



West End Circle Ignites Black History Month

By Sis. Diana Bibb

During our monthly General Missionary Society meeting, the West End Circle (all of whom were dressed in African attire) was in charge, with **Sis. Deborah Bush** presiding. Our national Black History Month theme: *Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism*, was presented by **Sis. Frances Martin**. Other circle members participating on program were **Sis. Elizabeth Hargrove** and **Sis. Diana Bibb**. We also appreciated the presence of Rev. and Mrs. Johnny Lewis, who heads our district mission efforts.

In keeping with our annual recognition and celebration of African American accomplishments, **Sis. Martin** narrated, as the audience viewed a pictorial display. The presentation included century 'greats' beginning with 18th century Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad; George Washington Carver and his 19th century wonders developed from peanuts; 20th century 'first' Jackie Robinson's breaching the color barrier in baseball; and of course, Senator and presidential candidate Barack Obama whose overwhelming national appeal has changed the dynamics of 21st century politics and awakened the interest and participation of a previously ignored section of the population – young voters.

As noted by **Sis. Martin**, we cannot begin this celebration of African American achievements without, first, acknowledging the vision of Dr. Carter G. Woodson. He was born to former slaves, finished high school in two years, worked in the Kentucky coal-mines, and earned a PhD from Harvard. His endeavor to make African Americans a part of mainstream American history began in 1926.

– See **West End Circle Ignites**, page 2

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Special points of interest:

- *Medical Professionals*
- *John 3:16*
- *A Christian's Prayer*
- *African American History Month*
- *Children and Youth Choir are one*

Although Dr. Woodson chose the second week of February because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the African American population—Frederick Douglas and Abraham Lincoln—there are several other significant dates and individuals that must be recognized:

February 1, 1960: Greensboro, North Carolina college students began a civil rights movement milestone with a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter.

February 3, 1870: The 15th Amendment was passed, granting blacks the right to vote.

February 12, 1909: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded.

February 21, 1965: Malcolm X, the militant leader who promoted Black Nationalism, was shot to death by three Black Muslims.

February 23, 1868: W.E.B. DuBois, important civil rights leader and co-founder of the NAACP, was born.

February 25, 1870: The first black US Senator, Hiram R. Revels (1822-1901), took his oath of office.

Recipe of the Month By Gladys Stringfellow

Tuna Tossed Salad

2 cups or 2 (7 oz) cans solid packed tuna
1 cup pineapple chunks
3 cups grated raw carrots
1 cup celery, chopped fine
1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup raisins



Toss well. Serve on lettuce. Garnish with parsley. Grapes or apples may be used in place of pineapple.

Church News

Please remember to pray for our bereaved families.

Mr. Allen McCray was funeralized on January 12, 2008 in Tuskegee, Alabama. He was the brother of our own **Sis. Susie Jackson**.

Sis. Martha Jean Smith was funeralized on January 12, 2008 at First African Baptist Church, with **Rev. Richard L. Morgan** as eulogist. Her mother, **Sis. Mary Smith**, and her daughter, little **Miss Jennifer Smith** are both faithful members of **First African**.

Funeral services for Ms. Elizabeth Watson were held on Saturday, February 2, 2008 in Lowndes County, Alabama. She was the sister of **Bro. Robert Watson**.

The late Eugene Sawyer Jr. was funeralized January 27, 2008 in Chicago, Illinois. The late Mr. Sawyer was a native of Greensboro, Alabama. He served as Mayor of Chicago upon the death of the late Harold Washington. Mr. Sawyer was the nephew of our own **Sis. Melnee Johnson**.

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Special Announcement

The **Children and Youth choirs** are now ONE. The group now rehearses every Saturday before the first and third Sundays and will sing on 1st and 3rd Sundays. Additional choir rehearsals will be announced. Members of the choir are gathering suggestions for a new name, look for an announcement in the very near future.

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Reminders

Sunbeam, Red Circle, and Crusaders meet every Thursday from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. You must attend a majority of the meetings during the year in order to participate in conventions and conferences.

Crusaders usher every second Sunday.

Red Circle usher every fourth Sunday.

Sunbeams usher every fifth Sunday.

Please be on time and in required uniform on the Sunday you usher.

Dr. James O. Ellis Scholarship

Sis. Audrey Ellis will accept applications in March 2008

Purpose: To provide an educational opportunity, beyond high school, to a deserving young person who desires to pursue a college education or prepare himself/herself for a specific trade/vocation.

Guidelines: The amount of scholarship awarded to one student each year is \$1,000. In the event no student applies, two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded the next year for eligible applicants.

Criteria for Scholarship

- A. Be an active member in good standing with **First African Baptist Church**
- B. Have a "B" average
- C. Be accepted at a two-year or four-year institution
- D. Submit an official high school transcript
- E. Complete a scholarship application form
- F. Apply for the scholarship by May of each year
- G. Be active in Sunday School, Red Circle/YWA, or Crusaders

Evaluation Points

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| A. Church Involvement | 25 points |
| B. Community Involvement | 25 points |
| C. District Involvement | 25 points |
| D. Academic Record | 25 points |

The Ten Commandments



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| Thou shall have no other gods before me. | Thou shall not kill. |
| Thou shall not make false idols. | Thou shall not commit adultery. |
| Thou shall not take the Lord's name in vain. | Thou shall not steal. |
| Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. | Thou shall not bear false witness. |
| Honor thy father and mother. | Thou shall not covet. |

Dr. Emily Melton Bell Returns Home To Help Honor The Medical Professionals at FABC By Dr. Oscar D. Tucker

First African Baptist Church (FABC), during its rich history, has celebrated sports teams, coaches, political figures, civil rights dignitaries, a score of preachers, and other standouts from our congregation and the community at large. They deserved our sincere adulation. On Sunday, 17 February 2008, **The Torchbearers** paid tribute to a group of professionals from the world of pain, anxiety, tender-loving-care, recovery, and from time to time death. These professionals, who call **FABC** their Church home, did not ask for recognition. Nonetheless, **The Torchbearers** thought it a good idea to let the light of appreciation shine, if only so briefly, on these dedicated medical practitioners.

Emily Melton Bell, M.D., OB/GYN, was invited to help honor this group. Emily, as she is remembered by those who knew her in her formative years while growing up in the nurturing arms of her parents and Church family at **FABC**, came to us from her practice at Cooper Green Mercy Hospital in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Birmingham, Alabama. **Bryant and Emily Melton**, parents of Bell, were given special recognition, and **Mrs. Melton**,

with obvious and justifiable pride, introduced her talented daughter.

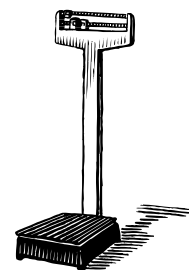
Dr. Bell held the rapt attention of a large audience as she talked about medical conditions that affect Alabamians in general and Alabama Blacks in particular. Diabetes, high blood pressure, HIV/AIDS, renal disease, low-birth weight infants, SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), obesity and other medical conditions were subjects Bell addressed in a fashion that laymen had no difficulty understanding.

Quoting statistics that apply to any subject can be as dull and uninspiring as watching paint dry, to an audience of lay people. However, Dr. Bell's comforting, soothing, yet authoritative voice made statistics sound interesting. Especially, since many of the persons under the sound of her voice were part of the date she cited. That fact, it could be argued, contributed to the undivided attention of all present. She made us aware of our susceptibility and risk for certain disease types. As any good, caring, meticulous medical professional would, Bell did not leave us confused and in a quandary. She provided us with many things we can do

as individuals, families, and communities to stem the tide of our risk and vulnerabilities. She discussed each disease in its turn, and followed up each discussion with what can be done to avoid the malady or slow its progress. In virtually every instance she emphasized healthy diet, cessation of smoking or not starting to smoke, exercise, alcohol in moderation, and regular medical check ups.

Most of us were introduced to a concept known as the Body Mass Index (BMI), which is a number calculated from a person's height and weight. Bell explained, that BMI provides a reliable indicator of body fatness, and is used to screen for weight categories, like underweight, overweight and obese, that may lead to health problems. Each person in attendance received a copy of the formula used to calculate BMI:

$$\text{Body Mass Index} = \frac{\text{Weight (pounds)}}{\text{Height (inches)}^2} \times 703$$



— See *Medical Professionals*, page 6

A person with a BMI of less than 18 is considered underweight, 24 is considered normal, 25-30 is overweight, and a BMI greater than 30 is considered obese. The audience responded to Dr. Bell's timely and well delivered speech with a rousing standing ovation. **First African Baptist Church** is proud of all its medical professionals, and especially proud of **Dr. Emily Melton Bell**.

Torchbearer Gladys Stringfellow glowingly acknowledged an impressive list of honorees that included:

Betty Bagby
Nell Cole
Deborah Cook
Audrey Ellis
James Evans
Myrtle I. Gray
Susie Green
Elizabeth Hargrove
Mary Hinton
Herman Horn
E.O. Jones
Melnee Johnson
Mary Kemp
Vera Key
Mildred Knox
Geraldine Lawson
Lillie Lawson
Sharon Long
Linda McGee
Bryant Melton
Linda O'Rourke
George Petagrew
Odessa Warrick
Frank White Jr.
Georgia White
Virginia Williams

A special presentation was made to Deborah Tucker, Executive Director of the Maude Whately Health Clinics which offer services to the indigent throughout West Alabama.

Ida Hobson, founder and principal organizer of **The Torchbearers**, was given special recognition for her work with that illustrious group.

Leveret Hedgeman, musician and singer extraordinaire, performed solo and led the audience in stimulating and inspiring spiritual music, which included, "We Shall Overcome," anthem of the Civil Rights Movement.

Ruby Petagrew was responsible, in large measure, for the planning and execution of this program. **Willa Kaye Goodson** presided.

Family Night

By Linda Carter

The first family night for this year was held January 31, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. The theme for the evening was “A celebration of our understanding of Kwanzaa, and our true history.” It is always good to learn about black history all year, not just during black history month—February.

Mary Kemp gave us a good overview of Kwanzaa, and its history. She told us how to celebrate, and why we celebrate Kwanzaa. She and **Mrs. Lawson** had items on display referring to our theme. There were a Kwanzaa Christmas tree, candles with the Kwanzaa colors, African American figurines, African cloths, cast iron pots and other great items to see.

Mr. Danny Steele, owner of Van Hoose and Steele Funeral home, was our guest speaker. He had an inspirational message for the young and the old. Fourteen-year-old Reginald Bell said he really enjoyed listening to Mr. Steele. As with other young people and adults, they said they got a lot out of what he had to say. **Terrell Byrd** commented that our young people need to take heed, read, and get their education.

Next, we had a candle lighting ceremony that began with a poem read by **Jessie Martin** entitled “Madam and the Census Man.” While lighting the candles, we reflected on the past, where we will go in the future, and our need to learn more about our history. The scripture for Family Night was *Get wisdom, get understanding, forget it not. Neither decline from the words of my mouth* (Proverbs 4:5).

The meal for the evening consisted of spaghetti, baked chicken, corn-on-the-cob, cornbread, rolls, green beans, and desserts. We were even surprised with souse meat.

A special Family Night is planned for Thursday, February 28, 2008 to celebrate Black History Month. Old-fashioned dishes will be served.

Following the special Family Night in February, another great Family Night is planned for the last Thursday in May.

Thank God for our church family.

Eternal Hope in Haiti

By Diana Bibb

As I was reading my most recent newsletter from Cheron Rose Hardy, NP, CNM, RN, and Director of Hope Haven Orphanage in Haiti, I was reminded of the “Prayer of Jabez” that referred to a request to increase his territory. As I looked out over the mission field in my mind, and considered the impact missionaries have made in the lives of the unloved, undernourished, and the lost around the world, I wondered how wonderful it would be to ask, “How much more can we do...?”

My heart was touched as I read of Cheron’s determination to get simple dental treatment for some of her children. She also mentioned how she and some of the children had battled illness during the Fall of 2007, and had also survived a near fatal incident while she was transporting some of the children.

One blessing that she shared in her letter involved an 8-month-old baby girl named Christine. She weighed only 7 pounds when she arrived at Hope Haven. Of course making sure the baby had formula was foremost on Cheron’s mind; but that meant going over her budget. She had been expecting some supplies from a woman who had decided to sponsor Baby Christine but the port had been blocked for 6 weeks. After prayer and supplication, she turned the matter over to the Lord.

The next day a visitor of another ministry that often brings supplies to the orphanage when he is in Haiti called her and said he had brought formula and baby cereal and asked when she could pick it up. As he normally ships in supplies, she thought he was waiting for the shipment that she knew was blocked. He told her he had brought it in his suitcase. She had not asked him for formula but God had impressed on this man to bring it, and to date that supply had not run out!!!

Jehovah Jireh... What a Mighty God we serve!!!!

A Christian's Prayer

Lord, help me live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way
That even when I kneel to pray
My prayers will be for OTHERS.

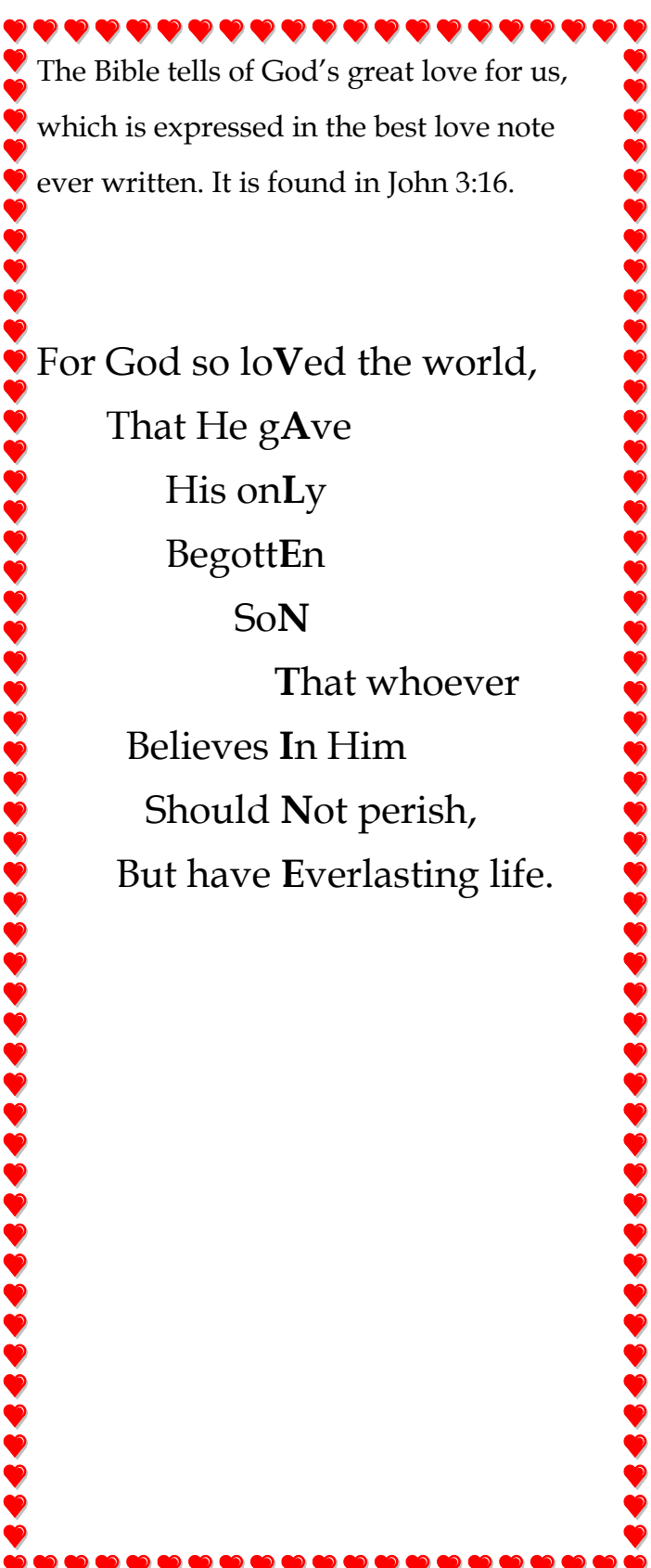
Help me in all the work I do
To ever be sincere and true
And know that all I do for You
Must needs be done for OTHERS.

Let Self be crucified and slain
And buried deep, and all in vain
May efforts be to rise again
Unless to live for OTHERS.

And when my work on earth is done
And my new work in heaven begun
May I forget the crown I've won
While thinking still of OTHERS.

Others, Lord, yes, others
Let this my motto be;
Help me to live for Others
That I may live like Thee.

—Charles D. Meigs



The Bible tells of God's great love for us,
which is expressed in the best love note
ever written. It is found in John 3:16.

For God so loVed the world,

That He gAve

His onLy

BegottEn

SoN

That whoever

Believes In Him

Should Not perish,

But have Everlasting life.

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The Friendly Church on the Corner

We're on the Web

www.firstafricanchurch.org

March Birthdays

March	7	Anthony Johnson
	10	Linda Carter Brenda Bell Paul Dykes
	12	Betty W. Lawson James Cole
	14	Shana R. Rivers
	19	Princess Richey Emily Melton
	26	Rev. Oscar J. Rivers III
	28	Jessie Martin
	29	Joshua Hyche

Happy Anniversary

March	23	Earnest and Veronica Showell
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Church Calendar

February 28	Black History Family Night
March 1	Church Voting
March 9	Daylight Savings time General Mission Meeting
March 10-13	Congress on Christian Education Institute
March 16-21	Passion Week Services
March 23	<i>Easter</i> Sunrise Services
March 30	Fellowship Services

If your birthday or wedding anniversary is missing or incorrect for any month, please notify **Sis. Gladys Stringfellow** or **Sis. Shana Rivers** for additions and corrections.