



SANKOFA



A RETURN TO THE PAST

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Riverview Baptist Church is to become a loving, evangelistic church that seeks to glorify God through worship, ministry, Christian education, missions, fellowship, and stewardship.

WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES ON SUNDAY

It was 30 days before Christmas; Christopher had checked his list and was making sure he was nice and not naughty. He cleaned his room daily and filled his parents' days with hugs and kisses. Even baby sister received more loving care. Although Christopher was only four years old, he used his mom's calendar to count down the days before Santa would arrive. At the shopping mall, he had shared with Santa all the gifts he wanted – gifts not only for himself but for mom, dad, baby sister, and his friend who had no family.

Christopher's parents were Christians and the family attended Church School together; he learned about God's love and the birth and death of Jesus Christ. At this time of year, it was foremost on his mind that Christ was born on Christmas day. The days passed quickly and Christopher marked off the day before Christmas; he jubilantly recited what he could remember of the poem, **'Twas the Night Before Christmas**. He was extremely excited about spending the entire Christmas day playing with his train set, cars, trucks, and other toys. When Christopher told his mom how he would spend Christmas day, she said, "Christmas day is on Sunday." Christopher knew on Sundays the family attended church and he was sad about having to change his plans. After his parents lovingly explained to him the importance of taking time to give thanks to God for His gift of love – Jesus, Christopher smiled reluctantly. Not only would the family members be in church on Christmas day, they would also observe Communion and Baptism. Christopher was very happy to witness his four cousins' baptism. The entire church family rejoiced and gave praise to God for this special time when Christmas came on Sunday. This Christmas day on Sunday was truly in remembrance of the birth and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In a study of Christmas coming on Sunday, an interesting pattern for years was discovered – 5, 6, 11, and 6. The last time Christmas was on Sunday was in 2011 (5 years ago). Christmas is on Sunday this year (2016) and will occur again in 2022, 2033, 2039, 2044, and 2050.

Where will you be on Sunday, December 25, 2016?



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

When Jesus was born, a shining star led Wise Men to the site of His birth; gifts were given to the Baby Jesus.

Christmas is a beautifully decorated season. Homes, stores, as well as the city, are illuminated with colorful lights and trees. We have continued the custom of bright lights and giving gifts at Christmas. This is our way of commemorating the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We greet each other with "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Holidays."

As we remember Christ during this season, we pray for peace and unity in our world. We pray for love and harmony among all humankind. There is no place for discord in God's universe. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NIV)

This quarterly newsletter is a symbol of love from the ministries of our church. It keeps us informed of events involving our church family and the community. We thank our Media Ministry and Office Staff for their dedication in distributing this publication in a timely manner. It is my prayer you will have a blessed holiday season.

Sincerely,



Pastor Hewlett



THE MEANING OF SANKOFA

Sankofa means "go back to the past in order to build for the future," or we should not forget our past when moving ahead. We should learn

from the past and move forward into the future. Sankofa is a realization of self and spirit. It represents the concepts of self-identity, redefinition and vision. It symbolizes an understanding of one's destiny and collective identity of the larger cultural group.

Sankofa is symbolic of the spiritual mind-set and cultural awakening African people were experiencing in the decades after independence on the African continent.

The Sankofa bird is used to represent Sankofa. The symbol is of a bird turning its head backward and its long beak is turned in the direction of its tail. - Reprinted from the Adinkra Dictionary by Bruce Willis

DEACON MINISTRY

Deacon Jacqueline Silver, Chair
Deacon Wayne Thomas, Vice Chair

Oh Lord, what is man that you care for him, the son of man that you think of him? Psalm 144:3

"We yearn, Lord, for the simple beauty of Christmas---for all the old familiar melodies and words that remind us of that great miracle when He who had made all things was one night to come as a babe, to lie in the crook of Mary's arm.

Before such mystery we kneel, as we follow the shepherds and wise men to bring you the gift of our love---a love we confess has not always been as warm or sincere or real as it should have been. But now, on this Christmas Day, that love would find us its Beloved, and from you receive the grace to make it pure again, warm and real.

May the loving-kindness of Christmas not only creep into our hearts, but abide there, so that not even the return to earthly cares and responsibilities, or all the festivities of our own devising will cause it to creep away weeping. May the joy and spirit of Christmas stay with us now and forever."

Peter Marshall (Adapted)



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

ADVENT, which comes from the Latin word for “arrival” or “coming,” is a period of preparation for the birth of our Lord.

ADVENT begins on the Sunday nearest to the 30th of November and lasts until midnight on **Christmas Eve**. **Advent Sunday** is the first of four Sundays before the 25th of December. The first Sunday for Advent for 2016 was November 27.

It is a time of joyous anticipation. The liturgical color is purple, a sign of atonement. It is a time to let the light of the world shine in. It is a time of hope and expectation as we watch the Christmas story unfold.

The **Advent** wreath and candles have special meanings. The wreath, made of evergreens, is a symbol of life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life found in Christ.

The four candles represent the four weeks of **Advent**. The purple candles represent **hope**, **peace**, and **love**. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday and represents **joy**; because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of **Advent**, their preparation is half over and they are close to **Christmas**. The fifth candle, located in the center of the wreath, is white and represents the birth of Christ. It is usually lit on **Christmas Day**. The flame of this candle reminds us He is the light of the world and if we follow Him, we will never walk in darkness, but will have the true light of life.



THE MEANING OF LITURGICAL COLORS

Liturgical is a word derived from “liturgy” meaning a form of public worship. Colors are used to decorate the space of worship according to the season. The church year consists of six seasons: **Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost**.

These seasons follow the life of Jesus beginning with the preparation of His birth. The colors for each season are as follows: **Advent** – purple, as the royal color of the coming Christ; **Christmas** – white, a reference to the purity of the newborn King; **Epiphany** – white, same as Christmas; **Lent** – purple, as the bleak color of repentance and solemnity; **Easter** – white, as the color of joy in the Resurrection; and **Pentecost** – red, as the color of fire to remember the tongues of fire that descended on the crowd in Jerusalem.

There are other colors after Pentecost. The color green is used to indicate the growth of faith as we follow the teachings and ministry of Christ.
- Adapted

RIVERVIEW CELEBRATES ADVENT

The participants for Riverview’s 2016 Advent Ceremony Sundays were:

November 27

Barbara Haynes
Carl James

December 4

Stacy Harris
Rev. Tony Harris

December 11

Linda Anderson
Michael Anderson

December 18

Janet Zimmerman
Leroy Zimmerman



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Mary J. Jackson, Chair
Joan T. Taylor, Vice Chair

The mission of the Christian Education Ministry is to provide a variety of teaching/training opportunities that are biblically based so disciples are encouraged, equipped and empowered for ministry in the church and community.

It's Christmas! It is a happy time when we commemorate the birth of Jesus. It is a cheerful time when we greet each other with "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Holidays." It is a joyful time when melodic songs are sung and bell music is played. It is the time when we are reminded "Jesus is the Light of the World."

The Ministry of Christian Education will continue to teach the importance of what it means to be a follower of Christ. In the process of teaching, we will continue to learn together. Remember, **"A chain is only as strong as its weakest link."**



CHURCH SCHOOL

Rev. Dr. Audrey Hawkins, Superintendent

The mission of the Church School Ministry is to teach God's word in a spiritual environment fostering the development of Christ-like thinkers and doers.

We are still experiencing difficulty in getting children to attend church school. There are no children in any of our departments. Our adult classes are held every Sunday, as usual. We continue to celebrate the Christmas season with our annual tree. This year, our tree was beautifully decorated by our Children's/Youth Ministry – C.O.P.S. (Children of a Powerful Savior). They were supervised by Rev. Creasy Arceneaux and Rev. Cherise Copeland. The tree was lit on the first Sunday of Advent.

The Annual Christmas Program was held Sunday, December 18, at 9:30 a.m. Holiday cheer was exhibited with presentations and sharing of gifts.

We pray you will help us build our church school by inviting or bringing children.

Keep our church school in prayer!



EVANGELISM

Rev. Tony Harris, Co-Chair
Barbara Haynes, Co-Chair

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25:35-36 (ESV)

During the festive celebratory time of the Christmas holiday, many people will be surrounded by family and friends. Yet, for others it may be the worst time of the year. There are people estranged from their families, have lost loved ones and are alone, have no homes to go to, and do not have proper clothing to protect their bodies from the harshness of winter. This is the time of year when many churches and organizations come together to provide emergency shelters. While this is endearing and heart touching, it is also our duty as Christians to be keepers or watchers over our brothers and sisters, as a way of life, not just at Christmas time,

Evangelism is not designated for the few; evangelism is designated for many. We are all commissioned to be witnesses for Christ. We are to be careful how we treat others; the stranger we meet on the street or in a public place could be an angel in disguise.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

Deacon William Jackson, Chair

Stewardship/Bible Sunday was observed on November 20. The theme was "Stewardship: Praying, Serving, Giving." Thanks to those who agreed to participate during the service. Mary J. Jackson served as our Worship Leader. Other program participants included Helen Gary, Bernadine Spencer, Deaconess Rita Henderson, and Deacon Ida McCollum. Pastor Hewlett's sermon, "Thanks for Giving," was very inspiring. The Male Ensemble, directed by Sterling Hines, Director of Music, rendered inspirational music.

We are looking forward to another year of "Praying, Serving, and Giving." It is our plan to teach the Biblical concepts of commitment and the wise management of time, talent, natural resources, and treasures.

The support of our church family is greatly appreciated.

C.O.P.S./CHILDREN'S/YOUTH MINISTRY

Rev. Cherise Copeland, Co-Chair

Rev. Creasy Arceneaux, Co-Chair

Greetings from C.O.P.S. (Children Of A Powerful Savior)

On December 3, the Children's/Youth Ministry sponsored the Broadway Bound Play, **#There's Something About Mary!** Written and directed by Kyla Jones, a resident of Baltimore, Maryland, the play is based on the question, "What would happen if this occurred in our digital age today?" (Kyla is the granddaughter of our very own, Carole J. Hall.)

Registration began at 8:30 a.m. and continued throughout the day. We had a wonderful group who was eager to learn, fellowship, share, and have fun!

Kyla brought her cast down to share the EXPERIENCE with our youth. The youth in attendance were given an opportunity to participate with the cast for a public presentation of what they had learned.

The culminating event held at Riverview, started at 6:00 p.m.. This improv theater was well received by the audience.

Special thanks to Sheila Craddock for connecting our ministry with Kyla. Special thanks also to Carolyn Turner for coordinating the food for everyone. We are appreciative to all who were involved and supported us.

ADULT MINISTRY

Rev. Dr. LaVerne Briggs, Co-Chair

Sheila Thomas, Co-Chair

Scriptures to ponder for Christmas

And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Luke 1:28-33 (ESV)

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." Luke 2:10-12 (ESV) When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." Luke 2:15 (ESV)



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

LEADER DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOLARSHIP MINISTRY

Deaconess Threnodiez Baugh, Chair

The Leader Development Ministry successfully completed all of its objectives for this year.

During this year, in addition to the scholarships awarded, we supported members in attending the following conferences:

1. Kaila Lambert, Rev. Creasy Arceneaux, and Driana Arceneaux – AB Girls National Gathering
2. Sterling Hines – Gospel Music Workshop of America
3. Rev. Audrey Hawkins – Ellison-Jones Convocation, sponsored by the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology

We are currently planning special events for Black History Month; the theme will be **“The Crisis in Black Education.”**



MEDIA MINISTRY

Deacon William Jackson, Chair

The mission of the Media Ministry is to disseminate the message, mission and ministry of Jesus Christ to the congregation and the community.

We are appreciative of all persons who submitted articles for Sankofa this year. Your articles help to keep us informed of what you are doing in your ministries. We thank our Facebook Administrator for postings and keeping our Facebook page up-to-date.

We are looking forward to the new improvements on our Web page and our Facebook page in 2017.

Should you desire to share an event on our Facebook page, please notify us two weeks in advance.

We thank our media staff for their commitment and hard work throughout the year.

OUR MISSIONS MINISTRY

Carolyn Washington, Chair
Joan T. Taylor, Vice Chair

The mission of the Missions Ministry is to exemplify and spread the Christian message of care, mercy, and love and to remain involved in educational opportunities for spiritual growth.

Our ministry has been busy helping others. In November, we gave a financial donation of \$120 to the Baptist General Convention to support National Day of Prayer.

In November, the Missions and Food Bank Ministries prepared pre-Thanksgiving meals for our sick and shut-in members. We are grateful to James Montague for preparing the meals. Our sincere appreciation goes to members of the Deacon Ministry and Carolyn Washington for delivering the meals. Those who were not able to receive a meal were given a Thanksgiving card with a monetary donation. Thanks also to all who gave financial support. The recipients expressed their gratitude to the Riverview family for thinking of them.

We also filled 3 boxes to support the AB Girls Operations Christmas Child Project.

We pray you will have a blessed holiday!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

DISCIPLESHIP & FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

Deacon Fennon Henderson, Chair
Rev. Dr. Audrey Hawkins, Vice Chair

The mission of the Discipleship and Fellowship Ministry is to nurture and teach new disciples and the congregation in their faith journey, and to provide a welcoming environment to visitors.

Dates to Remember: January 14 – 15, 2017

On Saturday, January 14, the Discipleship and Fellowship Ministry will team with Children's/Youth Ministry (C.O.P.S.), Leader Development Ministry, and Prayer Partner Ministry for a celebration for Black History. Unity Sunday will be observed on Sunday, January 15. We solicit your support in attending both of these events.

Our ministry supported the AB Girls with their 2016 Operation Christmas Child Project.

The Discipleship and Fellowship Ministry will continue to work closely with our Children's Church to serve our growing church family.

Looking up and forward!



SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

Trustee Kirk Jones, Chair

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself"
Matthew 22:39 (NKJV)

The year 2016 is coming to an end very soon. We will begin a new year with many of the same challenges we faced this year. The issues we face, like feeding the hungry, clothing the poor, housing the homeless, and educating our children, will still be in the forefront. Our community will continue to work on these and other issues in "our village" in 2017.

Organizations in the area, such as, CARITAS, RISC, and other mission groups will need additional help and support. Our commitment to social justice should be unwavering as we march into a new year. In the coming year, we will be presented with a number of opportunities to aid, assist and help our neighbors as we seek to improve their lives along this walk with Jesus. With God's help, I know we will be steadfast and dedicated in our efforts to help make this a better world as we think globally and act locally.

MAY YOUR HOLIDAYS BE BLESSED!



Christmas Blessing

Dear Lord,

We thank You for being here with us as we celebrate this cherished holiday to honor Your precious, sacred birth.

We recognize and acknowledge that all the material pleasures we enjoy today, the food, the gifts, and everything else come from You, Lord, through your grace, your compassion, and Your love for us.

Help us throughout the year to always strive to be worthy of all the blessings You have given us, our family, our friends and our comforts, by living our lives in Your will according to Your Holy Word.

We pray that You will bless this food and everyone at this table.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Joanna Fuchs

**RIVERVIEW SENSATIONAL
SENIOR MINISTRY**

Trustee Minnie Carey, Chair
Stephanie Cason, Vice Chair

The Mission of the Sensational Senior Ministry is to continue to develop members spiritually, mentally, socially and physically, which will enhance the overall quality of life.

The Sensational Seniors completed 10 boxes for the Operation Christmas Child Project sponsored by our AB Girls Ministry along with a financial contribution to help the girls with other projects. Items were also given to a youth at Riverview.

This group saw the following movies: "When the Bough Breaks," "Boo! A Madea Halloween," and "Almost Christmas." Other activities included arts and crafts, and celebrating birthdays with lunch. On December 10, we enjoyed the performance of "Glorious Christmas Nights" at West End Assembly of God on Parham Road.

We welcome Barbara Haynes to our Ministry. Come join the seniors on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, September - June, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – seniors 55 and older are welcome. Make sure you call first to confirm if we will be at church because we are seniors on the move.

Our motto: "Don't sit at home feeling lonesome and blue, come join us; we have something for you to do!"

**YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY
NEXT GENERATION**

Deaconess Julie Randall Co-Chair
Deacon Sabrina Montague Co-Chair

The Young Adult Ministry - Next Generation will resume meetings in 2017. We are planning fun and exciting activities. Our ministry welcomes those who are serious about Jesus Christ and seeking to impact our community and church in a positive manner.

Have a blessed holiday season.



PRAYER PARTNER MINISTRY

Deacon Ida B. McCollum, Chair
Rev. Dr. LaVerne J. Briggs, Vice Chair

"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." Matthew 21:22

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

God of Peace,

Thank you for Your Christmas gift of peace, for the birth and life of the nonviolent Jesus, and for all the blessings of peace, hope, and love He offers.

Thank you for being a peaceful, nonviolent God. Thank you for blessing peacemakers, justice-seekers, the poor, the mournful, the meek, the pure of heart and children.

As we celebrate Your Son's birth and life, give us new grace, strength, and energy to carry on His work of peace and nonviolence. May we become His faithful disciples, apostles, companions, and friends, so we might be holy peacemakers.

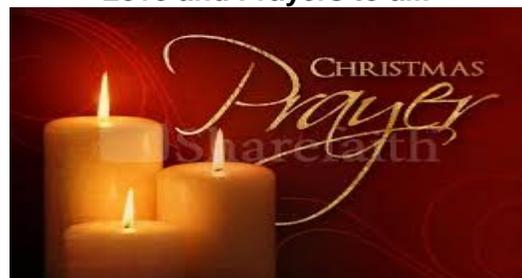
God of Peace, help us to become more authentic people of Gospel nonviolence. Inspire millions of Christians around the world to reject violence and the just war theory once and for all and to understand and embrace the nonviolence of Jesus with a firm new commitment.

Through the example of Jesus, help us to walk the path of peace, proclaim Your vision of peace, and welcome Your Christmas gift of peace on earth. We ask this in the name of the nonviolent Jesus. Amen.

John Dear (Adapted)

Praise God for His Son, Jesus. May your Christmas and New Year be blessed and bountiful!

Love and Prayers to all!



COUPLES MINISTRY

Rev. Stephen and Jeannie Hewlett, Co-chairs
Eugene and Sheila Thomas, Co-chairs

You are invited to attend our Valentine's Day Celebration, Saturday, February 11, 2017. This event will be held at the Ginter Park Women's Club, 3016 Seminary Avenue, from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. The event will include a buffet dinner with music and lots of fun for all. The cost is \$50.00 per person. Should you need additional information, please contact a member of our ministry.

HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS!

AB GIRLS

Rev. Creasy Arceneaux, Co-Chair
Rev. Cherise Copeland, Co-Chair

The mission of the AB Girls is to grow in Christ, serve others in God's world, and share our gifts of time, money, talents, and prayers so the light of life may shine through us.

The girls started a yearlong event entitled Operation Christmas Child which began in January and ended in November. Operation Christmas Child ministers to children in war-torn and famine-stricken countries. In just two decades, it has inspired everyday people to provide more than 100 million gift-filled shoeboxes to needy children in 130 countries.

Ministries and individuals in Riverview teamed with AB Girls in fulfilling this project. More than 100 Christmas shoe boxes were prepared and delivered. We sincerely appreciate all who participated in this worthwhile project for the less fortunate.

Note: This article was submitted by Driana Arceneaux, AB Girls President and member of the AB Girls National Leadership Team.

Each One, Help One!



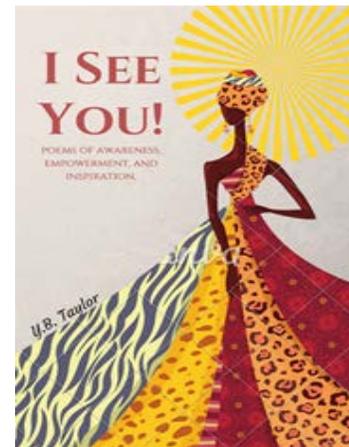
FINANCE MINISTRY

Deacon William Jackson, Chair

The mission of the Finance Ministry is to establish and maintain an efficient financial system that improves resources, supports the church's mission and its ministries, and models and teaches stewardship.

NOTE: Disciples are urged to fulfill their 2016 financial responsibilities. The Church Budget is dependent upon our dedication toward giving and tithing. We are appreciative to all who participated in Adopt-A-Pew. It signified results of a family working together. May God continue to bless us all!

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND GOD BLESS



A NEW BOOK IN 2017

Y.B. Taylor is preparing to release her fifth literary child in the first quarter of 2017. The Adinkra symbol Nea Onnim No Sua A. Ohu follows and precedes each poem. The meaning of the symbol is "knowledge, life-long education and continued quest for knowledge."

FOOD BANK & CLOTHES RACK

James Montague, Chair

The Vera T. Johnson Food Bank and Clothes Rack is opened on 3rd Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

The food bank needs to be replenished. We are in need of canned goods, soups (canned, cup or oodles of noodles) and canned meats (tuna, spam, salmon, mackerel, corned beef hash, Vienna sausages, potted meat, etc.). Please take note of the expiration dates on foods donated. We thank you for sharing a portion of your good fortune.

“Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.” Proverbs 22:9 (ESV)

BUS MINISTRY

James Montague, Co-Chair
Deacon Fennon Henderson, Co-Chair

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” 1 Peter 4:10 (ESV)

For several months, the Bus Ministry has been pleading for more drivers. Currently, James Montague drives one of the buses mostly every Sunday and the other bus drivers drive twice a month. Drivers are urgently needed to transport our members for Sunday worship as well as for special services at other churches. Please share your gift by volunteering once a month and help “ease the load” of our drivers.

If you need a ride for Church School or morning worship, please call the church office in advance (804-353-6135). The schedule will be prepared on Saturday. Thank you and God bless.

PERSONNEL MINISTRY

Bernadine Spencer, Chair

Employee Service Awards Presented

The fourth quarter indicates the end of fiscal year 2016. It’s been a busy time for everyone. In October, the Pastor’s and all employee evaluations were completed. A

summary of the Pastor’s evaluation was presented at the December church meeting.

Employees Service Award Sunday was celebrated in November. We honored two loyal and dedicated stewards:

Twenty-Five Year Service Award – Sandra Allison, Music Ministry – Youth Choir.
Twenty-Year Service Award – Wanda Chambliss, Church Secretary.

Each was given a love donation of fifty dollars. We thank them for their continued years of service to Riverview Baptist Church. “The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.” Matthew 9:37. (NIV) Let us continue to support the efforts of our employees.

As we wait, in anticipation, of what the New Year will bring, be still and feel God’s presence overflowing now and throughout the year. Remember, we must continue to have faith that the Lord will take care of things outside our control. The Personnel Ministry wishes everyone a blessed and Happy New Year.

Christ Is The Light Of Christmas

Christmas joy and lights aglow;
Christmas songs to warm and cheer
Excitement is on the children’s faces
As anticipation fills the air —

But for some, it can be lonely
When loved ones have passed away,
Memories are all that linger
As the years begin to fade

But Christ’s light should never dim;
It should ever shine out bright
Our ray of hope in this troubled world
Is our joy of eternal light

Christmas, when spent with Jesus,
Can warm our hurting hearts,
For as His light shines within us,
Its glow warms our deepest parts.

~M.S. Lowndes



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Alex Johnson (grade 4) and **Jasmine Johnson** (grade 6) were recognized for Scholar Roll achievement at Westside Elementary School in Smithfield, VA. Jasmine received a medallion for all As on the middle school level. (Alex and Jasmine are the children of Alana Cheeks Johnson and the grandchildren of Deaconess Brenda Cheeks.)

Kendall Phillips received 4s and 3s on her report card. 2s is the average for children in her age group; Kendall is considered above average. Kendall attends Hening Elementary School. "Kynni" is enrolled in hip hop classes; she participated in a recital on December 13. She is also a cheerleader for the basketball team.

Kameron Phillips is taking honors classes and had straight As on his report card at Manchester Middle School. Kam's football team made it to the Regional Championship game. He is also a member of the basketball team.

Leah Thomas, daughter of Eugene, Jr. and Tia Thomas, and granddaughter of Eugene, Sr. and Sheila Thomas, performed in the Nutcracker presented by the Richmond Ballet at Center Stage. The performance began on December 10 and will end on December 23. Leah is in the 3rd grade at Collegiate School.

Victoieria Butler is a Scholar Roll student at John B. Cary Elementary School.

Alaniyah Butler is an excellent and well-behaved student at John B. Cary Elementary School. She is in the first grade.

Kaila Lambert is a Scholar Roll student at Anna Julia Cooper Middle School.

Daliah Smallwood is a 7th grade honor student at Fairfield Middle School.

Travis Cambric is an honor student at Trinity High School. He is also a member of the basketball, football, and track teams.

Driana Arceneaux attended her first AB Girls National Leadership Team meeting in Philadelphia, PA. This was her first time traveling alone; she arrived and returned safely. The Executive Director of American Baptist Women, Virginia Holmstrom, was impressed with Drians's participation.

Rev. Creasy Arceneaux received all As for her first semester at Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University.

On November 20, **Deacon Harvey Carey** was awarded the Astoria Beneficial Club's Certificate of Appreciation at their 115-Year Anniversary Dinner. The Astoria Beneficial Club visits and helps elementary schools in Richmond and awards scholarships to high school students.

William McCollum is a Scholar Roll student at Community High School.



DID YOU KNOW????

The rail on the side of the church near the Annex Building was donated by the Women's Progressive League; the organization no longer exists. This group was organized to give small needed items to the church. There are only three remaining members of the Women's Progressive League, **Deaconess Serena Archer, Audrey Britt, and Margaret Carter.**



The Legend of The Candy Cane



The Shepherd's Staff: He chose to make the candy cane in the shape of a shepherd's staff. After all, Jesus is the shepherd to his followers and the Bible notes that the "sheep" would hear His voice and follow him (*Psalm 23:1, John 10:11, John 10:27-30, Isaiah 40:11*).

The Letter J for Jesus: Not only was the candy cane in the shape of a staff, but when held upside down, it formed a "J," which stood for Jesus (*Luke 1:31, Matthew 1:21*).

He is A Rock: The candy maker chose hard candy for the candy cane, which was done to remind children that Jesus was our "rock," dependable and strong (*Psalm 31:3*).

By His Stripes: Wide red stripes were added to the candy cane, representative of the crucifixion and the blood Jesus shed for our sins.

Red - His Shed Blood: Through his blood, we are given salvation and life (*Revelation 1:5, John 3:16, Luke 22:20*).

White - Purification from Sin: There are also white stripes on the candy cane, which represent the holiness, and purity of Jesus, who was sinless (*1 John 1:7*).

Sweet Fragrance of Christ: Peppermint was the flavor that the candy maker chose for the candy cane. Peppermint was very similar to hyssop, which was used for sacrifice and purification in the Old Testament, reminding us of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. It also reminds us of the spices brought by the Wise Men when they came to visit Jesus (*Psalm 51:7, John 10:29, Matthew 2:11*).

Broken For Us: Of course, when the candy cane is eaten, it is often broken, which the candy maker meant as a reminder that when Jesus was crucified, his body was broken (*1 Cor. 11:24*).

Love of Christ: The candy cane was also made to be given as a gift, representing the love of Jesus when he gave us the gift of salvation.

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