



Koinonia, Happy 42nd Church Anniversary!

2021 Theme
"Waiting to Be Restored"
Isaiah 40:31

NEW TIME
SUNDAY WORSHIP
SUNDAY SCHOOL 8:30 A.M.
WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M.

Volume 13, Issue 2
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THE VOICE FROM THE VILLAGE "THE JOURNEY CONTINUES"

Dr. Eric H. Jones, Founder/Senior Pastor



Each year on our anniversary we take the time to reflect on God, the journey, the people, and the struggles of our past. This is done so that the many years of our history will not be suppressed to the point that we forget to thank God for what we witnessed about Him, ourselves, and our fellowman. As we focus on our God who orchestrated this vision and empowered us to accomplish what has been done over the past forty-two years, it is important that we remember the impossibilities that were made possible and the enemies that He placed under our feet. God said to the chil-

dren of Israel in **Deuteronomy 6:20-21** "In the future, when your son asks you, What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you? tell him: **We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.**" The nature of the past must not be estimated by the difficulty or danger of the time, but by the importance of holding on until the end. When you consider the end of the vision, you will discover that each event of the past brightens as it nears the destination. The summation of all our up-and-down experiences during the years was designed to awaken impressions of the goodness of God. These were trials of obedience as well as chastisements for our sin. This month we celebrate 42 years of ministry.

It is a time to look back and wonder, a time to ponder the events of yesterday and think about how we got over. It is also a time to consider the God of our past. The God who did not immediately eliminate our struggles but yet fueled our belief with a faith that refused to quit. The God of our past encouraged us in the midst of our darkest hour as we sang songs that identified our struggle but also voiced our hope. Thank all of you who did not become weary in doing well. God knows your labor of love and in the end there will be great rewards and a crown of righteousness. The message to us after all these years is that **"PAIN AND STRUGGLE CANNOT BLOCK DIVINE DESTINY."**

**Koinonia Celebrating
BLACK HISTORY
365 days a year**



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- Rites of Passage
- Stroke and FAST
- More Than Conquerors

T.E.S.T.IFY

By Gisla Bush

"There is No Testimony Without a Test"



THE TEST: Do you acknowledge God in all your ways?

When my daughter was a teenager, she voiced her desire to become an architect. I was a bit skeptical since she did not appear to have the acumen and/or mindset for architecture. I often inquired with God about this desire and hoped that I was not influencing her in a way that was not aligned with God's will for her life. So, when she went to college she took the requisite classes and applied to the School of Architecture but was rejected. The rejection left her in a state of uncertainty. We contemplated her other interests but none fit her creative nature. Time was ticking to declare her major. Then, one morning my daughter called me from the university to tell me that a Q & A luncheon would be held at noon in the School of Architecture regarding a major in Urban Design and that the luncheon was open to the general public. I gathered the children and readied them for the event. Upon arrival, we were greeted by the presenter and awaited the arrival of other attendees.

To our astonishment, only my family was present, so we enjoyed the feast and all our questions were answered. When we left, we knew that this occasion was divinely prepared for my daughter and that this would be her major. From that day forward, it seemed that whatever she put her hands to regarding her major was successful.

My daughter was the youngest person ever to graduate from the Urban Planning Department and managed to receive a bachelor's degree with a minor and certification in Geographic Information Systems. She accomplished all this with academic honors in the span of three years. She became the "poster child" for the university's School of Urban Planning. Her blessings did not stop there. While other students were having difficulties in securing internships, my daughter, on the other hand, had no problem. The only issue was that all internship positions in that department were unpaid. However, it was conveyed to her that the internship position would be unpaid because it was for a college credit. Nevertheless, two weeks after my daughter began her internship, the director, impressed with her knowledge and abilities, deviated from the established norm and compensated her as an employee. Her three months agreement turned into a year-long paid internship. At the end of the one year, her boss created a position specifically for her and doubled her pay.

My daughter has been employed now for eight years with the same company and has enjoyed a continuous outpouring of blessings and favor. After she gave birth to her first child, she was required to work only one day in the office. A few months later, she was required to work exclusively from home due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Shortly thereafter, her employer reconfigured her position so as to warrant my daughter a substantial pay increase. Two weeks ago, she received an email calling for all employees to return to regular working status. My daughter was gravely concerned about her future working arrangements in light of the fact that her desire was to be home with her two children. She shared with me her ideas and talking points regarding the situation in that she was to meet with her boss the next day. She grappled with what she should and should not ask for and the way she should approach her boss without appearing ungrateful for their past accommodations and generosity. We had a lengthy conversation posing various scenarios when it dawned on me that God is in control, and it is He alone who knows tomorrow. It was obvious that we were leaning to our own understanding and not walking by faith. We had forgotten how God had clearly been directing her/our path for the last eight years. So, we ceased the foolish talk, changed our conversation, and acknowledged God's sovereignty and faithfulness in this situation. I reminded her not to limit God but rather ask God for whatever she willed, without compromise.

THE TESTIMONY: On the next day, she was ecstatic to share how God had shown Himself strong in her life. She reported that her boss allowed her to continue to work from home. The blessing did not end there. The boss said that she would not be required to work face to face with the public nor attend to the quick service task that was confining. She previously feared that she would be required to work with the public in person and not have the necessary flexibility that she needed in order to care for her two little ones. What makes the story more miraculous is that my daughter received all her heart's desires even the things she did not inquire about. It was as if the boss had read my daughter's mind and heart. Wow, God really can do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Ephesians 3:20.

FOOD FOR FAITH: God says in Proverbs 3:6 to acknowledge him in **ALL** our ways and He **SHALL** direct our path. Be anxious for nothing but in **EVERYTHING** by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. Philippians 4:6-7. For our Father knows the things we have need of before we even ask Him. Matthew 6:8. Imagine how many blessings we forfeit because we think we can figure life out apart from Him when He is the only one who knows the masterplan. It is imperative that we are mindful not to lean to our own understanding or we will certainly be lead by the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh and the pride of life. 1 John 2:16.



MORE THAN CONQUEROR'S MINISTRY

“THESE ARE THE TIMES THAT TRY MEN'S SOULS”

By Sister Gloria Knox

“These are the times that try men's souls” - Thomas Paine wrote these words in December 1776.

These same words can be used today, especially in this pandemic of Covid-19, where people are getting sick, dying and being killed. *“But know this that in the last days perilous times will come; for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” (2nd Timothy 3:1-5).*

Are we as Believers pulling away from the service of God to inform people about Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ, this passage is not just for Americans, but the entire Universe? We are all going through every form of tyranny (over the mind of man), but like HELL—it's not easily conquered without the help of God in the Name of His Son Jesus the Christ. Know this, whatever we go through in Jesus' name, the more glorious the victory is for us. (**Romans 8:37**—*“In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us”*). Conquerors—It's Time to Get to Work!!!

There are people over this entire city, state, country and the world, that need our help to know Jesus the Christ. The essence of time is now to complete the work. (**Thessalonians 3:13**, *“As for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good.”*) There are an abundance of families—men, women and children that need help with their spiritual souls! God has given us the First Commission to go out and make disciples of me. In God's infinite wisdom, He created us for Himself that he may get the glory out of our lives. Will you not join us to fulfill THE DIVINE PURPOSE for getting the unchurched on the right track in Jesus Christ, Our Lord & Savior?

God wants us to help people come out of the darkness of sin and into His marvelous light of Jesus Christ. To show through His Word—the Truth, Obedience and Behavior. To change all negative thoughts, attitudes and deeds and replace them with positivity and most of all LOVE—love for themselves and for others unconditionally, disregarding status and possessions. God is searching for those who are unashamed of their past sinful behaviors, unsure of where their testimony might take them, as long as others will know they are not alone in whatever they went through or are going through. All of our help only comes from God through His Son, Jesus Christ. How will they know if we don't or won't tell them!

More Than Conqueror's Members—we have not arrived. We are still working out our salvation with fear and trembling. (**Romans 7:21**—*“I find this law at work; when I want to do good, evil is right there with me, but I delight in the way of God with the spirit of Him that's in me.”*) The More Than Conqueror's Ministry has made an impact in the transformation of people's lives in the name of Jesus Christ. Today, in this age, what we are enduring is only a TEST! Where is our faith? Is it in God or what the world says? As believers, we must be who God created us to be and we must do what God created us to do. For example, in the Bible, the Disciples of 2000 years ago surrendered their lives to complete the work of Salvation. If you are a believer, your sins have been forgotten—please MOVE ON!

THIS IS WHERE MORE THAN CONQUEROR'S MINISTRY IS TODAY; THIS IS ALSO A CONFIDENTIAL MINISTRY WITH RULES AND GUIDELINES ONE MUST ADHERE TO!

MORE THAN CONQUEROR'S IS AN ATMOSPHERE OF CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE AND SUPPORT FOR (ANYONE) THAT IS EXPERIENCING LIFE-HINDERING ISSUES SUCH AS: STRESS, DEPRESSION, UNFORGIVENESS, ANGER, ABUSE (INCLUDING ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND CO-DEPENDENCY).

ROMANS 8:37—*“Yet in all things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”* To be more than conquerors is to live beyond the limitations of how people would label us, categorize or belittle us.

ARE YOU WILLING TO JOIN US?

Views From the Catbird Seat

Join Alvin C. Romer for commentary about life and faith in the African-American Diaspora.



The Passage of Rites Legitimizing Change By Deacon Alvin C. Romer

A wise man once said, "The only constant in life is change." This statement has more meaning than what would be seen on the surface, especially relative to matriculating to another level of maturation. Alas, throughout human history, rituals were developed marking the most profound of moving celebrations from one strata to another be it birth, transformation to adulthood, holy matrimonial ceremonies, and even death. They all signify rites of passages that are essential achievements for individuals and their communities. The 'community' depicted in this article is none other than our village right here. Different social norms have ways in allowing change to identify who is to be changed and what process it includes, if not lost altogether.

I preface all of the aforementioned to illustrate our recent Koinonia Rites of Passage program where the need acknowledging life's changes remains a constant in our mindset for young adults in their transformation. Titled, The Village: United and In Harmony, caters relatively to **Proverbs 22:6's** 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' Know that it adheres also to the young ladies as well. In 1995 the brainstorm culminated from an Afrocentric model and brought to fruition by **Pastor Willie Johnson** with an endorsement from the late, erudite Pastor, **Joe Smith**. In the twenty-six years since, it has evolved with a constant purposeful vigil for valued emanation.

This year's version had all of the pomp and circumstance of past affairs with one main important entity—the inclusion of the distaff gender where the Young Ladies Ministry was prominently showcased with their representative, **Nancie Juliana Rodriguez**. Dashing and no less debonair were **Michael Bhairo** and **Ethan Flanders** as Distinguished Gentlemen of note. All of the recipients are bound to allegiances signifying the passing of the rites with the young ladies' **YOU**-uniqueness pledge and the distinguished gentleman's Oath of Manhood. As per annum, the program instituted the principles of Kwanzaa adaptations where the emphasis are, and has always been on Afrocentric pride and self-awareness.

What better way for change to legitimize going forward in life than incorporating a sense of Purpose, having Unification with their true heritage, the importance of Faith initiatives, how Creativity is essential to the thought process, where Cooperative Economics should be par for their eminent domain speaking volumes for continuity and commitment going forward. Know that a village divided will stand for nothing if harmonious intent and unity is compromised. With this in mind we, individually and collectively, have challenges in not wavering in all attempts to bridge gaps above troubled waters so that any bridge between both camps is for one purpose.

Our church is now getting back to strength despite hovering concerns due to pandemic perils. Change is necessary in any endeavor making sure the village is sustainable and viable for all concerned...this means we have to circle the wagons where the body of Christ can aid and abet whatever needs to be done as long as faith is inherent and God is at the center! The beginning and end of any worthwhile sense of purpose determines the outcome for all concerned; if this is the case, let's be cognizant of this. When rites are passed for our youth and young adults, we need to be charged spiritually and with due diligence ready to do our part for their growth and support.



HEALTHY IS AS HEALTHY DOES

Health Tips and Advice by Sara M. Snell

What Does a Stroke Feel Like? Warning Signs and More

Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, according to the National Stroke Association, as written by LaShandra Gordan and reviewed by Dr. S. Han M.D. Since people don't know the symptoms of a stroke, they may ignore them and delay seeking treatment. Also, stroke symptoms are not painful, so you may not realize that you're experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency.

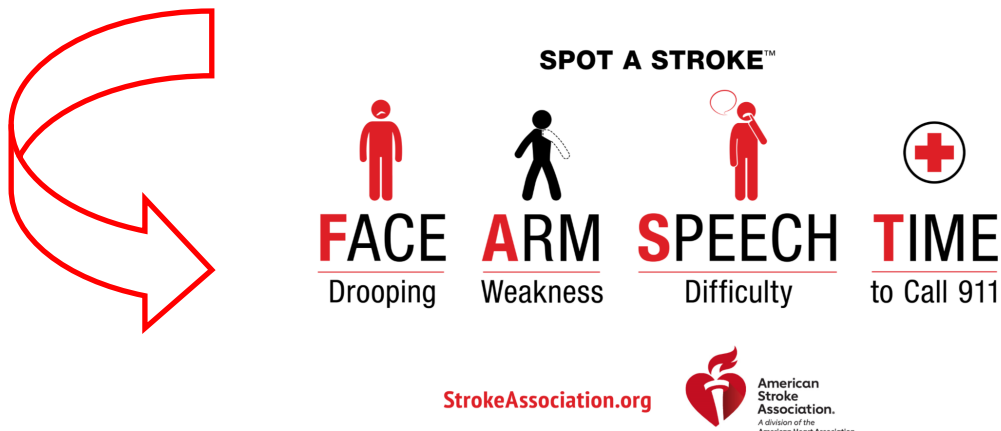
If you think you are having a stroke, there are classic symptoms you can look for. These happen suddenly, and include:

- ◆ Trouble speaking or understanding
- ◆ Trouble walking or maintaining balance
- ◆ Drooping or numbness on one side of the face
- ◆ Weakness or numbness on one side of the body
- ◆ Difficulty seeing through one or both eyes
- ◆ Severe headache

A characteristic of all stroke symptoms is that they began suddenly and are severe. If you are with someone or not, please call 911 or your local emergency services immediately.

The National Stroke Association recommends an easy strategy to help you, if you think someone is having a stroke.

Remember to Act FAST.



THE AMOUNT OF TIME THAT PASSES BEFORE RECEIVING TREATMENT IS CRITICAL.

According to the American Heart Association, every minute is important. Lack of oxygen and nutrients will cause the brain cells to die. When those cells die, the body functions that are controlled by those cells are lost, such as walking and speaking.

Bottom line. Your ability to recognize symptoms and seek emergency care for yourself or others can significantly improve the outcome.

Proverbs 3:13 says, "Happy is the man that finds wisdom and gets understanding."

HOW WE RISE

Systemic racism and America today

Unaddressed systemic racism, in my mind, is the most important issue in the United States today. And it has been so since before the founding of our nation.

Slavery was America's "original sin." It was not solved by the framers of the U.S. Constitution, nor was it resolved by the horrendous conflict that was of the American Civil War. It simply changed its odious form and continued the generational enslavement of an entire stratum of American society. In turn, the Civil Rights Movement struck a mighty blow against racism in America, and our souls soared when Dr. King told us he had a dream. But we were and still are far from the "promised land." And even when America rose up to elect its first Black President, Barack Obama, we may indeed have lost ground as a collective nation along the way, as on the night of Barack Obama's inauguration, a group of top GOP luminaries quietly gathered in a Washington steakhouse and formed a united front in which "the single most important thing they wanted to achieve was for President Obama to be a one-term president." The set of ideals and rhetoric that followed, spawned the Tea Party movement, Birthers' rhetoric, antigovernment sentiment, Trump election, intensified intolerance, broad division, misrepresentation of facts, Trump loss, and a riotous assault on the U.S. Capitol. While there have been other instances of violence at the Capitol in the 19th and 20th centuries, that event was the most severe assault on the building since the 1814 burning of Washington City by the British Army during the War of 1812.



That is our legacy as Americans, and in many ways, the most hateful remnants of slavery persist in the U.S. today in the form of systemic racism baked into nearly every aspect of our society and who we are as a people. Indeed, for those tracing their heritage to countries outside of Western Europe, or for those with a non-Christian belief system, that undeniable truth often impacts every aspect of who you are as a person, in one form or another.

The reality of this history has been on stark display in recent weeks. From the terrible killings of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery, to the countless, untold acts of racism that take place every day across America, these are the issues that are defining the moment – just as our response will define who we are and will be in the 21st century and beyond. Truly, the very nature of our "national soul" is at stake, and we all have a deep responsibility to be a part of the solution.

For us at Brookings, race, racism, equality, and equity are now matters of presidential priority. Addressing systemic racism is a key component of those efforts, with research also focusing on the Latino and Native American communities; faith-based communities, including our Jewish and Muslim communities; and the threat of white supremacy and domestic terrorism also playing a major role. It will also include work on the important need for comprehensive police reform, to include reform rooted in local community engagement and empowerment. We will not solve systemic racism and inequality over-night, and we have so much work ahead. But in a world where we often spend more time debating the nature of our problems than taking meaningful action, we must find ways to contribute however we can and to move forward as a community.

I firmly believe that we as Americans cannot remain silent about injustice. Inaction is simply unacceptable, and we have to stand up and speak out. And if our elected representatives and our elected leadership deny the problem, and refuse to act, then we must take on the responsibility of reform from the bottom up with special attention at the ballot box.

And especially for those Americans who may look like me – a white American male – or come from a similar background, action begins with reflection, and most importantly listening. It's also about elevating and supporting the voices of those traditionally underrepresented, or even silenced, throughout society. *How We Rise* is an absolutely critical part of that solution.

Excerpts derived from The Brookings Institution

GET YOUR LAUGH ON

COMEDY by Deacon Craig Smith



DIVERT YOUR COURSE

This is the transcript of an actual radio conversation of a US naval ship with Canadian authorities off the coast of Newfoundland in October 1995. Radio conversation released by the Chief of Naval Operation 10-10-95

Americans: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision.

Canadians: Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to the South to avoid collision.

Americans: This is the Captain of a US Navy Ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

Canadians: No... I say again, you divert YOUR course.

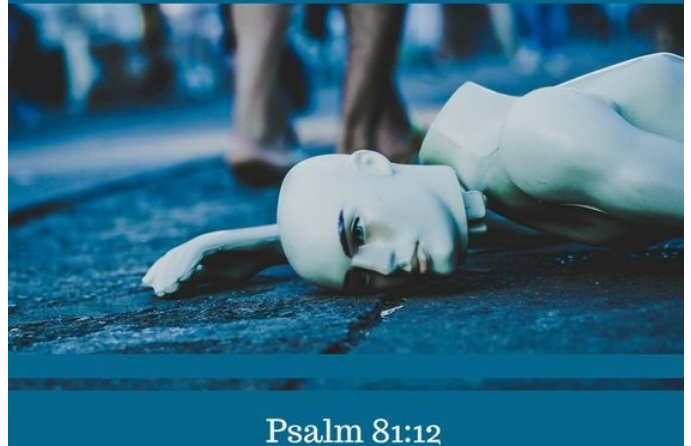
Americans: THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS LINCOLN, THE SECOND LARGEST SHIP IN THE UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET. WE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE DESTROYERS, THREE CRUISERS, AND NUMEROUS SUPPORT VESSELS. I DEMAND THAT YOU CHANGE YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH, THAT'S ONE FIVE DEGREES NORTH, OR COUNTER-MEASURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP.

Canadians: This is a lighthouse.... Divert YOUR course.

Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a
fall.

- Prov 16:18

So I let them go their own
stubborn ways and follow
their own advice



Psalm 81:12



**THE LIGHT NEWSLETTER
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*Our objective is to provide and distribute quality news
and reports on timely issues that relate to spiritual
matters pertaining to Koinonia's people and the
surrounding community at-large.*

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Truism - an undoubted or self-evident truth

**"EXPERIENCE IS NOT WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU; IT'S
WHAT YOU DO WITH WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU."**

~ ALDOUS HUXLEY



MORE + THAN CONQUERORS



We are currently meeting every other Friday on Zoom

NEW TIME: 6:45pm - 8:00pm

Meeting ID 294 414 4578 passcode 025325

For more information: Contact - Steven Williams, Interim Director