Welcome to 2015! 2014 is the past, so everything that happened in that year is done. So, you get to start a new chapter of your life. How cool is that-you can do something new and different or improve on the old! In Isaiah 43:18-19, the LORD tells us: “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” If you make no resolution for the new year, let this Word from the LORD motivate you to seek a new vision and a new interest in the things of GOD. So, stop looking behind-this is why our eyes are in front of us! Your past accomplishments will not sustain you—you need new work, new victories. What is GOD doing in your life right now? What do you want Him to do in your life right now? Past failures are just that-past, so don’t allow them to possess you. Let them go! You need to see (perceive) the new thing that GOD wants to do-get ready for it. The LORD is able to take your wilderness moments-your wasteland moments and bring blessings and life. He can give you purpose and direction. So, if 2014 had more challenging moments that left you feeling like a wanderer-STOP! 2015 is the start of a new chapter. The LORD has set in motion a new direction and a new purpose for your life-follow Him!

A MIND IS A TERRIBLE THING TO WASTE

UNCF Day at Greater Little Zion Baptist Church was December 7th. If you are familiar with Lou Rawls then you should be familiar with UNCF (United Negro College Fund) and the great work that this organization does. Since its founding in 1944, UNCF has raised more than $3.6 billion to help more than 400,000 students receive college degrees at UNCF-member institutions and with UNCF scholarships. UNCF plays a critical role in enabling more than 60,000 students each year to attend college and get the education they need and that the nation needs them to have by: (con’t pg 2)

Reaching the unsaved with
MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP
Rev. Dr. James T. Murphy, Jr., Pastor
Rev. Estelle Chandler, Associate Minister
DEACON/DEACONESS MINISTRY
Bro. Anthony Bazemore
Sis. Terri Bazemore
Sis. Janie Doctor
Bro. Calvin Parson
Bro. Alphronzo Moseley
Bro. Don Newton
Sis. Diane Reese
Bro. James R. Reese, III
Bro. Ned Roper
Bro. William Windley

- Awarding 10,000 scholarships and internships under 400 programs for students from low- and moderate-income families to attend more than 900 colleges and universities across the country;
- Providing financial support for its 37 member historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) for scholarships and capacity building;
- Advocating nationally for the importance of education and college readiness through its annual television program, a national public service announcement campaign, and commentary in national media;
- Advocating locally at events across the country such as Governor's and Mayor's luncheons, Walk for Education events and Mayor's Masked Balls.

UNCF’s Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute issues studies that improve understanding of the issues that face minority education and points the way to solutions.

UNCF’s Institute for Capacity Building, a unique institutional improvement initiative, helps member colleges and universities become stronger and more self-sustaining in areas that can make the difference between success and struggle such as curriculum and faculty enhancement, student recruitment and retention and fundraising.

So, what makes UNCF successful?

- Member HBCUs educate more than 57,000 students each year at tuitions averaging 30 percent less than those charged by comparable institutions. Research shows that HBCUs outperform many larger and better-funded schools at graduating low-income students—the students the country most needs to have college degrees.

UNCF Scholarship Programs increase the likelihood that students will graduate. African American recipients of UNCF scholarships have a 70 percent six-year graduation rate, 10 percentage points higher than the national average, and 30 percent higher than the average for all African Americans. A $5,000 UNCF scholarship increases by seven percent the likelihood that its recipient will graduate from college. The low-income minority recipients of Gates Millennium Scholarships, a partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, have average graduation rates of 90 percent.

UNCF Advocacy has changed the way the nation thinks about education and race. When UNCF’s iconic motto, “A mind is a terrible thing to waste®,” debuted more than 40 years ago, the idea that African Americans should go to college was not widely accepted. Today, the UNCF motto is almost universally known and almost every college has black students. The latest iteration of UNCF’s PSAs frames support for minority education as investment in better futures for students and all of us, and expands the iconic motto to,

“A mind is a terrible thing to waste, but a wonderful thing to invest in.”

So, invest in some great minds! Donate to UNCF!
FROM THE BOOKSHELF

Author: Michele Andrea Bowen

After Bible study, you will want to curl up with a great Christian fiction. Let me recommend three great reads to you by the Essence magazine best-selling author Michele Andrea Bowen. These titles are Church Folk, More Church Folk and Second Sunday. In Church Folk and More Church Folk, keep up with the going-ons with the good Rev. Theophilus Simmons and church drama—church-folk style. In Second Sunday, this story is set in St. Louis in the 1970s. The 100th year anniversary celebration of Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church is approaching and the pastor has died. How will the church pull itself back together and find a new pastor in time to prepare for the church centennial, let alone survive one more day? It seems as though everyone in the church has an idea about who the new pastor needs to be and what direction he should be going. In the tradition of Gloria Naylor’s Women of Brewster Place, Bowen weaves the hilarious stories of several church members as they plan, plot, and connive to have their choice installed as the next pastor before the anniversary celebration. Second Sunday refers to one of the main worship Sundays in small traditional Baptist churches. In the book, it is the day of the scheduled centennial celebration. You will enjoy this humorous perspective on the church and GOD’s people. Ms. Bowen uses her gift of writing to connect readers to drama-filled, but the

Martin Luther King, Jr.
1929-1968

The dream lives in us.

Greater Little Zion Baptist Church offers tutoring in the areas of Math, Science, Social Studies, Reading, Writing & Business. Tutoring is held each Tuesday night at GLZBC, 6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m. The tutoring team includes:

Dr. Al Moseley (Math, Geometry, Physics & Calculus); Dr. Jean Newton (Biology); Dr. Rosalind Blunt (English, Writing); Ms. Carol Ann Walker (English, Math, SAT Prep); Mr. John Rutland (Math, Science, Social Studies); Ms. Malinda Paige (Math, Algebra); Mrs. Lakita Jones (Business, Finance, Accounting); Mr. Mervin Fanfon (Math, Algebra, Pre-Calculus); Mr. Ed James (Math, Algebra, Physics); & Mr. Robert Clark (Math, Algebra).
MONTHLY DEVOTION

"Shamgar... killed six hundred... Philistines with an ox goad."
Judges 3:31 (NKJV)

Shamgar's Secret

Shamgar lived in dangerous times. Philistine gangs roamed the country-side, robbing people: "In the days of Shamgar... people avoided the main roads; and travelers stayed on... pathways" (Judges 5:6). Shamgar's only weapon was an ox goad, a long wooden staff with a steel tip used to prod oxen. But it wasn't until he came under attack that he discovered its full potential.

Understand this: GOD has given you an "ox goad," something you can use to win in the situation you're facing. If you seek Him, He will show you what it is. Like the boy with the five loaves and two fishes, GOD will take something small, bless it, then multiply it to bless others. The Holy Bible says we are to "be instant in season, out of season" (2Timothy 4:2). The Greek words for "be instant" could be translated "be prepared." The Greek word for "season" means "opportunity."

You need to be preparing yourself now, when it looks like nothing is happening, because your season will change and the opportunity to act will suddenly present itself. When it does, you must be ready. In life, opportunities are either coming towards you, or passing you by.

In college, a professor told Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. that if he kept using such lofty words, he would never be a very effective public speaker. You have to wonder what that professor thought as he listened to Dr. King's "I have a dream" speech, and watched him go on to champion civil rights.

What is your ox goad? Use it, and GOD will bless it!

*******************************************************************************************

"Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin." Zechariah 4:10 (NLT)

Change of Address

In 2015, I will no longer be living on the corner of Depression and Doubt. Rent is too high, the space is too little, and there is no room for my dreams to grow.

My new place is located over Destiny and Belief. If you need me, this is where I will be. All mail sent to the old address will be returned to sender!

Thanks, Management
Editorial Thought

The One That Seemed to Really Matter

On December 14, 2014, I sat on the back pew at the 7:45 a.m. service not knowing that the LORD had prepared the Pastor to give me a message-well at least this is how it appeared to me and how I am going to keep thinking. Now, don’t get me wrong-this is not the only time that Pastor Murphy has preached the Word and left an indelible impact on me. But, this Sunday’s Word was different for me—it was the one that seemed to really matter—the one that has resonated with me—the one that has framed my perspective going forward—the one that will help me put 2015 in perspective. “Give Everyday A Chance”—which was birthed from Psalm 118:22-24: “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Now all of these passages are important, but the one that I will use to frame my perspective is the last verse: This is the day which the LORD has made; we (I) will rejoice and be glad in it.” When he preached from this scripture, Pastor used the analogy of when a bird “poops” on you and changes the course of your perspective of the day—much like when your day has been disturbed by some circumstance—when someone or something has “pooped” on you. When you get a visual of a bird pooping on you (and this has actually happened to me!), you can see how something like this might impact your thinking on the day. Without regurgitating the entire sermon, I will attempt to share some of the highlights that were meaningful to me.

Give everyday a chance even when the “bird messes on you”—when life does not go right—even when the day has been disturbed. If GOD had not allowed the knock down, you would not know His picking up. We need to remember that GOD is our salvation. In the situation, rejoice—don’t let the “mess of the bird” get the best of you or you will miss the miracle of GOD. Begin the day by singing songs of affirmation. Entrust your day to the oversight of Jesus. Accept His direction and forget yourself. Saturate yourself in GOD’s grace. No matter what, This is the day that the LORD has made; we (I) will rejoice and be glad in it. He asked the question which serves as a marker for me: Can you praise Me (GOD) with “poop?” And this last thing did it for me: When you “poop” on GOD’s children, He has the perfect toilet paper to wipe it away. So “birds of life” bring it on—there is nothing too hard for my GOD! Beloved, as we enter into 2015, purpose to give everyday a chance because everyday is a day that our LORD has made, and we can rejoice in each of them and be glad! Blessings to you and yours for a ............

I wish you a...........
Sweet Sunday
Marvelous Monday
Tasty Tuesday
Wonderful Wednesday
Thankful Thursday
Friendly Friday
Successful Saturday
Have a great year!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Deaconess Diane Reese
Facts about Birth Defects

Birth defects are serious conditions that are changes to the structure of one or more parts of the body. Birth defects affect 1 in every 33 babies born in the United States each year.

Birth Defects Are Common

Every 4 ½ minutes, a baby is born with a birth defect in the United States. That translates into nearly 120,000 babies affected by birth defects each year.

Birth defects can affect almost any part of the body (e.g., heart, brain, foot). They may affect how the body looks, works, or both. Birth defects can vary from mild to severe. The well-being of each child affected with a birth defect depends mostly on which organ or body part is involved and how much it is affected. Depending on the severity of the defect and what body part is affected, the expected lifespan of a person with a birth defect may or may not be affected.

Identifying Birth Defects

A birth defect can be found before birth, at birth, or any time after birth. Most birth defects are found within the first year of life. Some birth defects (such as cleft lip) are easy to see, but others (such as heart defects or hearing loss) are found using special tests, such as echocardiograms (an ultrasound picture of the heart), x-rays or hearing tests. Learn more about diagnosing birth defects at.

Prevention

Not all birth defects can be prevented. But, there are things that a woman can do before and during pregnancy to increase her chance of having a healthy baby. If you are pregnant or planning to get pregnant, see your healthcare provider. Seeing your healthcare provider before you get pregnant (called the preconception period) can help you have a healthy pregnancy. Prenatal care, which is health care received during pregnancy, can help find some problems early in pregnancy so that they can be monitored or treated before birth. There are other steps a woman can take to increase her chances of having a healthy baby:

- Get 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day, starting at least one month before getting pregnant.
- Don’t drink alcohol, smoke, or use “street” drugs.
- Talk to a healthcare provider about taking any medications, including prescription and over-the-counter medications and dietary or herbal supplements. Also talk to a doctor before stopping any medications that are needed to treat health conditions.
- Learn how to prevent infections during pregnancy.
- If possible, be sure any medical conditions are under control, before becoming pregnant. Some conditions that increase the risk for birth defects include diabetes and obesity.

Causes

Birth defects can occur during any stage of pregnancy. Most birth defects occur in the first 3 months of pregnancy, when the organs of the baby are forming. This is a very important stage of development. However, some birth defects occur later in pregnancy. During the last six months of pregnancy, the tissues and organs continue to grow and develop. Most birth defects are thought to be caused by a complex mix of factors. These factors include our genes (information inherited from our parents), our behaviors, and things in the environment. For some birth defects, we know the cause. But for most, we don’t.

Certain things can increase the chance that a pregnancy will be affected by a birth defect. These are called risk factors. There are some things that you can change to reduce your chances, while other things cannot be
HAPPY FOUNDERS DAY TO

January 15, 1908

January 15, 1911

January 13, 1913

January 9, 1914

January 16, 1920

National Birth Defects Prevention Month
(continued from page 8)

- Smoking, drinking alcohol, or taking certain “street” drugs during pregnancy.
- Having certain medical conditions, such as being obese or having uncontrolled diabetes before and during pregnancy.
- Taking certain medications, such as isotretinoin (a drug used to treat severe acne).
- Having someone in your family with a birth defect. To learn more about your risk of having a baby with a birth defect, you can talk with a clinical geneticist or a genetic counselor (http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/genetics/genetic_counseling.html).
- Being an older mother, typically over the age of 34 years.

Having one or more of these risks doesn’t mean you’ll have a pregnancy affected by a birth defect. Also, women can have a baby born with a birth defect even when they don’t have any of these risks. It is important to talk to your doctor about what you can do to lower your risk. To read more about the prevention of birth defects, go to: http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/index.html.
VERSES TO REMEMBER

Ephesians 4:22-24

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like GOD in true righteousness and holiness.
1) Xerxes (zurk'sez) "the Great" was king of Persia from 486-465 B.C. He was also known by the Hebrew name Ahasuerus (a-haz-u-e'rus). Who was his first queen?
- Bathsheba
- Tahpenes
- The Queen of Sheba
- Vashti

2) In the third year of his reign, Xerxes became very angry with the queen. Why?
- She instigated a rebellion in the harem.
- She refused to worship the Persian gods.
- She refused to exhibit herself to his male guests.
- She refused to bow down to him.

3) All agreed that the queen must be punished. What bad thing would happen if the queen got away with her crime?
- The women of the kingdom, following her example, would refuse to obey their husbands.
- The Persian gods would be offended.
- The noblemen of the kingdom would rebel against Xerxes.
- The king's other wives, following her example, would refuse to obey the king.

4) The queen was forever banned from the king's presence, and a search was begun for a new queen. Why did Xerxes choose Esther as his queen?
- Esther's older cousin, Mordecai, was very wealthy and had gained the king's favor.
- The king's advisors consulted the stars and found that Esther was destined to be queen.
- The king ordered all the most beautiful women of the kingdom brought to his harem so he could choose a new queen. Esther was his favorite.
- The king saw Esther bathing one day while he was on the roof of the palace, and ordered her brought to his harem.

5) What secret did Esther keep from the king?
- She was already married.
- She was in love with Mordecai.
- She was Jewish.
- She was a Philistine.

6) Some time later, Xerxes promoted Haman, one of his nobles, to the highest position in the land. Haman maneuvered the king into issuing an edict that all the Jews in the kingdom be killed. Why did Haman want to kill the Jews?
- Haman was a Philistine, and they had always hated Jews.
- Mordecai refused to pay taxes to him.
- Mordecai refused to kneel down before him.
- The Jews had opposed Haman's appointment.
7) How did Esther thwart Haman’s plot?
- She skillfully convinced the king of Haman’s evil nature.
- She bribed Haman to abandon his plot.
- She convinced Haman’s wife to oppose the plot.
- She convinced all the women of the harem to petition the king against the plot.

8) Once the king had issued the edict against the Jews, it could not be ignored. How was Esther able to prevent the massacre of the Jews?
- She convinced the king to revoke the edict.
- She convinced the king to sign another edict allowing the Jews to defend themselves.
- She spread word to the Jews to go into hiding until the soldiers had passed by.
- She convinced the army commanders not to enforce the edict.

9) Which Jewish holiday commemorates Esther’s heroic acts?
- Hanukkah
- Purim
- Rosh Hashanah
- Yom Kippur

10) Some Christians have said the book of Esther should not be in the Bible. Why?
- It was not part of the original Jewish Scriptures.
- It glorifies the pagan king Xerxes.
- It tends to glorify the pagan gods of the Persians.
- It never mentions God’s name.

Correction to December Test Your Bible Knowledge questions (events related to the birth of Jesus Christ).

5. The angel that appeared to both Joseph and Mary told them:
   - A. “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.”
   - B. “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the LORD.”
   - C. “This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”
   - D. All of the above

Answer: Should have been D which should have read: None of the above.
If you’ve ever been lost without a map or GPS, you understand the value of a higher perspective. Climbing above the terrain to gain a bird’s eye view lets you see which road to take. In the same way, life is often confusing when seen only from a human perspective, but Scripture provides a higher divine viewpoint that adds clarity and direction.

To grasp how limited our vantage point is, try thinking about it this way. A children’s book called Look Book contains Tana Hoban’s photographs, each covered by a page with a circular cutout. In one, what shows through the round opening is unattractive, brown, and bumpy, but by turning the page, we discover it’s the center of a beautiful sunflower. From our narrow perspective, that’s exactly how life’s circumstances can appear—ugly, painful, or frustrating. From GOD’s point of view, however, they’re part of the beautiful picture of His eternal plan.

Perspective is important because it determines whether we live in discouragement or hope, turmoil or peace, dissatisfaction or joy. A divine viewpoint doesn’t come naturally; it requires faith in the truth of GOD’s Word. When we know and believe what the LORD says about His plans, ways, and desires, or spiritual eyes can be opened to perceive His eternal panorama.

READ: Isaiah 55:6-11

Pointing out the vast difference between the LORD and mankind, Isaiah tells us to forsake our own thoughts and ways because no matter how wise we may seem, our reasoning and perception have been tainted by sin. In contrast, his writings repeatedly call GOD the “Holy One.” And in addition to the matter of sin, he wants us to consider the issue of superiority: Our Creator’s thoughts and ways are immeasurably beyond our ability to comprehend.

READ: Isaiah 40:6-31

Other aspects of GOD’s supremacy over man are highlighted in these verses. Since the nature of human existence is transient, man has a limited time frame from which to evaluate and understand life. But our everlasting GOD, who was present at creation, has complete knowledge of all history and knows exactly what will happen in the future (46:8-10).

Because GOD is omniscient, His understanding far surpasses ours. He’s never needed a counselor or teacher, whereas everything we know, we’ve had to learn. Furthermore, nothing is beyond His control—not natural disasters, national events, world rulers, the universe, ordinary human lives. He tirelessly watches over His creation, working everything according to His divine purposes and accomplishing every work of His mouth.

Taking all this into account, whose perspective is more trustworthy—ours or GOD’s? Who sees the entire picture from eternity past to eternity future? Who has the insight and wisdom to decide the best course of action? The answers should be obvious, but trusting GOD’s perspective is at times difficult because it seems so foreign. Yet, if we wait on the LORD for guidance, He promises us a better view as we “mount up with wings like eagles” (v. 31).

(continued on page 11)
REFLECT

♦ The Sermon on the Mount challenges us to look at life from the perspective of GOD’s kingdom.
  1. In Luke 6:20-26, how do the LORD’s definitions of blessings and woes differ from the world’s point of view?
  2. Consider the advice Jesus gave about loving others defending our rights, and holding onto possessions (vv. 27-38). Which of His instructions seem like a reversal of what we would normally consider logical?

♦ The ways of GOD frequently conflict with our thinking.
  1. From your own experience, how would you define financial security, good leadership, and worthwhile ambition?
  2. What did Jesus have to say about these topics in the following passages: Matthew 20:25-28; Luke 12:16-34; 14:7-11?

♦ Paul at one time had a worldly perspective, but he saw things differently after encountering the LORD (Phil. 3:4-8).
  1. How does the apostle’s perspective in 1 Corinthians 1:20-2:5 differ from our culture’s view of strength, independence, and performance?
  2. What was his attitude toward weakness, difficulty, and suffering (2 Cor. 12:7-10)?

RESPOND

♦ Think back over the situations you faced this week. Which of your responses were determined by your perception? How would you have responded differently if you’d considered GOD’s viewpoint?

♦ Even when we realize GOD’s omniscience and sovereignty far surpass human understanding, it can still be hard to trust His ways. What role does faith play in gaining a divine perspective?

♦ This world’s values are often in opposition to GOD’s. Which statement in each pair below aligns with your viewpoint?

  * Keep what you get vs. Give generously of whatever you receive (Luke 12:33)
  * Look out for yourself vs. Consider others more important than yourself (Phil. 2:4)
  * Promote yourself vs. Humble yourself; let GOD exalt you in His time (1 Pet. 5:6)
  * Complain in hard times vs. Rejoice in trials and suffering (James 1:2-4)
  * Live for today and walk by sight vs. Live for eternity and walk by faith (2 Cor. 5:7; Phil 3:8-14)

REVISIT

♦ To know GOD’s thoughts and ways, you must become familiar with His Word. Record what you learn about His viewpoint to help solidify it in your mind.

♦ Memorize Isaiah 55:8-9. Then when you’re tempted to react naturally, ask GOD to help you remember His perspective. Also pray for the power to trust and obey, even if His way seems illogical.

It is all how you look at it—is a young or old woman? Perception!
GREATER LITTLE ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

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Fairfax, VA  22032

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9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Rev. Dr. James T. Murphy, Jr., Pastor
E-mail: James.T.Murphy@glzbc.org

We're on the web:
www.glzbc.org

Worship Times:  8 a.m. & 11 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Prayer Service: Wed, 7 p.m.
Bible Study: Wed, 8 p.m.

The mission of Greater Little Zion Baptist Church is to lead everyone to a full life of development in Christ.
Luke 4:18-19

Reaching the unsaved with the saving message of Jesus Christ.
Matthew 28:19-20

MORNING PRAYER TIME

GLZBC Sunday Morning Prayer Time
A quiet time in the sanctuary to sit and pray between services.
Starting at 9:45 a.m. & ending at 10:15 a.m. (approximately)
POC: Deacon Ned Roper

Where Everybody Is Somebody and Christ Is All.