Martin Luther King Commemorative Organization, Inc.

The organization welcomes the unique insight provided by participants and feels the contest is a way of gathering information that adults need to make better decisions.

“If we don’t have our youth to lead us in some way, we will



Charlie Williams (left) and Virginia Scott (right) congratulate essay contest winner Alexandra Marie Neely, last Thursday, Jan. 16 at the Enoch Davis Center.

be without conversation.”

Thirty-seven years ago, then-Governor Bob Graham appointed then-AARP Executive Director Charlie Carol to form a group of people who exemplified the leadership of Dr. King and who would create

events to honor his legacy.

The group became known as the St. Petersburg Dr. Martin Luther King Commemorative Organization, Inc., and they organized events such as the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

See **ESSAY**, page 9

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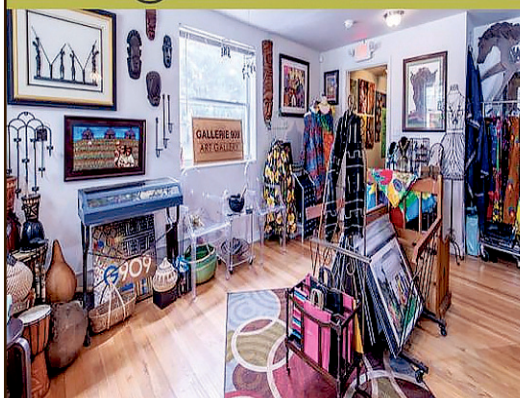
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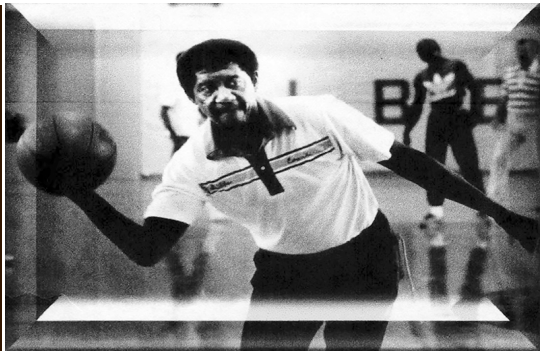


SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, February 1, 2020
2:00 PM

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Celebration Honoring

*Coach
Freddie
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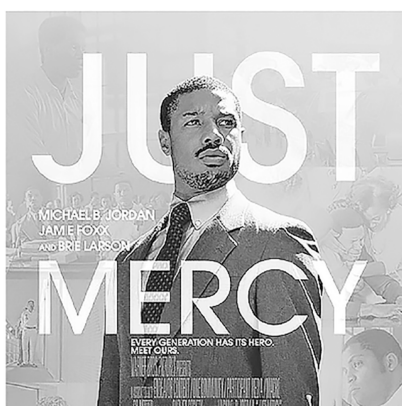


Keynote Speaker: Coach Daniel Wright

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PUBLIC DISCUSSION* ABOUT



Saturday, February 1, 2:30 – 4 pm

@ James Weldon Johnson Community Library
1059 18th Avenue South, St. Petersburg

sponsored by the Community Remembrance Project Coalition

The mission of the Community Remembrance Project Coalition (CRPC) is to bear witness to the legacy of racial terror, epitomized by lynchings in America, in alignment with the Equal Justice Initiative.

Goals: the CRPC will advocate for the truth of the story; educate with the truth of the story; com-memorate and collate this history in an effort to bring about reconciliation, justice, equity, peace and healing.

Guiding Principles: the CRPC believes that publicly confronting the devastating history of racial terror lynching in our own community is an essential step towards recovery, healing and racial reconciliation needed to create a more just society.

The CRPC believes that deep traumatic and psychological wounds of racial terror lynching continue to impact the black community, and that truth and reconciliation follow one another and we are compelled to honestly and soberly recognize the pain of the past.

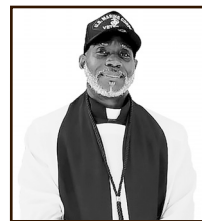
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* Does not include screening. Just Mercy is currently showing at AMC Sundial, Regal Park Place, Cobb Tyrone, & elsewhere.



Breaking the Cycle

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HARRISON, PH.D.
Men of S.T.E.E.L. Ministries
www.menofsteelministries.com

Ok child of God, show me your godly fruit (faith/works)

Praise the Lord.

This week is a small detour from Battle Scars but just as vital.

My love and compassion for the kids in our city go back many years. Having raised six here, we have come to be somewhat knowledgeable about the many obstacles that are in place awaiting them. Not all come from outside forces.

The Apostle Paul penned in Gal 4:16: "Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?" (NIV).

I hear so often people say "God still working on me," or "I ain't there yet," or "I'm still a work in progress." Really? Over 30 years old and you don't get it. God stopped working on you a long time ago. Read Acts 7:51.

It's time that we realize that we can't tell God how, when or with whom to bless us. Your season of harvest might have already come and gone because of your unwillingness to heed God's call or walk in obedience to His Word.

I have a statement for all those that refuse to change and adapt to new beginnings or new directions: Show me the fruit.

Show me the fruit and I will show you the faith. If you have factual evidences that says what you are doing is effectively producing positive, sustainable results then its working for your good and the good of the community. But, in the past years, if it's been the same old status quo or gotten progressively worse, please explain to me how God is blessing it or is okay with your stiff-necked approach.

God is not a standstill or backward moving God. He's progressively perpetually moving forward. He may tell us from time to time to be still because we can be our own stumbling blocks, but He is always moving forward. We have

to be proactive and not always reactive in our thoughts and actions. Proactive involves strategic, creative and critical thinking. Reactive is off the cuff and can be very dangerous and destructive.

I have been programmed to be a solution seeker, not a problem solver. If you give life to a negative thought, idea or suggestion, you have essentially set yourself up for more work than was originally necessary to accomplishing the mission.

The Bible is very clear as to addressing our daily warfare with Satan, "neither give place to the devil," "resist him and he will flee from you." Simple, right? If that were the case, we wouldn't be in the condition we are in today.

The church has been a major contributor to the constant decline in our communities. We are so focused on who is right or who is "preaching the truth," and so many doctrinal issues and a desire to be entertained, that in the process Satan and his minions have crept in and implanted seeds of malice, greed, self-righteousness, selfish malcontent and a multiple of so many other deadly and destructive weeds that have sprouted up and choked all the holiness and goodness in us out of us.

I have the Holy Ghost and a desire to keep receiving wisdom and my Bible tells me if I lack it, all I have to do is ask and he will give it freely. (James 1:5) He has also bestowed upon me spiritual gifts and I have no intentions of having Him take them back.

I was raised Baptist, studied for 10 plus years the teachings of the Worldwide Church of God, first baptized while a member of the 2nd Street Church of Christ in Winter Haven, introduced to and listened to many cassette tapes by Minister Farrakhan while fighting in Desert Storm,

followed Dr. Fred Price for 12 plus years weekly without fail and for the past 11 years, been holiness/apostolic. I know, tell me 'bout it.

I see why our kids are so lost and confused.

Organizations have their own by-laws, standards and principles in conjunction to the one most important daily living manual, the Bible. It's as though God didn't foresee certain issues so they had to add these in for Him. But read Rev. 22: 18-19.

Real soul winning requires compassion and empathy not just passion and sympathy. Many leaders have forgotten that. They want to regulate, dictate, demand, command, condemn, manage, control.

Jesus led with love, but in the process, set standards and boundaries whereby in following them ensured positive desired results. No where in the Bible did Jesus give us the freedom to decide without outlining the consequences of those decisions. Sin has already been judged and NO the Bible DOESN'T say you can't judge. Matt 7: 1-

I preached this past Sunday from Luke 10: 30-37 comparing the spirits of the two men of God who looked at the same need, accessed it and then chose to act like it didn't exist or felt it wasn't important enough to get involved.

While the third and least likely of the three saw that exact same need, acted upon it and went above and beyond that was expected and ensured that if what he initially did wasn't enough, he covered any unforeseeable needs that might occur in the far future.

When we get there, then we will start to see God's power in motion.

Till next week,
God bless,
Bishop-Elect Robert L. Harrison, Jr., Ph.D



REV. DR. ROBERT L. HARRISON, Ph.D

Senior Pastor

True Holiness Worship Ministries, Inc.

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DOG
DAYS



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All news items, advertising copy and related art submitted for publication on Thursday must be received no later than 4 p.m. Monday.

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THE BLACK PRESS

believes that America can best lead the world from racial antagonism when it accords to every man, regardless of race, creed or color, his human and legal rights. Hating no man, fearing no man... the Black Press strives to help every man in the firm belief that all men are hurt as long as anyone is held back.



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12 pages • 1 section

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Gospel, rock and roll, R&B innovator Sister Rosetta Tharpe examined in musical evening at freeFall Theater

BY J.A. JONES
Staff Writer

ST. PETERSBURG – Playwright George Brant's "Marie and Rosetta" at freeFall Theatre through Feb. 16 is a joyful examination of the musical genius and "mother" of rock and roll, gospel and blues – Sister Rosetta Tharpe – and her partnership with singer and pianist Marie Knight. Directed by Lydia Fort, the production triumphs with lean production values, successfully highlighting the easy, humorous, and soulful portrayals of the play's two characters by actors Illeana Kirven as Sister Rosetta and Hillary Scales-Lewis as Marie Knight. It deserves mention upfront that both actors sing and play piano and guitar themselves, lending to an authentic concert-feel throughout. In her director's note, Fort states, "Growing up, I knew that while Elvis was lauded as the progenitor of Rock 'n' Roll, Little Richard, and Chuck Berry were there leading the way in its nascent stage. It was a source of pride to know that African Americans had a significant impact in the birth of this remarkable musical genre. But now we know that Sister Rosetta

Tharpe, a Black woman, was, in fact, the real pioneer of that guitar sound we know as Rock 'n' Roll." Kirven's opening night performance was astonishing both because she had stepped into the role only four days earlier due to an emergency, as well as to her flawless performance of a lovely and gutsy Tharpe. She convincingly reveals Tharpe's deeply held belief in both the power of gospel music alongside her insistence that joy is a vital component of communicating music's God-given power. Scales-Lewis' performance of Marie Knight's transformation from a humble gospel backup singer to Sister Rosetta's piano-playing, co-vocalist is remarkable. It is through Knight's obvious reluctance to "swing" – both her hips and on the piano – that we understand Tharpe's dilemma as a church-raised musician with a rhythm and blues soul, who scared off much of her gospel following through her musical bravado. As the duet's pianist, Scales-Lewis also played most of the evening's music. Kirven, as the guitar-wielding Tharpe, donned an electric guitar – that seemed as tall as she was – to strum and sing Tharpe's first true popular crossover hit, "Strange Things Happening Every Day." The first gospel to chart on Billboard's Harlem Hit Parade, the song was considered by some to be the very first rock and roll recording and serves as Tharpe's finale in the production. The play deals head-on with the racism Tharpe and Knight experienced on the road, including southern cruelties such as being forced to sleep in funeral homes since Jim Crow's abhorrent policies barred blacks from staying in hotels. In fact, the entire play's single set holds two caskets alongside the piano – symbolic not only of the dire circumstances which blacks of the period found themselves in, but also invoking the play's deeper spiritual themes: heaven, or one's "final resting place." However, the play's light-hearted attitude towards men and husbands, or "squirrels," seems to pass over the contemporary assertions of the love affair between Tharpe and Knight. Anyone who hadn't read or known about the romance – an open rumor within the gospel world of the time – probably wouldn't pick up any indication of sexual relations between the



two. Brant's writing only alludes to Tharpe's obvious attraction to Knight through general compliments about her beauty. It would probably necessitate prior knowledge of the suspected affair to read much into the production's few moments of intense gazing, gentle hand-holding, and a kiss that, because of its timing, belies any clear reference to more than a close friendship. The play refers to some of Tharpe's real-life fans such as Elvis Presley and indicates that an up-and-coming Mahalia Jackson was waiting in the wings to steal Tharpe's singular status as the most popular female recording star of her day. Since the play's 2016 premiere, Tharpe was posthumously inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in 2018. In recent years, much has been made of Tharpe's impact on almost every recording giant that came alongside or after her, including Chuck Berry, Johnny Cash, Aretha Franklin, Little Richard and Eric Clapton, to name only a few. Please hurry up and catch this easy-to-love evening of show-tapping sounds and delightful performances before it moves to Gainesville' Hipodrome Theatre (which co-produced the play with freeFall)! "Marie and Rosetta" is at freeFall Theatre, 6099 Central Ave., St. Petersburg, until Sunday, Feb. 16. Call 727-498-5205 or visit freefalltheatre.com. To reach J.A. Jones, email jjones@theweekly-challenger.com

Are you interested in being a radio guest?

Radio Personality Princess Denise Wright of Matters of the Heart Radio Ministry is looking forward to you being a guest on her global radio broadcasting network on 99.1 FM JAMS. Matters of the Heart Radio Ministry has been broadcasting for the past 16 years locally


and internationally, all the way into Jamaica. For additional information about scheduling a guest interview or promoting your business, book, music cd or non-profit organization, please contact me 727-488-8818 or princessdenise.8818@yahoo.com

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WE ENCOURAGE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Education, Entrepreneurship, and Empowerment of African American Communities

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
JERRY BELL

Jerry Bell is an entrepreneur, philanthropist and highly respected leader in the Tampa Bay African American community. He is founder and CEO of Bell IT Company based in Tampa Florida, and an Oracle licensing expert.


In 2016, Mr. Bell was a founding member of the Black Leadership Network (BLN) at USF. Through scholarships and mentoring programs, the BLN enhances educational, mentoring, professional development, and leadership opportunities for African American students at USF.



FEBRUARY 4, 2020
9:30 A.M. - 4:15 P.M.

Panelists will discuss their roles in providing educational and leadership opportunities for African American students through scholarships, mentoring programs, and internships.

This event is sponsored by:



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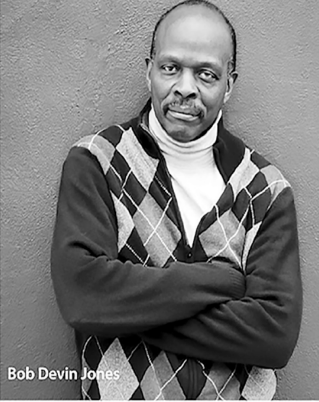
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For special accommodations, contact Dr. Fenda Akiwumi by January 28.

SHORT & SWEET THEATRE WEEK

USF ST. PETERSBURG

USFSP Theatre Week Preview Performance



BLACK WITNESS: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JAMES BALDWIN

A compiled play written and performed by Bob Devin Jones

February 11 at 2:30pm


USFSP Harbor Hall, 1000 3rd St. S. Community Room • Free and open to the public

Although he spent a great deal of his life abroad, James Baldwin always remained a quintessentially American writer. He never ceased to reflect on his experience as a black man in white America. In numerous essays, novels, plays and public speeches, the eloquent voice of James Baldwin spoke of the pain and struggle of black Americans and the saving power of brotherhood.

The paradox of education is precisely this—that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated. I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually. —James Baldwin

About Bob Devin Jones
A native of Los Angeles, Bob has been a theatre worker for more than 30 years. He began as an actor performing in Shakespeare festivals in Oregon,

California, Illinois, Idaho and St. Petersburg's American Stage Shakespeare in the Park. For the past 10 years, he has worked in the theatre primarily as a playwright and a director. A graduate of Loyola Marymount University, he attended the American Conservatory in San Francisco as well as the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England. Bob co-founded The Studio@620 in 2004. Its mission is to bring together people from various cultural backgrounds and experiences as artists, audience members and volunteers. Bob is a recipient of numerous awards and grants, including the Bank of America's Hero Award in 2005; Weekly Planet's Best of the Bay—Directing in 2001 and Playwright 2002; Theatre Communication Group (TCG) Artist Collaborative Los Angeles; Florida Department of Cultural Affairs; and Florida Humanities Council.



UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA
ST. PETERSBURG

Presented by USFSP Places, Spaces and Arts in conjunction with the Department of Verbal and Visual Arts, Dr. Julie Buckner Armstrong and the students of AML 4300

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. celebrates 100 years

ST. PETE BEACH – The members of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., are excited to announce they turned 100 years old on Jan. 16. Helping local chapter members celebrate their centennial, chapters of the Divine 9 were present at the Dolphin Beach Resort last Thursday. Founded by five women on Jan. 16, 1920, on the campus of Howard University, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. members

focus on scholarship, service, sisterhood and finer womanhood. The Jan. 16 celebration of local chapter Zeta Gamma Zeta featured a program honoring some of the sorority members, a tribute to their founders, speakers and other entertainment. This international sorority focuses on social causes that include the March of Dimes, Relay for Life, elder care, youth involvement, and many

other worthy causes to aid the community, the country and the world. The international centennial celebration was also held in Washington, D.C., last week, while founder's day, a week of business, and another celebration will be held in the nation's capital this coming June. Lisa Wilson, St. Pete native and veteran Pinellas County teacher, serves as Zeta Gamma Zeta's president.



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Vision for Humanity in 2020

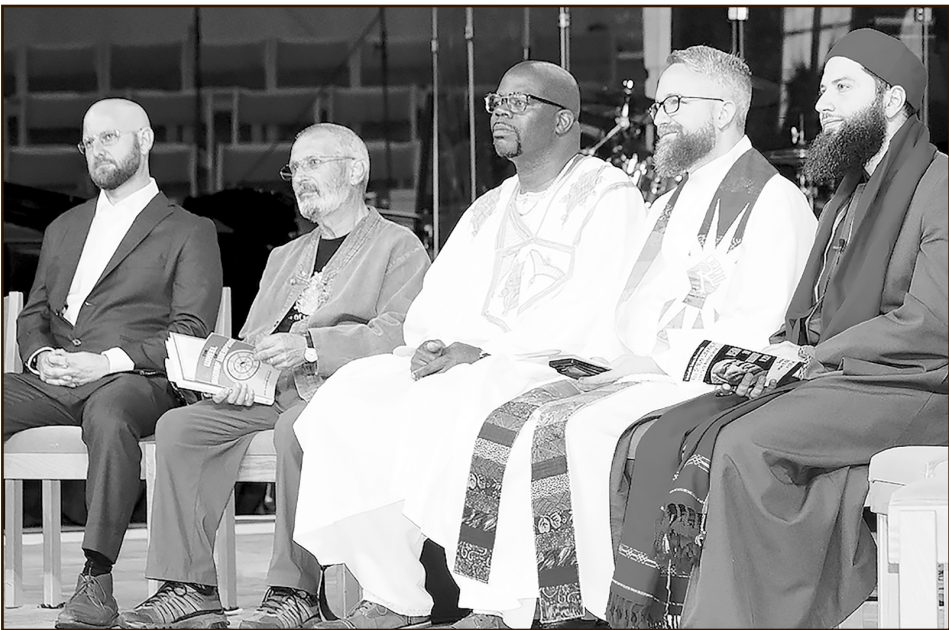
VISION, from front page

Council on American-Islamic Relations Florida. "The only thing that separates you is your service to others, your sincere actions." Shibly believes regardless of religious denomination, if worshippers were to combine their traditions and learn to interact with each other, humanity would be better off. By choosing to love others as we would ourselves or our children, society will see fewer disagreements and instead create a source of passion that can work toward the betterment of humanity. He took the discussion one step further and proposed it wasn't enough to not be racist, a statement that rings true with Dr. King's message that it isn't the words of our enemies that we remember, but the silence of our friends. "If you are truly antiracist, what are you doing to fight racism day

in and day out," he asked. "Today is not only a reminder of the beauty of our diversity, but it's also a reminder that sacrifice is a necessary price to pay to protect our ability to celebrate diversity." Shibly believes people are tested with the freedom to be racist, to oppress, to hurt and be greedy because that also means they have the opportunity to sacrifice by fighting racism, poverty, and injustice in the world. "When we are willing to sacrifice, we can do what it takes to create the change that is needed to make the world a better place." Shibly urged those in attendance to bring their daughters, sons, and grandchildren to the event next year so they can be educated in the history of how many sacrificed not only their sweat and blood but also their life to bring about equality. To be able to

drink from the same water fountains, eat at the same table as whites, and sit where they wanted on public transportation were the building blocks to the dream of true equality. Readings and prayers for peace, justice, love, and hope came from Rev. Andy Oliver, pastor of Allendale United Methodist Church (Christian), Rabbi Philip Weintraub, congregation B'Nai Israel (Jewish), Rev. Dr. Frank Tedesco (Buddhist), Sepideh Eskandari, Baha'i Community and Rob Howland, St. Petersburg Meeting (Quaker). Courtney Erickson, co-founder of Sew Much Hope, was this year's recipient of the annual love offering (passing the plate). Her organization is a community group and social enterprise founded on the principles of social justice and the necessity of hope for all.

Sew Much Hope is a co-op made of women who are refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and the volunteers who have taught them how to sew. They all work together to make and sell women's accessories such as totes, purses and necklaces made from upcycled items. Even though they just recently started selling their products, the group has been meeting for more than two years, practicing sewing skills needed to launch their business concept, practicing English and building friendships.



The offering was earmarked for the organization, but one of its member's 11-year-old brother was hit by a car last Friday. He sustained a broken back, and as of Sunday was in intensive care.

The Sew Much Hope member belongs to a single-parent household where the mother recently lost her job. Since the family is in desperate need to cover basic necessities, proceeds from the collection went to a fund

to help the family. Closing remarks were given by Imam Abdul Karim Ali of the Tampa Bay Area Muslim Association, and songstress Keisha Prime provided musical presentations.



First Baptist of St. Petersburg Associate Pastor John Rice



Councilwoman Deborah Figg-Sanders presided over the afternoon.



Keisha Prime provided two musical presentations.

Opportunities to participate in Literacy Week

PINELLAS COUNTY – Part of a statewide campaign to promote the importance of early literacy, the Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas (ELC) celebrates “Literacy Week” in Pinellas the week of Jan. 27-31.

Community leaders, philanthropists and volunteers are invited to read with the county’s youngest learners at more than 300 preschools throughout the county. As part of this celebration, the ELC will be donating hundreds of books to early learning providers.

“Nowadays, children are expected to start kindergarten with basic reading skills. Without

fostering this skill during their earliest formative years, we risk our community’s children struggling as they enter the school system,” said Rosa Rivera, director of community engagement. “We hope that the enthusiasm for books and reading shown by our guest readers positively influences the children we support.”

If interested in reading: ELC hosts guest readers at various sites throughout the week, with each visit approximately 30 minutes. Readers include local philanthropists, business and nonprofit leaders, elected officials, first responders and more. For information, contact

Camille Eckrem, quality programs supervisor at CEckrem@ELCPinellas.org or 727-400-4457.

If interested in sponsoring: Help the ELC purchase books for childcare providers and support efforts to enhance early education. For information, contact Rosa Rivera, director of community engagement at 727-400-4430 or RRivera@ELCPinellas.org. “Raising Readers” explains that the development of “early literacy skills makes it easier for children to learn to read. Children who enter school with these skills have an advantage that carries with them throughout their school years. However, more



than 1 in 3 American children enter kindergarten without the skills they need to learn to read.”

The Early Learning

Coalition of Pinellas County is a nonprofit agency focused on high-quality early care and education – working with families and childcare providers to prepare children to enter kindergarten ready to succeed – in school and in life.

TREY MCLAUGHLIN & THE SOUNDS OF ZAMAR

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JAN 22 - FEB 23, 2020

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ST. PETE CELEBRATES DR. KING




COMMUNITY NEWS

34th annual MLK Leadership Awards Breakfast

AWARDS, from front page





Life's most persistent and urgent question is,

‘What are you doing for others?’

Martin Luther King, Jr.

34th annual MLK Leadership Awards Breakfast

AWARDS, from front page

“I want you to serve. Serve in the name of Dr. King; served in the name of your city of opportunity, serve in the name of kindness, compassion and empathy.”

Thelma Bruce, president of the Metropolitan Section of NCNW, echoed Mayor Kriseman, saying she hopes the remembrance of Dr. King will be a catalyst to stir people into the action of service.

Local historian, columnist, and president of the St. Petersburg African American Heritage Association Gwendolyn Reese took over the reins as mistress of ceremony. She weaved historical factoids and personal experience throughout the morning, which helped the program transition effortlessly.

“I truly wish that you

could see what I see when I look out in this room. Not that many years ago, I would not have had the same picture I have today. Not that many years ago, black people could not come to the Coliseum, but thanks to Dr. Martin Luther King, his work, his life, we are now sitting here together.”

Keynote speaker Assistant Professor of Theology and African American Religion at Yale University Divinity School Rev. Dr. Eboni Marshall-Turman noted how tenuous black lives are in a country that values them so little.

She said as we celebrate the life and love of Dr. King, we have to remember that the same logic of white supremacists and Christian nationalism that shot him “down

like a dog on a Memphis balcony” is still in existence today.

Marshall-Turman recited stark statistics that proves America still has, what the 1903 book of essays by prominent black writers called, “A Negro Problem.”

For instance, one-third of American children live in poverty, and although African Americans constitute roughly 13 percent of the U.S. population, 40 percent of those children living in poverty are black.

She said our children are threatened by educational apartheid in the year 2020 that nullifies Brown v. Board of Education when “white flight and the privatization of American education – much like the privatization of the prison indus-

trial complex – have left poor children who are disproportionately black and brown in separate and unequal educational facilities” that are overtasked, understaffed and underfunded.

Those same overtasked, understaffed, and underfunded schools are targets for the school-to-prison pipeline that uses their data to project how many prison beds they’ll need in the future.

Statics prove that African Americans do not commit the most crimes, take or sell the most drugs, sell the most guns, and are not the most violent offenders. Yet, black people are over-represented in America’s prison system.

Marshall-Turman asked if anyone has read the U.S. Constitution,

where it says slavery has been abolished except for reason of punishment for a crime.

“The fact of the matter is that there are more black people in jail today than were enslaved in the 1860s,” she said.

She listed a number of young black men and women who are now household names because of the way they were killed such as 17-year-old Trayvon Martin for walking home from the store, 17-year-old Jordan Davis for listening to music in his car, 19-year-old Renisha McBride for seeking help after a car accident and Eric Garner for being asphyxiated while being arrested for apparently no reason.

Marshall-Turman likened those modern deaths to the 1955 slaying

of 14-year-old Emmett Till for looking a white woman in the face; the three young girls killed in the 1963 16th Street Baptist Church bombing, Jimmie Lee Jackson for attending a peaceful voting rights march and “thousands of unnamed negroes lynched from the redwood forests to the gulf stream waters.”

“When you compound the realities of our time... our children are hungry, when they go to unequal schools, they have been targeted by the evil machination of a prison industrial complex that has already incarcerated many of their loved ones, while living in a community where black lives do not matter,” Marshall-Turman preached.



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The 37th annual MLK Essay Contest

ESSAY, from front page

Leadership Breakfast, the MLK Candlelight Vigil, Interfaith Memorial Service, and of course, the MLK Essay and Oratorical Contest — all of which are going strong today.

Students from schools all across St. Pete are encouraged to send entries in each year. More than 100 submissions are typically received, read through and whittled down to a handful.

Judges Arcilous Mincey, Hillsborough County School educator, Shelia Lamb, retired educator, Jacquilin Wallace, retired educator and Sepideh Eskandari,, Esq. had a difficult task choosing a winner. All five finalists were on top of their games, had done their research, and were passionate about the subject.

Alexandrea Marie

Neely, a ninth-grader at Gibbs High School, took top prize for her outlook on the prompt: If Rev. King had 20/20 vision into the future, which of his principles do you think he would consider most relevant to present-day immigration issues and why?

She chose to highlight his second principle, which focuses on the art of nonviolence and how it cultivates friendship and understanding, with the result being redemption and reconciliation. Nonviolent interactions, according to Dr. King, will bring about the creation of the Beloved Community.

Today, King’s second principle holds relevance concerning modern-day immigration practices.

“The struggle of immigrants is often overlooked

and misunderstood,” said Alexandria. She believes seeking a broader understanding of personal hardships is the first step in solving many of the country’s most prominent political debates.

“Instead of compassion, they are greeted with the promise of tearstained pillowcases as they are put indefinitely into confinement.”

For her efforts, she was awarded the \$200 grand prize, the chance to showcase her oratorical skills once more at the Interfaith Memorial Service held last Sunday at First Baptist Church of St. Petersburg and two tickets to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Breakfast held on Monday at the Coliseum.

The first runner up, Jack Gaultier, received

\$100; Victoria Hunter, the second runner up, took home \$75. Fourth place went to Jamie Flournoy, and fifth place went to A.J. Pope.

Entertainment for the evening was provided by

creative dancer Soraiya Edwards, a student at James B. Sanderlin IB World School.

Sponsors for the event included Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Theta Eta Lambda Education Foun-

dation, City of St. Petersburg Parks and Recreation Department, the St. Petersburg Police Department Forfeiture Grant Program, the Packer Family Foundation and others.



Alexandrea Marie Neely giving her award-winning speech at the Interfaith Memorial Service held last Sunday at First Baptist Church.



Judges (L-R) Shelia Lamb, Jacquilin Wallace, Sepideh Eskandari and Arcilous Mincey



(L-R) A.J. Pope, Jack Gaultier, Alexandria Marie Neely, Victoria Hunter, Jamie Flournoy

CHURCH NEWS

10 THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2020

www.theweeklychallenger.com

The Weekly Challenger



955 20th Street South • St. Petersburg, FL 33712
(727) 894-4311
Email: info@mzprogressive.org
Website: www.mzprogressive.org

Sunday Worship Services.....7:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School.....9:00 a.m.
Wednesday Mid-Day Bible StudyNoon - 12:30 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Service6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study6:30 p.m.

Youth Chapel Services - 921 20th Street South
Sunday Worship Service10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Small Group Bible Study6:30 p.m.

Mission Statement:
*Impact the world by equipping believers
to reach the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ.*



Rev. Louis M. Murphy Sr.
Senior Pastor

First Baptist Institutional Church
3144 Third Avenue South,
St. Petersburg, FL 33712
Phone: 727-323-7518

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Praise Time 10:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
Tuesday Night Live -
Prayer Service & Bible Study 7 p.m.

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PASTOR

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Telephone (727) 327-0554 • Fax (727) 327-0240
E-mail: bchurch5@tampabay.rr.com Web site: www.bmmbc.org

Sunday Worship Service10:15 a.m.
Sunday School9:00 a.m.
Teen Summit (Wednesday)7:00 p.m.
Bible Study (Wednesday)7:00 p.m.



Rev. Rickey L. Houston,
Pastor

“God’s House To The City”

BETHEL COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
2901 - 54th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL. 33712
(727) 866-2567

SERVICES
Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.
Mid-Week Worship: Wednesday 7:00 p.m.



Rev. Dr. Manuel L. Sykes



The Rev. Josie Rose,
Priest-in-Charge


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MATTHEW 28:18-20, JOHN 15:4-5

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FAITH MEMORIAL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE 9:00AM
SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL 9:30AM
SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE 10:45AM
TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY 7:00PM



REV. ROBERT A. VINSON, JR.



Rev. Wallace Elliott
Sr. - Pastor

First Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church
1121 22nd Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33712
(727) 327-8708

Sunday Worship Services 8:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Prayer Meeting (Tuesday)6:00 p.m.
Bible Study (Tuesday)7:00 p.m.
Baptist Training Union (Sunday) ..4:00 p.m.

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Schedule of Services
Sunday Worship*
10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study* -7:00 p.m.
Friday Prayer -7:00 p.m.
Intercessory Prayer - 9:00 a.m.
(except Wednesdays)

Victory Christian Center is a Word of Faith Church.
For more information about the other services and
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Sunday Bible Class (All Ages)8:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship9:45 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship6:00 p.m.
Ladies Bible Class Monday7:00 p.m.
Monday Evening Bible Class7:00 p.m.
Wednesday Morning Bible Class10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Evening Bible Class7:00 p.m.

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St. Petersburg, FL 33712

Helping People Live Healthy, Prosperous, and Meaningful Lives

Sunday Worship Service 10:00 A.M.
Spiritual Living Class—Wednesday 1:00 P.M. & 7:15 P.M.

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INSPIRATIONS
BY DIERDRE DOWNING-JACKSON

Keep Trusting in God

Keep trusting in GOD as you journey through;
Life's ups and downs, HE will see you through.
Keep trusting in GOD as our Ancestors did;
They trusted in HIS promises and survived the
grid.
Of a life of pain and torment, a life unjust and
cruel;
Trusting their faith in GOD, knowing their
strength would be renewed.
Keep trusting in GOD and your faith will be
strong.
Our Forefathers trusted in GOD, we heard
strength in their songs.
Songs of hope and faith that our GOD was still
there;
Watching and holding them with HIS gentle care.
Keep trusting in GOD, we have come from so far;
Our faith is in JESUS and our strength is in our
GOD.
Keep trusting in GOD, let the Holy Spirit guide
you;

Allow peace and HIS grace to always rest upon
you.
The shoulders we stand on prove that truth sets
you free;
A mind stayed on JESUS is what one must be.
Keep trusting in GOD, for HIS promises are true;
Keep hoping in GOD, HE will make you brand
new.
Only HE can set all captives free;
Keep trusting in GOD with HIS grace and mercy.
Teach our children GOD's wisdom while we are
in this place.
We are grateful to realize the blessing of being,
GOD's delivered and chosen race"
Keep Trusting in GOD with steadfast faith.
Keep Trusting in GOD
HE will honor your faith."
AMEN
“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord.”
Jeremiah 17:7 KJV

**UNITY**
EST. 1957
511 Prescott Street South St. Petersburg, FL 33712
Email: Unitytruth1957@gmail.com

Presents

Upcoming Events and Classes

Prayer and Meditation Service
Restarting Wednesday Night, February 5, 2020, at 6:00pm

The service will include:

- ♥ A Time to relax and connect with the God of your understanding
- ♥ A different Meditation Team each week
- ♥ Different types of meditation - guided, breath, walking, bowls etc.
- ♥ A time of silence and quiet reflection
- ♥ Prayer team members available for prayer after the service

The service is offered on a love offering bases.
If you would like to serve as a meditation leader or provide quiet music to support the
meditation, please contact: Rev. Linda McLeod at (727) 898-2457

Bible Study with Metaphysical Interpretation
Starting Thursday Night, February 6, 2020, 6:00pm

Bring your Bibles and questions about the Bible and the Scriptures.

Please contact: Rev. Linda McLeod at (727) 898-2457 for more information

“Prayer and Meditation Practices” Class
Classes offered on Wednesdays, starting February 6, 2020,
at 1:30pm for 5 weeks

Learn different meditations techniques to quiet the mind and be in the silence.

Please contact: Rev. Linda McLeod at (727) 898-2457 for more information

CHURCH NEWS

The Weekly Challenger

www.theweeklychallenger.com

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2020 **11**

ST. MARK MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

1301 - 37th Street South, St. Petersburg, FL
(727) 321-6631 • www.stmarkch.org

Schedule of Services

Church School..... 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
Baptist Training Union..... 5:00 p.m.
Prayer Meeting and Bible Study
Wednesday 7:00 p.m.



Rev. Brian K. Brown

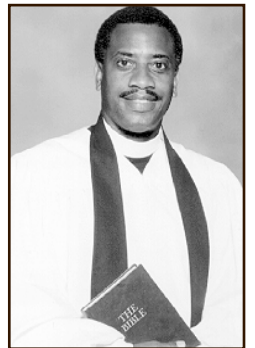
THE ROCK OF JESUS MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

SUNDAY SERVICES/WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

10:30 a.m. Worship Service
9:00 a.m. Breakfast (First Sunday only)
9:30 a.m. Sunday School (First Sunday Only)
Sunday School 9:15 a.m. / Devotion 10:15 a.m.
Praise & Worship 10:20 a.m. / Worship Services 10:30 a.m.
Saints of Prayer - Monday 12:00 noon
Weekly Bible Study - Tuesday 6:30 p.m.
Adult Choir Rehearsals - Thursday 6:30 p.m.

Van service is available by calling: (727) 327-0015

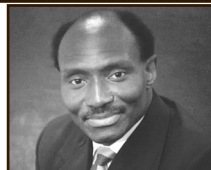
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Rev. Frank W. Peterman, Jr.
Pastor

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church

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(727) 906-8300 www.fmbctheship.net
Email: fmbc3300@verizon.net



Dr. John A. Evans, Pastor

WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

Sunday Worship.....7:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
WednesdayNoonday Wednesday in the Word and Bread of Life
7:00 p.m. Prayer and Wednesday in the Word
7:00 p.m. Youth Enrichment

Our Mission: Friendship Missionary Baptist Church is a family of believers in Christ, reaching out to the world, preaching the gospel to the unsaved and teaching the saved to serve by demonstrating the Love of Christ.

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SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP
9 AM | Centering Service
10:30 AM | Creative Expressions
Worship Experience

WEDNESDAY NIGHT WORD
6:30 PM | Mastermind Prayer
7 PM | Bible Study Class

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Church Office: (813) 450-2353

SUNDAY AFTERNOON WORSHIP
2 PM | Creative Expressions
Worship Experience

TUESDAY NIGHT
7 PM | Bible Study Class
MOC SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
8 PM | Courses Offered

Dr. Doral R. Pulley, Spiritual Leader | WWW.TODAYSCHURCHTAMPABAY.ORG

CHURCH NEWS

St. Mark MBC

When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? Nehemiah 2:10; 19

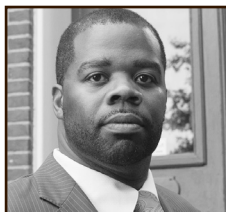
The new year brought a new series for the first quarter of 2020 from Pastor Brown entitled 'In 20'. Sunday's message asked the scripture text: 'What should we look out for that might stop our momentum in 20?' The text introduces us to the characters which give us answers to the question, 'Sanballat the Horonite', 'Tobiah the Servant and the Ammonite' and 'Geshem the Arabian'.

With these names Pastor Brown expounded on

these three things we need to look out for in '20' that might stop our momentum. The first thing we are to look out for is Sanballat. Sanballat's name refers to 'an enemy in secret'. In '20 Your Past Will Come Up. We should remember that all of us have a past and there may be those in our present who want to remind us of our past. In spite of this we must keep in mind that our past is dependent upon our present activity. Only we can change our past and it's up to us to overcome our past by changing what we do in our present. The second thing we are to look out for is 'Tobiah' and where Tobiah was from 'Ammon'. Tobiah means 'good' and Ammon means 'hidden one'. In '20 Your Pride Will Come Out. We were reminded that pride is in all of us and can get the best of us. Pride has the potential to wreck our future. Pride can make us think we have

something to prove. We can give people all the facts, but they still draw their own conclusions. Jesus is the only one to affirm our lives. Lastly, we need to look out for Geshem. Geshem means 'rain' which can bring unexpected problems. In '20 Some Problems Will Come In. Problems know all of us. We can't stop the rain from falling but we can make preparation for the rain. Problems come with life, but we can be grateful that we serve a God who knows how to manage problems. No matter what the problem may be, God is able to do all but fail. We need to stop fighting problems and give them over to God.

We invite you to begin your Sunday mornings with us in Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. and worship service at 10:45 a.m. Weekly bible studies are held on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.



Pastor's Corner

BY REV. DR. DORAL R. PULLEY,
SPIRITUAL LEADER
TODAY'S CHURCH Tampa Bay

Harmony, the King Legacy

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:6)."

Each person is a unique expression of God. Differences in personality, race, gender, culture, orientation, religion, family dynamics, educational level and socio-economic status exist for you to see the unity and equality of all people to create harmony in all relationships. You have more things in common with other people than in contrast with them. Getting to know others' uniqueness helps you discover how alike you really are.

Jesus Christ, as Wayshower, saw his oneness with the Samaritan Woman and Jacob's Well was the perfect place for them to meet (John 4:1-25). Traditionally, men and women of that time did not have one-on-one conversations unless they were re-

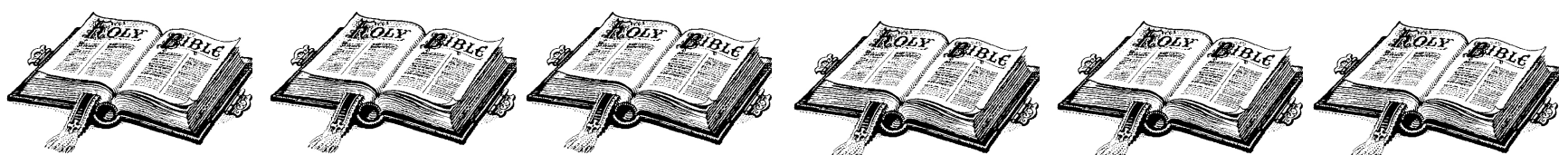
lated. Jesus did not let their gender differences stand in the way of them connecting. Although he was a Jew and she was a Samaritan, Jesus made a conscious choice to establish a rapport with her. He did not allow their religious differences to be a barrier to their relationship. Even though the woman had several sexual partners, Jesus did not allow her sexual experiences to be a wall between them. The Kingdom of God is a kingdom of unity and equality and Jesus is the king of that Kingdom. Jesus operated in this consciousness of harmony with the Samaritan woman and everyone he encountered. In his cry for liberation and cooperation with all, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. continued the legacy of the King of kings (1 Timothy 6:15).

You are exactly where you are supposed to be in every

area of your life. Based on upon your Divine Placement, your path intersects with other people. At the point of intersection, you have the choice to connect or to disconnect. When you choose to focus on the differences, connecting is a challenge. When you are conscious of the Truth that you are a spiritual being and that the same breath of God that is in you is in all humanity, you connect easily and create harmonious relationships with all people (Ephesians 4:1-6).

Reflection Question – What groups or groups of people are challenging for you to connect to? Why?

Connection Activity – Be aware of your path intersecting with someone who is obviously different from you. Make a conscious choice to have a conversation with that person to learn more about them.



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7TH ANNIVERSARY

"GOD CAN DO ANYTHING"

19 AND MY GOD WILL MEET ALL YOUR NEEDS ACCORDING TO
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SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2020

9:00 AM

GOSPEL JAZZ BRUNCH WITH JAZZ SAXOPHONIST
HANK ASHWOOD
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP

ATTIRE: AFRICAN GARMENTS OR CASUAL



GUEST PREACHER- DR. MANUEL SYKES,
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DR. DELCEDA WALKER,
PRAYERLINE MINISTRY COORDINATOR
REV. KENNETH IRBY, PASTOR

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Sunday, February 23 – Friday, April 10

YouTube

TodaysChurchTampaBay.org

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Sunday
2:00PM Creative Expression Service



St. Petersburg
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Sunday
9:00AM Centering Service
10:30AM Creative Expression Service

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A DECADE OF DARING


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**SIXTH ANNUAL
BLACK HISTORY MONTH
GALA**
CELEBRATING
BLACK EXCELLENCE

SATURDAY • FEBRUARY 8, 2020
6:00pm

ST. PETERSBURG COUNTRY CLUB
2000 Country Club Way South • St. Petersburg, FL 33712

THEME:
"THE CHALLENGES OF BLACK MEDICAL EDUCATION IN AMERICA"



KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. John E. Maupin
Past President of Meharry Medical College and Morehouse School of Medicine

HONOREES
Memorial to Dr. Paul McRae, First Black Chief of Medical Staff at Bayfront Hospital
Special Tribute to First Black Graduates of the University of Florida Medical School

FEATURING
Cash Bar, Hors d'oeuvres, Dinner, Music by John Lamb, Fred Johnson, and Hank Ashwood. All proceeds go to ASALH's Mission of Providing African-American History, Life, and Culture

\$65 per person
ASALH, Inc., POST OFFICE BOX 35504, St. Petersburg, FL 33705 • 727-642-3499

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St. Pete

STEAMfest

Ignite your imagination!

**Annual celebration of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art,
and Math in a free, family-friendly outdoor festival.**

Saturday, January 25 10am-2pm

Shorecrest Preparatory School 5101 1st St. NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33703

35+ BOOTHS INCLUDING:
Robotics Demonstrations
Hands-on Technology Exploration
Design and Engineering Challenges
Mad Scientist Games
Individual and Group Arts Activities
Dedicated Preschool Area for Young Children

** We love furry, four-legged friends, but they are not allowed on campus. Please keep pets at home.*

FEATURING



SPONSORED BY



**Admission is free with the donation of
a canned good or personal hygiene supplies
benefitting the St. Pete Free Clinic.**

**St. Petersburg
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For more info or to RSVP visit **www.stpetesteamfest.com**
or call 727-522-2111.

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