



St. John Trumpet

November 2011
Volume 6, Issue 2



The Pastor's Word!

Greetings in the High and Holy Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

I am thankful; I am satisfied; I am elated; I'm humbled and I am still excited to have been appointed to once again serve the greatest church in all Christendom. It has been a wonderful journey and truly I believe the best is yet to come. Ms. Mary and David join me in thanking each of you for your unconditional love, your overwhelming support and your tremendous spirit of servanthood.

This past conference year has been one in which we've had to become acclimated to a new building and space; we've met financial challenges; we've welcomed new parishioners as well as grieved the loss of others. We have been excited about new ministries and activities for our community. We have seen God moving in new ways and with all the many challenges, we've remained true to our mission and vision.

In January, 2012, St. John will begin a year of celebration of our 150 years in ministry and service to Aurora and to the larger community. Each month we have planned some exciting events ~ with the culmination of our celebration being held on November 16, 2012 at the Drury Lane Theatre in Oakbrook, IL. We want you to plan now to be in attendance as well as to invite your family and friends. It promises to be a great event.

Our theme for the year is: *"Remembering the Past; Celebrating the Now and Transforming the Future."* Great preachers have been selected, great entertainers are

expected to honor us with their presence ~ we're just planning an exciting year and your participation and support will be graciously appreciated.

I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the clergy staff and leadership of St. John, clerical staff, and Ms. Brewster, our editor, for your kindness shown throughout the year. I am blessed to have such a talented, resourceful and gifted team. Please know that you are valued and appreciated.

Lastly, as we enter into the seasons of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas, I am prayerful that you and your family will be tremendously blessed. We all have so much to thank God for ~ He has done great things! If you are traveling, we pray God's traveling mercies.

May God's blessing richly be with you, your family and loved ones.

Many Blessings,

Pastor Hawkins



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Letter from the Editor

Behold, St. John! We humbly submit for your review, this latest edition of the St. John Trumpet. We hope that this issue finds you and your family well and of good cheer. Our Father promised us that he will care for us during times of trouble and that we should not worry for he has overcome all obstacles that might come to pass.

“These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33 NIV

This is good news!! We must trust in the Lord that His plans for us that will surpass anything that our limited capacities could image. This truly is cause for celebration!

In the spirit of celebration, we have marked our first anniversary in our new edifice! Time flies, as the saying goes, and we are grateful and having an awesome time settling into our new space. Through steadfast leadership, Pastor Hawkins has gotten us to this point. With unspeakable gratitude, we must continue to do all that is within our power to grow the kingdom of God in the Aurora community and beyond. We all should work diligently to do our part in growing the membership of St. John. As Pastor would say, “each one, bring one!”

In this edition of the Trumpet, we enthusiastically report that Pastor Hawkins has received his 29th consecutive appointment as Pastor of St. John AME Church. Welcome back, Pastor! Within these pages, you will find that he has introduced new programs that are geared towards increasing the participation of St. John members in the life of the church. It is our prayer that these programs will appeal to potential new members as well as edify current St. John family members. Participation in St. John ministries is more important than ever. Each ministry is working towards developing relevant programs as the new season of study for all age groups and stages of spiritual maturation is underway. We have also included articles on celebratory activities planned for this and next year, commemorating the life of the oldest African American congregation in the western suburbs.

We trust that you will find something within this newsletter that not only is of interest to you, but also encourages you to get on board and join us in the activities and programs of St. John. Be a blessing!

Respectfully submitted,

Yours in Christ,
Sandra A. Hall-Brewster
Editor

St. John Trumpet Contributors

Rev. Brenda Jackson
..... Women’s Ministry
Sisters Circle

Beverly Campbell
..... Outreach Ministry
Hesed House Experience

Kimberly Hatchett and
Cathy Taylor
..... Crossroads Career Network

Charlotte Hazel
..... New Appointment

Thank you all ever so much!



Welcome Back, Pastor!

Praises and honor to our Lord and Savior for blessing us with the return of our beloved Pastor for the 29th consecutive year! The AME Church held its Leadership Conference at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Tinley Park, IL. Commencing on Tuesday, October 18, with the Chicago Annual Conference Women's Missionary Society ("WMS") Day, the Leadership Conference was a huge success. Presenting issues that are relevant to today's woman in her spiritual development, the WMS schedule included a series of healing stations, vendors and live productions. St. John, under the leadership of Ms. Mary Hawkins and Wendy Swims, hosted a station that explored the theme, "Resilient Faith." The evening featured the traditional WMS Night in White where life members were honored.

The conference ended on Sunday, October 23, where Fourth District Presiding Elders and Pastors were announced by Bishop Bryant. Pastor Hawkins received his 29th appointment to a rousing show of support from St. John members in attendance. We are so blessed to have our Pastor sojourn with us for another year!

St. John will be hosting the AME Church Mid-Year Conference, which will take place on Thursday, March 8 through Saturday, March 10. Mark your calendars and plan to be in attendance at this important event. Let us have a strong showing of St. John members at this conference.

149th Anniversary Celebration



On Sunday, November 20th, St. John will celebrate its 149th year anniversary! This is a momentous occasion as once again we are reminded that St. John holds the distinction of being the oldest African American congregation in the western

suburbs. We thank God for fulfilling the vision that was bestowed upon Pastor Hawkins as we celebrate this milestone in our magnificent facility. What a blessing!

Rev. Dr. William D. Watley, Senior Pastor, St. Phillip AME Church in Atlanta, GA 30317 has accepted St. John's invitation to be our preacher for the 9:30 AM worship service. Additionally, Dr. Watley will facilitate leadership training session scheduled for Saturday, November 19th. During this session, the leaders and clergy staff of our church will be motivated, encouraged and challenged as they partner with our Pastor to lead the St. John congregation to another level. It is imperative that we all are strengthened by persons of Dr. Watley's caliber to move continue to build the kingdom of God. We look forward to hosting Dr. Watley and being in the presence of his awesome leadership experience.

150th Anniversary Celebration

In 2012, St. John will celebrate 150 years of service to Christ and community. Our theme for this year-long celebration is "*Remembering the Past, Celebrating the Now, Transforming the Future.*"

St. John is planning several activities that will take place over the course of the year. Most notably, there will be a banquet celebration held in DuPage County with 1500 anticipated guests in attendance. St. John members should plan to be present at this banquet, which will be held on Friday, November 16, 2012. Save the date information will be available within the near future.

Please join us in this year of celebratory activities! We are working diligently to confirm guest speakers, requisite venues, and other logistical details to kick off and continue this celebration throughout 2012. More information to follow.

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"The Church at the Caring End of Ministry"

Religious Leader of the Year



Congratulations to Pastor Hawkins who was honored by the Mu Xi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. on Saturday, October 15, 2011 with the Religious Leader of the Year award. The award brunch was held at the Diplomat West in Elmhurst, Illinois. St. John was well represented at the brunch, in a show of support for our Pastor. Many St. John members who are also Omegas were present at this event as well.

The men of the Mu Xi Chapter presented Pastor Hawkins with a beautiful plaque, featuring the fraternity's signature colors of purple, black and gold. Pastor would like us to know that it is because of the support of the St. John family and the larger community that he remain encouraged and will continue to move forward God's kingdom here on earth. Pastor Hawkins would like to express his gratitude to the Omegas for this honor and also to the St. John family for its continued support.

Men's Ministry

Launched by Pastor Hawkins and introduced to an enthusiastic group of men on September 25, 2011, the Men's Ministry ("the Ministry") is up and running! This ministry will be called, "The Kikundi Brotherhood of St. John." Kikundi is Swahili for group.



Focused on promoting the men in St. John and beyond, the Ministry's mission is "to develop the Brotherhood of St. John into servant leaders who are living out their strengths with integrity, promise and spiritual

fulfillment." Their vision is developing an intimate relationship with the Father and every brother through prayer, worship, Bible study, servanthood and engaging in relationship with others.

Several components of this ministry have been identified that will promote the Ministry's agenda. These components are: spiritual, evangelist thrust, mission, relational, and social. Bible study and group discussions based on a theological premise are included in the spiritual component. Each man is asked to evangelize by bringing someone to worship services, planned activities, ministry projects and witness to others about the love of Jesus Christ. The men of the Ministry will serve as missionaries at

*St. John men,
this is your
ministry!*

Hesed House, prison ministries, mentoring programs and recreation nights designed for youth. In order to effectively establishing and build relationships, it is imperative that the men establish male bonding groups in order to empower, support and encourage each other.

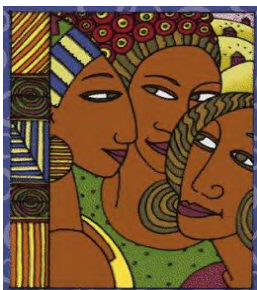
We know that brothers tend to suffer in silence. These bonding groups will hopefully provide an opportunity to exchange valuable spiritual enlightenment and knowledge. Young adult brothers should be invited to join these groups to witness, spiritually mentor and fully participate in the Ministry. Other opportunities to building relationships will be explored as well. Several social functions are being developed in which the men will take the lead. Geared towards further bonding and relational aspects, these activities are crucial in the development of the Men's Ministry.

Pastor Hawkins is excited about this ministry and whole-heartedly invites all St. John men to participate with as much passion and dedication as humanly possible! St. John men, this is your ministry. Use it to make a difference!

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"The Church at the Caring End of Ministry"

Women's Ministry Sisters Circle



Rev. Brenda Jackson is the facilitator of St. John's Women's Ministry - Sisters Circle (the "Ministry"). This Ministry's focus is, "To support and drive the mission of St John by equipping women of the

Church to be servants of God by addressing the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of these women, which will enhance their potential for more effective service." Under Rev. Jackson's guidance, the ministry's objectives range from providing opportunities for women to deepen their faith to mentoring young women, teens and girls. Within the scope of these objectives, the Ministry also seeks to assist and encourage St. John's

... women will be transformed in order to partner with God in the re-creation of humankind.

women to identify and use their talents and spiritual gifts for the glory of God!

In terms of format, this is a 5 to 7 year plan that will be developed in phases. This will allow the

Ministry to completely develop its vision with outcomes that will be realized over a prescribed period of time with a focused and intentional strategy. Developed around a spiritually nurturing component, the Sisters Circle is designed to equip women to circle around the family to strengthen and empower its members for the challenges of the future!

The 2011-2012 plan of study, activities and events for the Ministry includes: Bible study and discussion; leadership in morning worship; planned weekend conference, "Woman's Spiritual Journey;" mission/service activities; and quarterly social activities. Presently, Bible study is scheduled for the fourth Sunday of each month and the text used for this purpose is *Understanding Spiritual Gifts* by Kay Arthur & B.J. Lawson.

Through the Ministry's activities, women will be transformed in order to partner with God in the re-creation of humankind. Sisters in this Ministry will accomplish this mission through service to the community and personal and communal spiritual restoration. Women of St. John, step into the Sisters Circle to connect, encourage, nurture and protect. Join us to laugh, sing, dance, play and grow together!

Staff Appointments

Pastor Hawkins is excited to report that several ministerial staff appointments are now in place. The Rev. Cherida Gary (Itinerant Elder) and The Rev. Justin West (Itinerant Deacon) were both ordained in the Michigan Conference. The Rev. Gary has been given the responsibility of leading the Jr. High Ministry and The Rev. Ben Brown has been given the responsibility of leading our Sr. High Ministry. The Rev. Robert Stewart was ordained Itinerant Deacon in the Chicago Conference and will continue his work in leading our Children's Ministry. The Rev. Justin is studying abroad and we are prayerful that he will return to St. John in the future.

The Rev. Shonda Gladden of Washington, DC, the Second Episcopal District of the AME Church, is leading St. John's Young Adult Ministry, which includes the responsibility of facilitating our Young Adults in Fulfillment Hour. Rev. Gladden also leads our young adults in the alternative worship service on the fourth Sunday of each month and is excited about planning other kinds of activities for the growth and development of our Young Adult Ministry. We are encouraging all of our young adults to participate in this growing ministry.

St. John parents, please show your support for these ministries by making sure that your young people are active participants in their activities and events.



Outreach Ministry - Hesed House Experience

Beverly Campbell, who joined St. John earlier this year, volunteered at Hesed House on two separate occasions. Having gone through a major change in her life, rather than dwell on what she had lost, Beverly chose to acknowledge her blessings and share what she could with others. Volunteering at Hesed House gave her the opportunity to do just that.

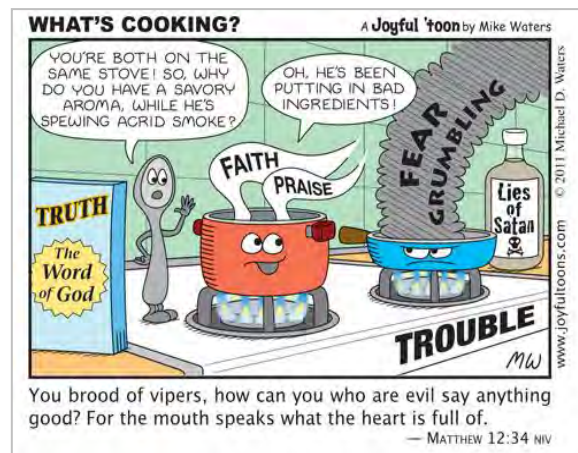
Beverly is no stranger to this type of volunteer work. For many years she donated her time and other resources to the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. Here in Aurora, she has made regular donations to the Wayside Cross Ministries. When it comes to making a real difference, Beverly's perspective is that making monetary donations is important, but giving of your time can be even more meaningful. Sometimes we just need someone to show up and show that they care.

Upon arriving at Hesed House, Beverly was surprised by the sheer number and diversity of the program's clientele and the items stocked in their storeroom. It was quite humbling to realize that the people who benefit from these ministries are in dire need of the bare necessities, things that we tend to take for granted. St. John volunteers were asked to prepare and serve meals. Luckily, help was also needed in the storeroom. Beverly volunteered to assist Hesed House clients in this capacity. She commented that, "I offered a warm smile and kind words to those I encountered. At times we even laughed together. I hope this ministry sees me as someone committed to helping others and will allow me to participate whenever needed." Overall, Beverly felt that her experiences at Hesed House were positive and productive. She would like to believe that St. John's ministry is viewed as people who cared enough to help in some way.

Beverly looks forward to returning to Hesed House in the future. In addition to this ministry experience, she has also taken advantage of the opportunity to accompany the Women's Missionary Society on a visit to The Warrenville Youth Center, an experience that touched her deeply. Beverly strongly asserts that "our young people need us, and need to know that we have not given up on them. I hope to return and contribute whatever encouragement I can."

In conclusion, Beverly stated that her prayers usually include asking God to use her to help and lift up others. She firmly believes she was led to St. John for a reason. Beverly feels that St. John is a caring church with many good ministries. It is her hope that she will be used in some way to further the work of some of these ministries.

For more information on Hesed House or other St. John's Outreach programs, please contact Rev. Melanie Wilkinson, mwilkinson@yahoo.com, Outreach Ministry Facilitator.



Find Jobs, Careers, Calling Through New St. John Career Ministry

In January 2012, the St. John Career Ministry will launch its national career search program. As part of the Crossroads Career® Network, this support program is being implemented to help those who are unemployed, under-employed or happily-employed and seeking God's calling to identify the right career or business opportunity.

The St. John Career Ministry is unique because it is scripturally based and includes a six-step process to develop the

right attitude, aptitude, and altitude to begin searching, sorting and selecting the next career opportunity. Small group interaction allows participants to obtain practical, emotional, and spiritual support. Meetings include prayer, relationship development and encouragement, and an emphasis on individual and group accountability.

Participants must register online to access hundreds of job openings and other online support tools that include resume writing and job interview preparation, assessment tools to identify your gifts and more.

To register or learn more contact Kim Hatchett, khatchett1254@aol.com.

Educator's Reception



In an effort to say thank you to African American educators in the school districts of Aurora and the surrounding areas, St. John will be hosting a reception in honor of the districts' teachers, counselors, school psychologists, nurses and speech therapists. This reception will take place on Saturday, November 19, during National Education Week. The reception is not religious based, but is planned to celebrate the African American educators in our communities that impact our children and parents to say thank you and we appreciate you.

We have contacted several school districts and have received positive, enthusiastic responses. St. John appreciates the

commitment, dedication and demands that are placed on our educators and would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to these professionals. We are certainly appreciative of all of our educators, but it is our intent to especially encourage this very small percentage of professionals. It also gives the student body and parents an opportunity to meet with their respective educational teams in a social setting. We also hope that this event will serve as a recruitment tool for others who have not considered the different fields afforded through education, particularly in the western suburbs.

St. John continues to support the hard work of our school districts and wish the staff, students and parents a productive and successful year!



American Red Cross Appointment

Congratulations to Charlotte Hazel on her recent promotion to Volunteer Partner to Alex Robinson, Operations Manager, the American Red Cross ("ARC"). In this position, Charlotte reports out of the ARC National Headquarters in Washington, DC.

Ms. Hazel joined ARC during the Hurricane Katrina disaster relief efforts. When approached by her previous employer with a promotional opportunity, Charlotte was not looking forward to relocating to her 16th residence having previously resided in 8 states. After much consideration Charlotte decided to volunteer with an organization in which her professional talents could be used to aid those who have suffered a loss. She chose the ARC.

Charlotte is a subject matter expert in the field of moving disaster victims from response to recovery. Working with local, state and federal

agencies, she creates an agenda that is instrumental in the long term recovery process. Hazel is the face of the ARC in these situations and offers a set of standards that will assist the community in organizing to move forward.

While also serving at the ARC as Lead Manager, Community Partnerships, in her Volunteer Partner role, Charlotte is responsible for establishing and maintaining working relationships, both internal and external, with all voluntary agencies, faith-based and community organizations as well as other non-government entities. She further acts as a communication channel to enhance service delivery options and to encourage their involvement in a disaster relief operation.

Looking towards the future, Charlotte prays to remain a volunteer for four more years and then will move in another direction.

Join us for Worship Services:

Saturday: Alternative Service • 5:00 PM
Sunday: Praise and Worship • 9:45 AM
Divine Worship • 10:00 AM
Youth & Children's Church • 10:00 AM
Fulfillment Hour • 8:45 AM

We give thanks to You,
O God, we give thanks,
For Your name is near;
Men declare Your wondrous works.

Ps. 75:1

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Senior Pastor

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Thankfulness

Appreciation

Gratitude

