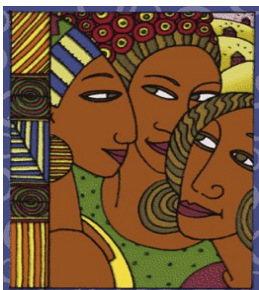


# Women's Ministry Sisters Circle



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.

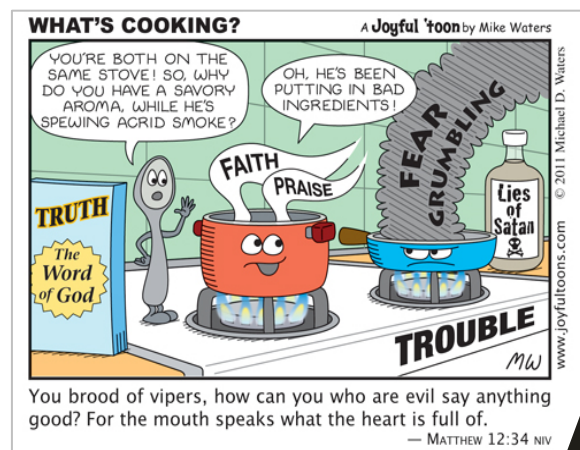
Upon arriving at Hesed House, Beverly was surprised by the sheer number and diversity of the program's clientele and the items stocked in their storeroom. It was quite humbling to realize that the people who benefit from these ministries are in dire need of the bare necessities, things that we tend to 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, [mwilkinsonan@yahoo.com](mailto:mwilkinsonan@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](mailto: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 and 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 and 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### **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

### **St. John AME Church The Rev. Jesse Hawkins**

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**Thankfulness**

**Appreciation**

**Gratitude**