

The Voyager

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FEBRUARY 2011

OLI: A *Fantastic Voyage*

by Sister Barbara Hilliard

The beginning of a new year was also the beginning of a new initiative for Mt. Helm members. Odyssey Life Institute, a program that supports Pastor Rhodes' vision for the church, is allowing us to take another step forward for God. We are eternally grateful to God for instilling in our hearts the desire to "Launch Out into the Deep" on this fantastic voyage and move us from membership to discipleship.

As outlined by Pastor Rhodes, OLI is a discipleship education resource that will (a) empower you to go deeper in your Christian faith and practice; (b) equip you with the theological and practical tools needed to faithfully live, love, and lead like the Lord Jesus in our present world; (c) enable us to journey together from mere membership to passionate discipleship; and (d) help anyone and everyone, no matter where you are in your faith journey.

Pastor Rhodes further explains that this odyssey is an extended voyage and intellectual or spiritual quest that will engage participants spiritually, intellectually and socially. Participants will discover many things about themselves, their faith and world, and what God is calling each individual to do for His glory. Then we will be able to move out into the world with purpose and enthusiasm and build up the church by being vibrant witnesses for our risen Savior.

OLI meets each Wednesday from 6p.m. to 7 p.m. in the Brotherhood Bible classroom. Members and nonmembers are welcome to come and join those who have already embarked on this mission. Our focus will m

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welcome to join us!

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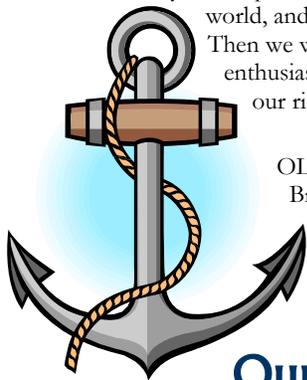
GO RED!

February is Heart Health Month.

The Health Ministry of Mount Helm Baptist Church invites the church family to the "Go Red Day Fellowship Luncheon" on Sunday, February 20, 2011, immediately following the church service.

Remember to wear something red as a part of your attire.

If you need more information, please contact the Health Ministry Chairperson, Sister Maudell Smith.



Our Anchor in Ministry: Brotherhood Bible Class to Celebrate 83 Years



The Brotherhood Bible Class will observe its eighty-third year anniversary on Sunday, February 13, 2011, during the 11:00 a.m. church service. The Honorable Carlton Reeves, the recently appointed Federal Judge of the Southern Federal District Court of Mississippi, is the guest speaker.

LEGACY PRESERVED

The members of the Brotherhood Bible Class are writing a book to chronicle the history of the class from its origination (1928) through the year 2010. It will focus on the relation of the members to selected trends such as history, politics, economic and social facets and how these elements have impacted Jackson, the State of Mississippi, and the United States. We will keep you informed of the publication date.



BEHOLD the New!

by Pastor C.J. Rhodes



Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? Isaiah 43:19

Behold, I make all things new! Revelation 21:5

We are now a month and some change into the new year, and what a year it's been so far. Sudan is now two countries. Tunisia, Yemen, and now Egypt are all experiencing revolution. In our own country millions of Americans are trying to survive the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression. Many institutions—churches among them—are coming to terms with the possibility of being obsolete in a rapidly evolving culture. Technology has transformed the way we connect and communicate—both across the table and across the globe.

Our world is changing. Literally.

What's sad is that too many don't sense that we are living in a different world than, say, five years ago. It reminds me of the Lord's

words through the prophet Isaiah: "Behold, I do a new thing! Don't you see it?" God is doing a new thing, indeed; if only the eyes of our understanding would be enlightened so that we could see it for ourselves.

Understandably, most of us hate change. We have our routines and rituals and we like things just the way they are, thank you very much. I remember when my bank, the former Wachovia, became Wells Fargo. I walked into my favorite branch one day and Wachovia's pleasant blue was replaced with Wells Fargo's bold red and mustard yellow. I disliked the change. Though all the tellers were the same, greeting me with their familiar smiles, they were now learning a new system. **It was expected; I knew about my bank's merger for months. But seeing the new thing made me grieve the loss of the familiar.**

The same thing happened to me when Facebook changed its look and usability. I complained about how much I liked the old format and how Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook's founder) was just doing too much, too fast.

But as time went on, I recognized that it wasn't the end of the world. In fact, I grew to like some, though not all, of the changes with my bank and on Facebook.

Yes, I grieved the loss of familiarity, but as I stayed open to the new and I slowly embraced it as my new normal.

We're living in a time of great change, and that can be frightening. Much of this change is inevitable, no matter how nostalgic we'll be for "the good ole' days." But we can find solace in the God who makes all things new. Though He's the same today, yesterday, and tomorrow, Scripture repeatedly shows us that His methods and movements are ever changing. He changes names and addresses, directions and destinies. He changes us so we can change the world in the power of His Spirit. In this year of great changes, may this old ship of Zion embrace God's future for us. Sure, it'll be unfamiliar to some, but God is faithful to see us safely through. And, if you're honest and open, you may just like the new thing as much—or more—than the old. May we see and savor the new thing God is doing right before our eyes.

Youth Ministry Sets A Course for Success

by Sister Arva Fuller

Mt Helm's Youth Ministry has much to offer the youth of the church. Youth Services are held the first, second and fourth Sunday of each month. On the third Sunday, the youth worship with the adults and take a leadership role in the service by assisting with the responsive reading, prayer, and the worship through giving portions of the service. The Youth Choir sings each fifth Sunday. Planned activities are scheduled each Wednesday night at 6 p.m.

The youth have identified several goals and activities which they want to accomplish during the year 2011. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Increase attendance**
- **Communicate regularly** with the sick and shut-in members via cards or phone calls
- **Increase knowledge** of the Bible by memorizing verses and learning the books of the Bible

- **Visit nursing homes** where our members are housed.

In January, the youth presented "Extension of the Dream", an activity in which each youth gave his/her ending to Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech.



The Sunday Youth Service is patterned after the regular church service. They sing the *Gloria Patri* and the *Doxology*.

The goal is to make sure they are prepared to take their place in the adult worship service. The Youth Service combines singing with discussions of the Bible and how it applies to everyday life situations.

You are invited to encourage all youth whom you know to come and be a part of something great, join the Youth Ministry today.



We Salute...

MEMBER PROFILE:



Sister Emma Hurley joined Mt. Helm Baptist Church in 1972 and is a Deaconess. She holds the office of Director of Christian Education and has served on the Homecoming, History and Women's Day Committees. Sis. Hurley also sings in the Choir, is a Sunday School Teacher, and is a member of the Colley Missionary Society, the Ollie Love Bible Class, and the Youth Ministry. She has also served as the Director of Vacation Bible School.

Sis. Hurley at the Mt. Helm 175th Anniversary Banquet, November 12, 2010.

Can We Get Much Higher? by Sister Angela Norwood

Black History Month is here again, which signals the time to reflect on the important people and events that have occurred in African American history. Sadly, the month's brief occurrences have grown stale and inconsequential. We all get tricked into attending "I Have a Dream" re-readings, parades, marches, and singings of "We Shall Overcome", only to conclude the month in a perfunctory coup de grace of a rendition of "Kumbaya."

Mount Helm itself has always contributed to these obligatory celebrations, which this year consisted of the youth giving brief speeches of their aspirational dreams. The youth have some nice dreams, if not typical, which mostly consisted of attaining the American Dream, e.g., finishing college, getting married, having two kids and living on such-and-such street with a white picket fence. Yet, these dreams were missing something. Did you catch it? Hint: It is a vital component of the very substance of Black History Month.

While these dreams emphasized so much of the tangible and material aspects of life, they lacked the spiritual ambitions of civil rights advancement that should be emphasized during Black History Month. The youth's dreams did not encompass the desire to address and rectify issues that continue to affect black folks today, especially in light of current events, such as the parasitic effects of payday loans, the proposed Civil Rights Museum by a governor with a questionable stance on civil rights, or even the Ruth's Chris Steak House semi-controversy in Madison. Black History Month celebrates the people

who looked past the Corvettes and two-story homes and personally sacrificed, because they "would rather die on their feet than live on their knees."

Our relaxed attitude every February has contributed to our youth's willingness to live on at least one bent knee, if not both. It is not there fault, because they have not encountered anything tantamount the experiences of the Civil Rights Movement. The fault lies with us, because we have forgotten the struggles and lessons learned from our previous generations and gotten complacent with the shared conformity of our lives and, thus, succumbed to the desire to attain more and more junk. This is what our children see and this is where their aspirations lie.

Devastating, especially considering that just last year, Congressman John Lewis, who was a co-founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a group which organized student activism during the Civil Rights Movement, and who personally endured more than 40 arrests, physical attacks, and serious injuries as a civil rights pioneer, was spat on and called the "n" word for supporting health care legislation.

The struggle for equality is far from over and instead of convening every February for gratuitous "celebrations," we should do as a past article in the Huffington Post suggests and ask ourselves, "What's Next?"

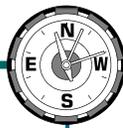


Online giving option available through **PayPal**

Members, friends and supporters of Mt. Helm Baptist Church are now able to make donations online through PayPal at www.mthelm.org. Please know that online giving is simply a new option. You may continue to give in the way that best fits your lifestyle — during worship service or by mailing your contributions to Mt. Helm.

Our Treasurer, Brother Michael States has implemented the process to facilitate online giving. From the Mt. Helm home-page, scroll down to the donate button. This will take you to the PayPal page where you may pay your tithe, make a general donation (offering), or contribute to community benevolence (caring and sharing fund). Visitors to the site also have the opportunity to support Catch the Vision (property acquisition efforts) or give to our Missions Programs.

To all contributors, we say thank you for making a donation to Mt. Helm Baptist Church. Your support as a co-laborer in this great ministry will allow us to continue to spread the Gospel and serve our brothers and sisters in the name of Jesus Christ. Please know that we will be good stewards of the resources you have entrusted to us and through the power of the Holy Spirit we will build God's kingdom together.



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To be good stewards of our resources we are seeking to keep printing/reproduction costs for the newsletter to a minimum.

The newsletter will be available online at www.mthelm.org as a downloadable pdf on the Monday following the first Sunday of each month. Printed copies will be made available to our sick and shut-in members and to those who do not have internet access. Please inform Sister Barbara Hilliard if you require a printed copy.

Articles, photographs and notices of special events may be submitted to Sister Hilliard or to Sister Olivia Thomas. We look forward to expanding and increasing *The Voyager* and we thank you for your assistance and support.

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www.mthelm.org

The Strategy for a *Successful* Launch . . .

by Brother Jason Thompson



A successful launch into the deep requires a succinct strategy to successfully navigate the sometimes troubled waters of the world and the spiritual skills to execute the tasks necessary to keep the ship moving along its divine course.

Mt. Helm's strategy for the next five years has been carefully outlined after analyzing thoughtful insights and feedback from the congregation and visitors to ensure that our ship sails efficiently and effectively into the future. However, the drafting of the strategic plan is only the beginning of our joyous journey. We are longer passengers. We are full-fledged sailors on the sea of change that will lead Mt. Helm to its destiny.

The church's storied history has provided a wonderful vessel on which to sail. This vessel has always been and will continue to be steered by the captain of our lives, Jesus Christ. It is not incumbent upon us to do our part as co-laboring sailors to open the sails and let His wind propel us into uncharted territory.

The scope of the strategic plan is broad. However, a recurring theme is the need to fellowship more deeply and more sincerely with our brothers and sisters in the community where Mt. Helm rests. A recent article in *The Clarion-Ledger* noted that one of the poorest neighborhoods in the City of Jackson is located in the Farish Street District. In this particular community, nearly 40% of families live in poverty, and most residents over the age of 25 do not have high school diploma. With such turmoil in our backyard, it is not good enough that our ship is adorned with beautiful sails and towering masts.

Our ship must be the source of sustenance and support for the destitute, downtrodden and downcast members of society.

Bear in mind, our journey cannot and will never be merely about statistics. It has always been and will continue to be about the Spirit. We must be willing to allow our hearts to be open to the guidance of the Spirit, even when we are led in to the deepest, darkest corners of the world. For it is then, and only then, that we can begin to come to terms with the deepest, darkest parts of ourselves – those parts that can only be illuminated by Love and the Light of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If you have not had the opportunity to peruse the strategic plan, I invite you to do so at your earliest convenience. *(Editor's note: Copies are available in the Church administrative office or you may contact Brother Thompson.)*

More importantly, I invite you explore ways in which you can commune more deeply with Jesus Christ and with your brothers and sisters in Christ so that, "you may walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Colossians 1:10)

Black Pioneers Make a *Splash* in American History

Because the month of February has been designated "Black History Month", we decided to share some relevant facts for your perusal and entertainment. However, we want to emphasize that we must focus on Black History every month of the year.



Fredrick McKinley Jones (1893-1961)

Fredrick McKinley Jones held over 60 patents, with most of them pertaining to refrigeration. His portable air conditioner was used in World War II to preserve medicine and serum.

African American surgeon **Charles R. Drew** is often credited with the invention of the first large-scale blood bank.

African American mechanical engineer, **David Crosthwait, Jr.**, created the heating systems for the Rockefeller Center and New York's Radio City Music Hall.

The first sociology department in the U.S. was established by educator and civil rights leader, **W.E.B. Du-Bois.**

Allensworth is the only California community to be founded, financed and governed by African-Americans. Created by Allen Allensworth in 1908, the town was built with the intention of establishing a self-sufficient, all-black city where African-Americans could live their lives free of racial discrimination.

Bridget "Biddy" Mason founded the First African American Methodist Episcopal Church in Los Angeles.

Dr. Maulana Karenga created the African-American holiday, Kwanzaa, in 1966.

Louis Armstrong bought his first coronet at age seven with money he borrowed from his employers. He taught himself to play while in a home for juvenile delinquents.