



FIRST AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH
REV. RICHARD L. MORGAN, PASTOR

FABC Communicator

The Pastor's Corner

When the thought of what it takes to be a good father comes to mind, many ideas arise. If one however chooses the Biblical and or Christian concept to pursue this task the results can be extremely rewarding with eternal gratifications. We need only to look at how our heavenly Father loved us, a people who actually deserved no love such as the love he displays in John 3:16. A father should also have balance in raising his children, bringing them up in the admonition of the Lord as found in Ephesians 6:4. A good father shows love for his wife at all times and especially when it is unmistakably done before the children's watchful eyes.

I learned how to provide for my family from observing the great job my father did in providing for my mother, my siblings, and me. The quest for being a good father is an individual responsibility that falls upon each man that has begotten children. I think it would be helpful if a father would pay attention to the following things as a leader of his family. Point them to God. Be an example. Spend time together as a family unit. Protect your family. Share your life story with your kids, your failures, as well as your accomplishments. Make sure all decisions are made prayerfully WITH your wife. God has a passion for oneness as should every father. May our heavenly Father bless each of us richly.

—*Minister W. Dennis Hinton*

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Special points of interest:

- *Stewardship*
- *Food for Thought*
- *Jail Ministry Update*
- *Youth Dates to Remember*
- *Early Morning Sunday Services begin at 7:45 a.m.*

Stewardship Over Money Matters

Sis. Diana Bibb

As I was looking over my Spring 2008 Newsletter from Transamerica Retirement Services, I began to reflect on how the economy has affected all of us over the last year. In my role as an administrative assistant with the Chapter 13 Bankruptcy Trustee (where I have been employed for the last 12 years), I am privy to financial information that may not be readily available to the average consumer. In performing my duty as an auditor of bankruptcy cases, I get a glimpse of the areas of employment that are experiencing downsizing, layoffs, and slow growth simply by noting the occupations of the petitioners.

I wanted to do something to help others; so, I decided to share some of the information (of course, with the Trustee's permission) that Transamerica has made available to the employees at the Trustee's office. If you have been reading or listening to financial news, you are certainly aware that the stock market has experienced ups and downs since the autumn of 2007. As an owner of a 401K or some other retirement plan, it's worth a look. I would like to share some insights with regards to long-term investments, your credit score, and teaching your children about money.

First of all, as a long-term investor, here are some things you can do to protect yourself from the short-term unsteadiness of the stock market. By owning a broad mix of stocks and bond investments, you can protect yourself against the risks of any one investment doing poorly. Studies have shown that the percentage you allocate to each asset class is the key factor in determining your investment returns.

Secondly, you should maintain a long-term focus. When I look at my investment portfolio and see how much I may have lost during a quarter, I have to remind myself that it's a temporary slump; and I need to hang in there and ride it out. According to the professional analysts, stocks tend to perform better than other assets over long periods. They offer protection against two of the major long-term risks people face—the threat of inflation devaluing your dollar and the threat of running out of money.

Thirdly, let's look at 'dollar cost average.' No one likes it when the value of your investments go down, but by contributing a regular amount every pay period, those dollars will buy more units when the unit price drops. Let's say you contribute \$100 every pay period. When a unit is \$10, you can buy 10 units. If the unit price falls to \$5, you would buy 20 units. If the unit price goes back up to \$10 (hello), your \$100 investment is now worth \$200. The key is to stay calm and remain confident, and be prayerful.

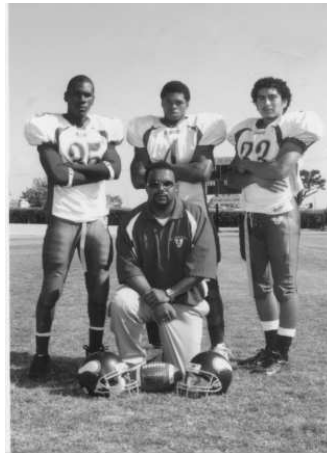
—See, *Stewardship*, page 3

Now, let's talk about your credit score. It is a number from 300 to 900 that is determined by the three major credit bureaus: Equifax: www.equifax.com; Experian: www.experian.com; Transunion: www.transunion.com. You can get a free credit report once a year from each of these credit bureaus. These are the factors that determine your score: (1) How you pay your bills (35% of score); (2) Your outstanding debt (30%); Length of your credit history (15%); New credit (10%). What does all this mean? Higher scores mean lower interest rates and lower monthly payments.

Last, but not least, I would like to share some suggestions on how to raise financially responsible children. Preschoolers (ages 3-5) will learn to handle money by playing make-believe store. At ages 6-8, begin giving allowances and tie it to chores if you'd like. Explain the importance of tithing. At ages 9-12, teach your children about setting and achieving savings goals. For example, if your child wants a new bike, consider matching dollar for dollar what they save by the end of the year. Encourage them to earn money by babysitting, mowing lawns or walking the neighbors' dogs. At ages 13-15, start discussing buying a car and college tuition. Lay out a plan for who will pay for college. At ages 16-18, encourage them to pay themselves by saving. At age 18, open a savings or investment account. If your child is having problems managing credit, address it immediately. When they're 30, you don't want them paying for financial mistakes they made when they were 20.

I sincerely hope that I have shared something that can help you and your family. *Be Blessed!*

Congratulations to



John Daniel Bibb (son of **Diana Bibb**); recently named Defensive Coordinator for Saint Bernard High School's Varsity Football Team located in Playa Del Rey, California. John presently works at the Carousel School for Autistic Children as a health and physical education instructor. He considers his additional duties at the high school to be an extension of God's blessings and grace. John is forever grateful for the prayers of the **First African** family that have helped to sustain him. He is a former member of the **Crusaders**; and even now, when asked to read a scripture, he recites I Corinthians 13 from memory.

Food for Thought

By Sis. Frances A. Martin

Wear the Shoes You Want Filled

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

Two of the greatest influences in your child's life are *music* and *television*, and both of them constantly threaten your values. Parents, have you actually *listened* to the words in the song? Shouldn't any music called *Gangsta Rap* set off some alarm bells? Or noticed what your child watches on television? Too busy? Get un-busy! Your child is being molded – the question is by whom?

God's Word clearly states there are six things you owe your children:

1. Instruct them (Deuteronomy 6: 6-7)
2. Train them (Proverbs 22:6)
3. Provide for them (II Corinthians 12:14)
4. Nurture them (Ephesians 6:4)
5. Discipline them (I Timothy 3:4)
6. Love them (Titus 2:4)

That is your job description.

Abraham's nephew Lot did some things wrong; things that ultimately cost him his family:

1. He had the wrong *emphasis*; he placed financial success above spiritual priorities
2. He had the wrong *environment*; he thought his children could live in Sodom and not be affected by it.
3. He had the wrong *expectation*; he thought he could change Sodom by compromising with it.
4. He had the wrong *example*; he thought his children would follow his instructions, instead they followed his lifestyle.
5. He had the wrong *relationships*; he didn't realize until too late how much Sodom had influenced his family.

If you think that you can live by the world's rules and expect your children to follow God's, you're kidding yourself. Don't *preach* about the shoes you want them to fill, *walk* in them. Ask God today to help you become the *parent* your *child* needs!

The Torchbearers Presents Mr. Jerome Gray
Executive Assistant to the Commission of Agriculture and Retired Field Director of the
Alabama Democratic Conference (ADC)

Mr. Jerome Gray, Alabama native of Conecuh County and political icon in Alabama and national politics for over thirty years, spoke to a small but enthusiastic **FABC** audience about Twenty First Century politics in America and the opportunity for blacks to play major roles on that political stage.

Gray is an avowed and unapologetic supporter of Senator Barak Obama, Democrat, Illinois, to be the Democratic Party's standard bearer for president of the United States in November 2008. Early on, he broke ranks with long time ADC colleague, Dr. Joe Reed, who is a staunch backer of Senator Hillary Clinton, Democrat, New York. Reed explained, as reported in the last issue of the **FABC Communicator**, his reasons for backing Clinton. He feels that the country is not ready to back a black candidate and, between the two candidates, her experience makes her the most electable. There is no animosity between these long time boyhood friends as some suspect, they simply do not agree on this particular issue.

After reading the life story of the Senator from Illinois entitled, *The Audacity of Hope* Gray declared, "If he can have the audacity to hope to

be president of the United States, I have the audacity to help." He became principal organizer, without pay, of Sen. Obama's Alabama campaign shortly after Obama declared for the presidency. Gray did not seek that responsibility. Persons in Barack Obama's national campaign office knew of Gray's organizational abilities and the great work he has done in Alabama politics, and sought his leadership in getting the Alabama campaign off the ground. In the past, according to Gray, it was rare for a presidential candidate to open campaign offices in Alabama. We in Alabama were ignored or taken for granted. Every major city in the State has a Barack Obama campaign office, including Tuscaloosa.

Our speaker dismissed Hillary Clinton's accusation that his candidate is too young and too inexperienced to be president. He suggested that Clinton has concluded that she has been anointed to be the Democratic Party's standard bearer. This man, Gray asserts, has been an activist, organizer, and fighter for human and minority rights most of his adult life. Further, Gray believes Barak Obama is a God send and

parallels him with the Biblical Jacob, son of Isaac and younger brother of Esau. The law of primogeniture required that Esau, the elder son, inherit the estate of his parents, Rebecca and Isaac. However, with the help of his mother, Rebecca, Isaac schemed successfully to appropriate Esau's blessings and inheritance. God was in that plan, declared Gray, and God is in this plan to see that Barak Obama gets the nomination of the Democratic Party for president over the older more experienced Senator from New York.

Gray also dismissed the contention by some that Obama cannot get the middle class and poor white vote because of his race. The Alabama volunteers in the Obama campaign are a diverse group of young, old, middle class, poor, rich, college students, housewives, white, black, and more. One of the many strengths of the candidate is his ability to rise above race, ethnicity, political party, income, and education levels and attract voters from every strata of the political spectrum. Our guest reminded us that the campaign does not need all the white

—See, *Torchbearers*, page 6

votes just a respectable number to go with his political base to win the election.

During the Q & A session following his presentation, Gray was asked about the fallout from the remarks made by Obama's former pastor, the controversial Rev. Jeremiah Wright. It must be made clear, said Gray, that for the most part Rev. Wright was telling the truth. Some whites unfortunately do not like our "words." Blacks have not revolted and overthrown the government nor have we lynched anybody. Whites can say inflammatory and hateful things, but when an influential black says something that challenges the status quo he is condemned. Wright is a good example and so is Minister Louis Farrakhan. In spite of the freedom of speech rights, guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, there is a double standard in the execution of those rights. Obama is guilty by association, according to those who claim Rev. Wright to be hateful, anti-American, and racist. The remarks have had some negative affects, but Gray feels that Sen. Obama has minimized the affects by distancing himself from Rev. Wright.

Gray was elected Alternate Delegate to the Democratic National Convention to be held in Denver, Colorado in August, but wishes he could get some young person to take his place. He is keen on recruiting young people to get involved in the political process. The campaign of Barak Obama is a blessing for the Democratic Party, says Gray, because it has attracted a core group of young political activist who will be the future of the Party. He seemed supremely confident that his candidate will be the Democratic Party nominee and will eventually emerge as the first black president of these United States.

Our guest speaker was introduced by his good friend and former teaching colleague, **Dr. J.C. Carter**, member of and former Interim Pastor of **FABC**. Torchbearer members **Mrs. Gladys Stringfellow** gave the invocation and **Mrs. Willa Kaye Goodson** presided.

Update from the Jail Ministry

By Sis. Diana Bibb

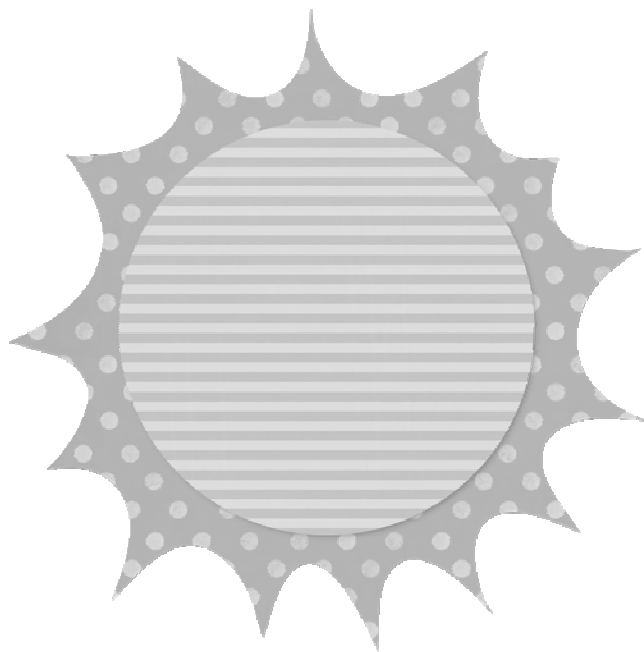
It is now 2:15 p.m. on June 19, 2008 and I have just returned to work from the Jail Ministry visitation at Metro Jail. One might ask, "Why is she being so specific by noting the time and date?" Let's see if I can answer that question. There is no big mystery going on...unless you agree that the gratitude we owe the Lord is worth noting and news worthy. This afternoon my group of volunteers had the opportunity to witness, fellowship, and minister to inmates in three different cells. That was exciting for us because we want to impact as many lives as we can in the time available. Of course, there were a couple of men who preferred to play checkers, while one or two others stayed in their beds. However, most of them were very cooperative and attentive.

—See, *Jail Ministry*, page 7

Our ministry involves singing, reading scriptures, prayers, and a lesson. We are also open to any comments the inmates desire to make. It was truly encouraging to see and hear the response from some of the men whom I had assigned specific scriptures to read aloud during the lesson. I had asked one of our group members to prayer, but she opted to allow one of the inmates to do it. He prayed a very touching prayer and actually seemed to be comfortable doing so. There was also a man who when we asked if anyone had a favorite song or hymn, he lead a beautiful song.

Of course, we have no idea what set of circumstances resulted in these men and women being incarcerated, and we are not there to inquire or judge. Our mission work is simply to share the Word. One of the things I constantly say to the inmates is that, *"We don't do mission work to get saved...we work because we are saved!"* Praise God!!! We don't preach to them or make any condemning statements. Our comments reflect our own generalized testimonies. We express to them that our visits are acts of obedience to the Lord, as well as acts of gratitude. It's like a person being saved from a burning building knowing what it means to live with a deep sense of gratitude. Those of us who have been rescued by God's grace from the fires of judgment live out our gratefulness to God through obedience and service.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite anyone who might be curious about the Jail Ministry to join us in August at the Metro Jail from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. Lets continue to work within the Lord's will, and say, "Lord, whatever You're doing in this season, don't do it without me;" and remember to give God the glory! *Be Blessed!*



Remember
Early Morning Worship Services
begin at
7:45 a.m.

Church News

Please continue to prayer for our bereaved families:

Mrs. Susie Green who lost a brother

Mrs. Christine McCoy who lost a brother

Mr. & Mrs. Julius (Mary) Richey who lost a son

Ms. Fannye Gray who lost a sister in Chicago, Illinois



The Friends of Historic Northport tapped eleven members into the Northport Hall of Citizens during its annual Homecoming Luncheon at the Northport Civic Center on Friday, May 16, 2008. Long time member and deacon of **First African**, **Bro. George Crummie Sr.** was among the inductees. Congratulations **Bro. Crummie**.

Charty Nicole Dykes was among the graduates from The University of Alabama in May. She is the granddaughter of **Mr. & Mrs. Paul (Minnie) Dykes**.

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First African's last Family Night was held on Thursday, May 29, 2008. More than 100 people, most of whom were children, attended a blessed night. **Mr. Earnest Showell** was the speaker for the hour and he gave a wonderful presentation about his trip to Africa. He shared pictures, African items and talked about the experience of meeting families and children from poor areas of Africa. His job assignment with Mercedes Benz allowed for a wonderful experience that he will always remember. The dinner for the evening was delicious and we thank everyone who purchased or prepared a dish. Everyone had a good time. We thank God for our church family. The next Family Night is planned for Thursday, September 25, 2008.

The Alabama Baptist Women's Convention was again held on the campus of Selma University in Selma, Alabama. Many from **First African** attended on June 11, 2008. **Taylor Long**, from our Sunbeam department was on program before the parent body to bring the welcome. **Taylor** did a terrific job. Hats off! Other Sunbeams who attended included **Brandon Byrd, Ana Hargrove, Jonathan Lawson, Miracle Lawson, and Tameron Long**.

Church News continued

Sick & Shut-In

Please continue to pray for our sick and shut-in members. See our weekly church bulletin for a list of names.

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We Welcome Our New Church Members

We welcome you most heartily and hope that you will share along with us the joy of being part of the Christian family here at **First African**. The members who recently joined are:

Tobby Crummie
Jonathan James Lawson
Leah Briana McGruder
Kendall Darrell Reed
Princess Richey
Joyce Spence
Katonya Bagby Stewart
Sherre Tubbs
James B. Wells
Michael Wells
Sabrina Williams
Columbus Williams

From the Youth Department **Dates to Remember**

- July 16** Northwest District Convention (9:00 a.m.)
First Baptist Church, Fairfield, Alabama
- July 22 - 24** Congress of Christian Education (begins each day at 9:00 a.m.)
Bethel Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, Alabama
Thursday night Youth presentation begins at 5:00 p.m. at
Bethel Baptist Church
- July 26** NABD Sunbeams Picnic (10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.)
McDonald Hughes Center
School supplies will be given to all Sunbeams
- July 28 - 30** Southwest Regional Youth Conference
Hattiesburg, Mississippi
- August 9** NABD Youth Conference (8:00 a.m.)
Beulah Baptist Church
- August 14** Conference Continuation (5:30 p.m.)
NABD Children & Youth program before the Parent Body
NABD Religious Center

...and the celebration continues By Sis. Linda McGee

Installation Services began with an article in the Saturday, June 21, 2008 edition of *The Tuscaloosa News*. This article highlighted the energy, vision, and goals of our 22nd Pastor, **Rev. Richard L. Morgan** and featured quotes from members within the congregation.

Guests from Panama City, Florida arrived later in the day to Tuscaloosa and were greeted by members of the Hospitality Committee at the host hotel. On the campus of Stillman College at 6:00 p.m., a well-attended banquet was held. Rev. Harold K. Lester, Pastor of Orchard Knob Missionary Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee gave a powerful message. Rev. Cal Hopkins, Pastor of Porter Saint Paul C.M.E. kept the crowd in stitches as master of ceremony and Ms. Essie Tuggle and Rev. Darren Allen brought attendees to their feet with melodious singing. **Mark Griffin** provided excellent accompaniment to our guest soloists. Lloyd Watson, a gifted saxophonist presented music throughout the evening that was most enjoyable. The evening was topped with reflections and best wishes with **Ms. Linda O'Rourke** and Youth of **First African Baptist Church**.

Sunday morning began at 7:45 a.m. with Rev. Darren Allen, Pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Cordova, Alabama delivered the message. Rev. Delwynn G. Williams, Pastor of St. John Missionary Baptist Church, Panama City, Florida was the 10:45 a.m. speaker and his choir provided music. At 3:00 p.m. Rev. E.J. James Jr., Pastor of New Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Northport, Alabama and his choir and congregation rounded off a Holy Ghost-filled day. All messages, sermons, and services for the weekend were powerful.

We thank God for all of those who worked diligently to make the Installation Services for our Pastor one to remember. A special thank you goes to all members of the Hospitality committee: **Willa Kaye Goodson, Deborah Bush, Bettie Bagby, Brenda Bell, Debra Bell, Diana Bibb, Patricia Bryant, Laura Cameron, Linda Carter, Debra Cook, and Ruby Petagrew**. Also, thank you to the Master Messengers for the weekend, **Reginald Bell Jr. and Roger Cook II**. We give a mighty Praise God and thank you to **Jackie Watson** and the Culinary staff for their hard work and diligence.

The Installation Committee consisted of **LaFonda Boddie, Deborah K. Bush, Willa Kaye Goodson, Willie Kemp, Linda O'Rourke, Shana R. Rivers, Jackie Watson, Georgia White, and Oscar D. Watts** who worked tireless hours for months. I thank God for placing this wonderful committee together.

Blessings to all committee members and workers! Thank you to our First African Baptist Church family for your love and support.

Recipe of the Month

Submitted by Olivia Maniece

Mississippi Mud Pie

1 cup self-rising flour
1 cup chopped pecans
1 stick butter or oleo
1 8 oz. pkg. Cream Cheese
1 cup Cool Whip
1 cup powdered sugar
2 small pkgs. Chocolate Instant Pudding
3-1/2 cups whole milk
1 teaspoon Vanilla Flavor

1st layer

Let butter or oleo cool at room temperature until soft. Add to flour and pecans and mix well, then put in baking pan* and flatten out to make a crust. Put in over and let cool.

2nd layer

Mix together cream cheese and powdered sugar, then add cool whip and mix until smooth. Spread over cooled 1st layer evenly.

3rd layer

Mix instant pudding, whole milk and vanilla flavor. Beat on medium until semi-thick. Spread over second layer evenly.

4th layer

Top with cool whip. Garnish with chopped nuts or grated Hersey bar. You can also use mixed decoration in the Birthday Cake section of the store for the top.

Usually best after it cools for 24 hours.

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The Friendly Church on the Corner

We're on the Web
www.firstafricanchurch.org

The *Communicator* is a project of the East End Circle where Sis. Willie M. Carter is chair. The purpose of this newsletter is to disseminate information to members regarding the Bible and church activities. Copies are mailed to students and anyone away from home. The newsletter is also sent to sick and shut in members locally.

Any suitable literary or Bible-based articles will be accepted from members for publication at any time. These may be given to **Sis. Irma Mason** or **Sis. Gladys Stringfellow**.

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July

- 3 Audrey Ellis
4 Earnest Showell
Linda McGee
6 Wynton Kemp
9 Christopher Moss
10 Kara Bell
15 William Marshall
16 Oscar Watts
18 Briana Bell
19 Ida Watts
22 Leventte M. Green
26 Robin Johnson
28 Willa Kaye Goodson
Ron Bush
30 Masika Smith
31 Mildred Knox

August

- 1 Alethea Williams
3 Robert V. Watson
5 Jamaal Noland
8 Jacqueline Smith-White
9 Jacqueline Watson
10 Jennifer Smith
12 Hasanne Cole
18 Earnest "EJ" Showell, Jr.
21 Elizabeth Hargrove
25 Darius Taylor
Willie Kemp
26 Deborah Bush

Birthdays

Happy Anniversary

July

- 1 Reginald & Debra Bell
5 Julius & Mary Richey
17 Frank III & Alfreda White

August

- 7 Oscar & Ida Watts
Terry & Linda Tucker
19 George & Ruby Petagrew
24 Roderick & Jessie Martin