

March 2008



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

FABC Communicator

Message from the Pastor *Rev. Richard L. Morgan*



I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am deeply honored and humbled to be your servant and the under shepherd of this flock. It is my prayer that we are able to make Christ known by doing mission, outreach, and education. God has brought us to this place to do a greater work and we are responsible for this harvest of reclamation, restoration, and recommitment. Let us therefore commit, submit, and delight in the work that is before us and let us not be weary in well-doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

We Welcome Our 22nd Pastor

Rev. Richard L. Morgan

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Who Is Your Shepherd?

By Sis. Gladys Stringfellow

Sheep were an important part of the possessions of the ancient Hebrews and the eastern nations generally. The first mention of sheep in the Bible occurs in Genesis 4:2.

It is striking to note the immense number of sheep that were reared in Palestine in Biblical times. They were used in sacrificial offerings both the adult and the lamb. They also formed an important article of food (I Samuel 25:18) and the wool was used as clothing (Leviticus 13:47).

Unlike other animals sheep are slow, weak and defenseless and left to their own devices they would starve. They panic easily when attacked by predators. They follow one another blindly and cannot cross deep water without drowning. They are particularly vulnerable to parasites and disease. They tend to overeat, then lie down, and cannot get back up. It is for these reasons that sheep need shepherds.

The office of most shepherds as described in the Bible was attended with much hardships and even danger. They were exposed to extremes of heat and cold (Genesis 31, 40) their food frequently consisted of supplies afforded by nature such as fruits, figs, etc. neither were they free from the risk of robbers and animals. Occasionally they had to encounter the attacks of wild beasts, lions, bears, and others. The shepherd's equipment consisted of a mantle, a wallet containing a small amount of food (I Samuel 17:40), a sling and a staff which served the double purpose of a weapon against foes and a crook for the management of the flock (I Samuel 17:40; Psalms 23:4).

The routine of the shepherd's duties appear to have been as follow –

In the morning, he led forth his flock from the fold (John 10: 4) which he did by going before them and calling them. He watched the flocks with the assistance of dogs. He supplied them with water and at evening he brought them back to the fold (John 10:4) and made sure that none was missing. Finally, he watched the entrance of the fold throughout the night. The shepherd's office required great watchfulness particularly by night. It also required tenderness towards the young and feeble. Some shepherds were not always held in high regard and even required to live in isolated communities because of this lifestyle (Geneses 46:34).

The sheep is an emblem of meekness, patience and submission, it is expressly mentioned as typifying these in the person of our blessed Lord (Isaiah 53:7, Acts 8:32). The relationship that exists between Christ "the chief shepherd" and its members is beautifully compared to that which is strikingly exhibited by the shepherd to their flocks. When one thinks of the qualities and characteristics of the shepherd, it is no wonder why some of the most noted men in Scripture were shepherds.

– See, **Who Is Your Shepherd**, page 4

Church News

Please remember to pray for our bereaved families.

Raymond Dykes, the brother of **Bro. Paul Dykes** was funeralized in Sarasota, Florida.

New Antioch Bethlehem District Association (NABD)

TeLeah Byrd serves as Sunbeam President for First African. **TeLeah** also held the office of NABD Sunbeam Vice President for 2006 and 2007.

Taylor Long is Vice President of the Sunbeams here at First African. **Taylor** presently serves as the NABD Sunbeam Assistant Secretary.

On March 1, 2008, the NABD Sunbeams held their district meeting at Bethel Baptist Church. **First African's Sunbeams** were on program. They gave a terrific presentation about African Americas in our history and they sang *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. Our Sunbeams also won third place in attendance. The next district Sunbeam meeting will be May 3, 2008 at Morning Star Baptist Church.

Southwestern Region Youth Conference

Miracle Lawson, Briana Bell, and Roderick Martin Jr., all members of First African, hold an office in the Southwestern Region Youth Conference under the leadership of Sis. Mary P. Hopkins of Meridian, Mississippi. **Miracle** is the region's Sunbeam Secretary, **Briana** is the region's Red Circle Vice President, and **Roderick** is the region's Crusader Vice President. These members will preside over a program during this year's conference in Hattiesburg, Mississippi that is attended by hundreds of people from six different states.

The Southwestern Region board meeting was held on March 1, 2008 in Meridian, Mississippi. **Miracle** and **Roderick** attended along with their Youth Counselors from First African Baptist Church. Both conducted themselves well and were attentive to learning their duties for the July conference.

Who Is Your Shepherd?

(continued from page 2)

Joseph was a shepherd (Genesis 37:2). Along with his 11 brothers he tended the flocks of his father Jacob. Unknown to him, God was preparing him for the day when he would “shepherd” the nation of Egypt through 7 years of famine.

Moses was a shepherd. For 40 years he learned to cope with sheep in Midian, not knowing that soon he would be putting his “pastoral” education to work to lead the Israelites.

David was a shepherd. As a young lad he learned the harsh realities of the Judean wilderness as he nurtured his father’s flocks unaware that soon he would be anointed to “shepherd” God’s people. Likening God to a loving caring shepherd in Psalms 23 was natural because David knew first hand the role of the shepherd.

The Scripture informs us that it were to the lowly shepherds watching their flocks by night that the angel announced the Savior’s birth.

It seems rather unflattering that Jesus likens believers to sheep (John 10:27). Isaiah the prophet shows why the description is both appropriate and important (Isaiah 53:6). Jesus said “I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep” (John 10:11). This was aptly demonstrated on Good Friday when he was crucified on the cross.

A Pastor is considered an under shepherd as he leads the flock (believers) under the guidance and direction of the Good Shepherd.



The Good Shepherd never disappoints. He is one leader you cannot afford not to follow.

Have a Happy Easter

The Ten Commandments



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.

Report from the Board Meeting of the Northwest District State Convention Auxiliary to the Alabama State Baptist Convention Inc.

By Sis. Diana Bibb

On Wednesday, March 5, 2008, the annual board meeting was held at Hopewell Baptist Church, where Rev. Edward Rogers serves as pastor. Our President's son, Rev. Green Davidson IV, delivered the devotional message, "In the Fellowship." His sermon was taken from the first part of Acts 2:42. He stated that "fellowship" is the most important aspect of church growth. He went on to say that when the world examines us (Christians), they pick on our "lack of fellowship." "Luke," he said, "looked at new Christians. Believers should learn together and grow together." Rev. Davidson commented that the church was a spiritual organism, which after being changed inside, manifests outside and becomes a spiritual organization. "Christianity," he said, "means we must have love, kindness and fellowship. He ended by saying some of us have selected memory, but what we need is reflective memory which takes us back to the cross."

President Green Davidson called the business meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. After the reading of the minutes of the 2007 meeting, President

Davidson introduced the host pastor for the 2008 Northwest Convention, Rev. Robert Twyman of First Baptist Church-Fairfield, July 15-17. He announced some new initiatives for the 2008 convention, which included a 'pulpit and pew' conference, a couples' class, and a session designed for youth entitled "Image of a Positive Team." He also presented our new Northwest Women's Auxiliary President, Sis. Josephine Kennedy (replacing Sis. Glenn who resigned for health reasons). Sis. Veronica Salary advanced to First Vice President, and Sis. Josephine Swift was named Second Vice President.

Rev. Jerry Seay was called to give the financial report from the 2007 convention; 70 churches registered; 15 associations make up the Northwest District. The total monies collected for 2007 was \$35,932.12. The 2008 goal is \$50,000.

2008 registrations are as follows: Church 0-50 members = \$100.00; 51-250 = \$200.00; 251-200 = \$300.00; Missionary Societies = \$25.00; Pastors = \$15.00; Personal = \$15.00; Matrons = \$12.00; Nurses = \$15.00; Crusaders, Red Circle,

and Sunbeams = \$5.00. President Davidson emphasized that all special efforts for Selma University will be routed through the executive committee so that the Northwest receives proper credit for donations to the school.

There was a special health care benefits announcement made with regards to Medicare. Qualifying individuals were encouraged to inquire about "part C" of the Medicare package that covers the gap in the benefit plan.

Sis. Gertie Lowe (President of the Women's Auxiliary to the State Convention) greeted the assembly and she announced the women's banquet on March 16th at the Sheraton in Birmingham. (Tickets are \$100 as this is a special effort for Selma University)



– See, Report from the Board Meeting, page 9

12 Things the Negro Must Do For Himself

By Nannie Helen Burroughs

(Circa Early 1900s)

1. **The Negro must learn to put first things first. The first things are: Education; Development of Character Traits; A Trade and Home Ownership.**

The Negro puts too much of his earning in clothes, in food, in show and in having what he calls "a good time." The Dr. Kelly Miller said, "The Negro buys what he WANTS and begs for what he Needs."

2. **The Negro must stop expecting God and white folk to do for him what he can do for himself.**

It is the "Divine Plan" that the strong shall help the weak, but even God does not do for man what man can do for himself. The Negro will have to do exactly what Jesus told the man (in John 5:8) to do – Carry his own load – "Take up your bed and walk."

3. **The Negro must keep himself, his children and his home clean and make the surroundings in which he lives comfortable and attractive.**

He must learn to "run his community up" – not down. We can segregate by law, we integrate only by living. Civilization is not a matter of race, it is a matter of standards. Believe it or not – some day, some race is going to outdo the Anglo-Saxon, completely. It can be the Negro race, if the Negro gets sense enough. Civilization goes up and down that way.

4. **The Negro must learn to dress more appropriately for work and for leisure.**

Knowing what to wear – how to wear it – when to wear it and where to wear it, are earmarks of common sense, culture and also an index to character.

5. **The Negro must make his religion an everyday practice and not just a Sunday-Go-To-Meeting emotional affair.**

6. **The Negro must highly resolve to wipe out mass ignorance.**

*The leaders of the race must teach and inspire the masses to become eager and determined to improve mentally, morally and spiritually, and to meet the basic requirements of good citizenship. We should initiate an intensive literacy campaign in America, as well as in Africa. Ignorance – **satisfied ignorance** – is a millstone about the neck of the race. It is democracy's greatest burden.*

– See, **12 Things the Negro Must Do For Himself**, page 7

12 Things the Negro Must Do For Himself (con't from page 6)

Social integration is a relationship attained as a result of the cultivation of kindred social ideals, interests and standards.

It is a blending process that requires time, understanding and kindred purposes to achieve. Likes alone and not laws can do it.

7. The Negro must stop charging his failures up to his “color” and to white people’s attitude.

The truth of the matter is that good service and conduct will make senseless race prejudice fade like mist before the rising sun.

*God never intended that a man’s color shall be anything other than a **badge of distinction**. It is high time that all races were learning that fact. The Negro must first **Qualify** for whatever position he wants. Purpose, initiative, ingenuity and industry are the keys that all men use to get what they want. The Negro will have to do the same. He must make himself a workman who is too skilled not to be wanted, and too **Dependable** not to be on the job, according to promise or plan. He will never become a vital factor in industry until he learns to put into his work the vitalizing force of initiative, skill and dependability. He has gone “**Rights**” made and “**Duty**” dumb.*

8. The Negro must overcome his bad job habits.

He must make a brand new reputation for himself in the world of labor. His bad job habits are absenteeism, funerals to attend, or a little business to look after. The Negro runs an off and on business. He also has a bad reputation for conduct on the job – such as petty quarrelling with other help, incessant loud talking about nothing; loafing, carelessness, due to lack of job pride; insolence, gun chewing and – to often – liquor drinking. Just plain bad job habits!

9. He must improve his conduct in public places.

Taken as a whole, he is entirely too loud and too ill-mannered.

There is much talk about wiping out racial segregation and also much talk about achieving integration.

Segregation is a physical arrangement by which people are separated in various services.

It is definitely up to the Negro to wipe out the apparent justification or excuse for segregation.

The only effective way to do it is to clean up and keep clean. By practice, cleanliness will become a habit and habit becomes character.

– See, **The Negro**, page 8

10. **The Negro must learn to operate business for people – not for Negro people, only.**
To do business, he will have to remove all typical “earmarks,” business principles; measure up to accepted standards and meet stimulating competition, graciously – in fact, he must learn to welcome competition.
11. **The average so-called educated Negro will have to come down out of the air. He is too inflated over nothing. He needs an experience similar to the one that Ezekiel had – (Ezekiel 3:14-19). And He must do what Ezekiel did.**

Otherwise, through indifference, as to the plight of the masses, the Negro, who thinks that he has escaped, will lose his own soul. It will do all leaders good to read Hebrew 13:3, and the first Thirty-seven Chapters of Ezekiel.

A race transformation itself through its own leaders and its sensible “common people.” A race rises on its own wings, or is held down by its own weight. True leaders are never “things apart from the people.” They are the masses. They simply got to the front ahead of them. They simply got to the front ahead of them. Their only business at the front is to inspire to masses by hard work and noble example and challenge them to “Come on!” Dante stated a fact when he said, “Show the people the light and they will find the way!”

There must arise within the Negro race a leadership that is not out hunting bargains for itself. A noble example is found in the men and women of the Negro race, who, in the early days, laid down their lives for the people. Their invaluable contributions have not been appraised by the “latter-day leaders.” In many cases, their names would never be recorded, among the unsung heroes of the world, but for the fact that white friends have written them there.

“Lord, God of Hosts, Be with us yet.”

The Negro of today does not realize that, but, for these exhibits A’s, that certainly show the innate possibilities of members of their own race, white people would not have been moved to make such princely investments in lives and money, as they have made, for their establishment of schools and for the on-going of the race.

12. **The Negro must stop forgetting his friends. “Remember.”**
Read Deuteronomy 24:18. Deuteronomy rings the big bell of gratitude. Why? Because an ingrate is an abomination in the sight of God. God is constantly telling us that “I the Lord they God delivered you” – through human instrumentalities.

The American Negro has had and still has friends – in the North and in the South. These friends not only pray, speak, write, influence others, but make unbelievable, unpublished sacrifices and contributions for the advancement of the race – for their brothers in bonds.

*The noblest thing that the Negro can do is to so live and labor that these benefactors will not have given in vain. The Negro must make his heart warm with gratitude, his lips sweet with thanks and his heart and mind resolute with purpose to justify the sacrifices and stand on his feet and go forward – **God is not respecter of persons. In every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.***

Report from the Board Meeting

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At the conclusion of the business meeting, auxiliaries dispersed for plenary sessions. President Josephine Kennedy presided over the women's planning session. Noted changes were. **Sis. Gladys Stringfellow** resigned as coordinator of Committee Highlights and **Sis. Ida Hobson** resigned as coordinator of the County Workers. **Sis. Frances Martin** will replace **Sis. Hobson** and **Sis. Gladys Hall** will replace **Sis. Stringfellow**. **Sis. Diana Bibb** will continue to serve as one of the moderators for the panel discussion. Churches were asked to submit the names of the 'sick and shut-in' to the District Benevolent Committee. At the conclusion of business, a delicious lunch was provided by the host church.

As this was the first board meeting I attended, I felt it was very informative and I acquired a deeper appreciation for the convention after having participated in this planning stage. Other participants from First African included **Sis. Myrtle E. Gray**, **Sis. Myrtle I. Gray**, and **Sis. Frances Martin**.

Recipe of the Month

Chocolate Layered Delight

Submitted by Sis. Diana Bibb

1 ½ stick butter
1 ½ cups self-rising flour
¾ cup chopped pecans

Mix together and place in bottom of pan for crust. Bake on 350 for 20 minutes or until brown.

1 - 3 ounce cream cheese
1 ½ cup confectioners' sugar
small cool whip

Soften cream cheese with mixer. Mix in confectioners' sugar and cool whip. Spread on top of crust.

2 large packages instant chocolate pudding

Mix according to directions on box. Chill. Spread on top of 2nd layer.

Large cool whip
Spread on top of pudding.
Shredded chocolate or chopped nuts can be sprinkled on top.

“Continue to...”

By Serita N. Reed

Continue to Believe...

Stop telling yourself that your goal is impossible.
Stop listening to others who say you can't be remarkable.
Remove the word “can't” from your vocabulary.
Replace it with “I can” and avoid the worry.

Continue to Plan...

You dream of how you want your life to be
So you establish goals that will set you free.
You plan how you must tackle each negative turn
Because your successful dream is what you Have to earn.

Continue to Have Confident...

Your confident level may be viewed as being cocky.
People may become mad and want to sock ya,
But you don't dare give up on your personal plan.
You have to be in control of what's at hand.

Continue to Dream...

Once one of your dreams has come alive
You will search for another to personally survive.
You will not allow others to dictate your life's goal
Because you have learned that you're in control.

Some things in life that you don't want to forget
Like these essential words that can keep you in check.
So continue to strive for your dream with determination
Then you can appreciate the struggle once you reach your destination.

The Devil's Beatitudes

Contributed by Sis. Mary Kemp

If the devil were to write his beatitudes, they would probably go something like this:

- ◆ Blessed are those who are too tired or busy to spend an hour once a week with fellow Christians – they are my best workers.
- ◆ Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked – I can use them.
- ◆ Blessed are the touchy who stop going to church – they are my missionaries.
- ◆ Blessed are the trouble makers – they shall be called my children.
- ◆ Blessed are the complainers – I'm all ears to them.
- ◆ Blessed are those who are bored with the minister's mannerisms and mistakes, for they get nothing out of his sermons.
- ◆ Blessed is the church member who expects to be invited to his own church – for he is a part of the problem instead of the solution.
- ◆ Blessed are those who gossip – for they shall cause strife and divisions that please me.
- ◆ Blessed are those who are easily offended – for they will soon get angry and quit.
- ◆ Blessed are those who do not give their offering to carry on God's work – for they are my helpers.
- ◆ Blessed is he who professes to love God but hates his brother and sister – for he shall be with me forever!
- ◆ Blessed are you who, when you read this think it is about other people and not yourself – I've got you, too!

First African Baptist Church

Criteria for Scholarship

All graduating students that are members of First African, and meet these requirements, will receive a financial reward scholarship when you enroll in a College or Technical Institute of your choice.

1. Must be an active member in good standing at First African Baptist Church, demonstrated by participating in a specific ministry group or choir.
2. Must perform at least one community service project during every semester.
3. Must have at least a "C" average.
4. Only the student can sign for themselves.
5. Must sign and complete a scholarship application every semester beginning with the 9th grade through the 12th grade to be eligible for four years of scholarship funds, otherwise, you will only be eligible for the number of years you did sign up.
6. Must submit a copy of an official high school transcript (report card) each semester to be turned in with your completed application.
7. Must show proof of acceptance every semester from a two-year or four-year College or Technical Institution before receiving a check of \$250.00 from the church each semester.
8. A College information form must be filled out your first year of college and must be updated if any of the information change or you changes schools.

All forms can be obtained from the church office or any member of the Scholarship Committee.

Committee members

Sis. Betty Bagby

Sis. Brenda Bell

Sis. Emma Melton

April Birthdays

<i>April</i>	1	Rev. Richard L. Morgan
	6	Crystal Smith Charlotte Carter Malik Cole
	8	Dornisha White Tameika K. Brown
	10	Hazel Eubanks
	12	Roderick Jerome Martin Sr. VaShida Christian Taylor
	14	Marqueno Davis
	18	Chiquiya L. Richey
	20	Nathan Williams
	22	Tamitra G. Johnson
	23	Irma Mason
	25	NaaMeka White
	28	Robert B. Watson II
	30	Mary Richey

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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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