

FEBRUARY 2020

# The Epistle



## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

450 Orchard St. N.W.,  
Vienna, Virginia 22180  
(703) 938-8525 • [www.fbcv.org](http://www.fbcv.org)  
Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Pastor

FIRST FORWARD... Philippians 3:13-15



*From*  
**Pastor  
Walton's  
Desk**

## First Forward

*Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14*

Dear First Family,

A new year has begun, new leaders have been enlisted, leaders have been charged with an assignment, ministries have been charged with a focus, the year has been saturated with prayer and the 2020 Leadership retreat is behind us. I pray that you, like me, are ready to forge ahead.

As we begin our sixth year as pastor and people, I am ever so confident in this reality; First Baptist is a blessed church. The hand of the Lord has been guiding this ministry for nearly 153 years. We have been blessed with phenomenal leaders. We have had signifi-

## New Ministry at FBCV: The Social Justice Ministry

by Andrea B Logan, *Epistle* Staff Writer

The Social Justice Ministry is new to First Baptist Church of Vienna, but the ideas and movement behind it, are not new concepts to the membership. "The Black Church has always been at the forefront, speaking to issues of justice and inequality not just for African Americans but for all of humanity. We model our ministry after the Master Himself, Pastor Walton said about the new ministry. "Jesus was always in the business of teaching, preaching and participating in acts of liberation and empowerment. The Social Justice Ministry, though not a political organization, is charged with addressing policies that impact us as a congregation and as individuals."

Kofi Annan and Dorri Scott will be co-servant leaders for the ministry. Virginia Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax is also a member. The focus of the ministry will be to facilitate and implement Pastor Walton's vision as it relates to the ministry and to uphold its mission of education and advocacy. Scott and Annan have a wealth of experience preparing them for the tasks ahead.

"Born into a family of community leaders I believe I was called to serve," said Scott, an entrepreneur, educator and psychotherapist. "Fighting injustice is very dear to my heart. Between church, writing, public service and working toward a PhD in Policy, I am excited about the new role," she adds.

Annan has led multiple successful advocacy efforts during his two terms as the President of the Fairfax County Branch of the NAACP. As founder of mul-

**New Ministry**, continued on page 2



**Pastor**, continued on page 3

From left, Kofi Annan, Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax, Pastor Vernon C. Walton, and Dorri C. Scott

## New Ministry, continued from pg.1

tiple social action organizations to include *The Activated People*, a national digital magazine dedicated to raising awareness about social justice issues, shares that “educating the FBCV congregation and the surrounding community about policies and politics that impact equity, and galvanize the community to take action to affect change” is their mission.

The Social Justice Ministry will be contributing to the *Epistle*, providing relevant information to include the kickoff of a book club in Spring 2020. The book club will be open to the entire FBCV Family of readers to enjoy history, fiction/nonfiction books, biographies, political/newsworthy articles and varied African American authors.

## Pastor, continued from pg.1

cant impact on community and around the world. More specifically, we have been instrumental in leading thousands of people into loving and responsible relationships with Jesus Christ.

Beloved, with all of our accomplishments there is still more for us to accomplish. Our theme for this year, “First Forward,” is a reminder of such. The theme is not designed to dismiss nor diminish the success of the past, but rather to challenge and propel us to do even more for the Kingdom.

I want to encourage every member of First to be open to every possibility that God has for our ministry. As Pastor Kevin Johnson said during our retreat, “Don’t just think outside the box, but think as if there is no box.” Together we can reimagine ministry.

What’s my ask of every member? My request is simple. I’m inviting every member to help me move First Forward. Forward in our commitment to Prayer. Forward in our commitment to Ministry. Forward in our commitment to Fellowship.

Together we can make a difference.

# HERITAGE

review

BLACK PROGRESS:  
THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

WEDNESDAYS IN  
**FEBRUARY**



WEDNESDAY  
FEBRUARY 5TH | 7 PM  
RECKONING WITH RACISM  
**Rev. Rob Lee, IV**  
Humanitarian and Episcopal Priest  
+ Author of *A Sin by Any Other Name: Reckoning with Racism and the Heritage of the South*



WEDNESDAY  
FEBRUARY 12TH | 7 PM  
THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF  
MODERN DAY SLAVERY  
**Dr. Angelita Clifton**  
Associate Minister | Fountain Baptist Church  
Summit, New Jersey +  
Vice President | WSE | Lott Carey Foreign Missions Conv.



WEDNESDAY  
FEBRUARY 26TH | 7 PM  
THE THEOLOGY OF ECONOMICS  
**Dr. William Spriggs**  
Chief Economist AFL-CIO +  
Former Assistant Secretary  
Office of Policy | Department of Labor

# HBVU

PAN-  
HELLENIC  
WEEKEND

**FEB 8 / 8:00-4:00PM**

**Free Admission!**

**BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROVIDED**

- College Application Process
- Writing Your College Essay
- Dollars for Scholars (Scholarships)
- Figuring out FAFSA
- Life After College/Entering the Workforce

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# HBVU

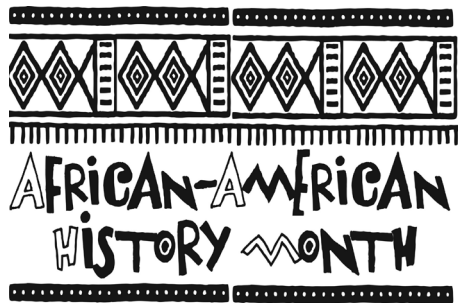
PAN-  
HELLENIC  
SUNDAY

**FEB 9 / 10:00AM**

**GUEST PREACHER**  
**DR. W. FRANKLYN RICHARDSON**  
Senior Pastor, Grace Baptist Church  
Mount Vernon, NY

**ONE WORSHIP SERVICE**  
We encourage all in attendance  
to wear their college or Greek  
letter organization paraphernalia.





## Can We Change?

By HB McCown, Epistle Staff Writer

I had an opportunity to attend the FBCV Leadership Conference on Jan. 24-25, led by Pastor Dr. Kevin R. Johnson of Dare to Imagine Church, Inc. He provided a wealth of information on how the mission and vision of church and ministry has changed and that if a church does not evolve it will cease to be relevant and worst case—cease to exist.

I thought about my years here at First Baptist and how I have watched us evolve but in a lot of cases, reluctantly. We have spent a lot of time and energy focusing on what we need to be doing for ourselves and not focusing on the true mission of any church—making disciples.

There is a process to get there that will not happen overnight. The process includes building up our current members and equipping them all to dream bigger and imagine that there is no box when it comes to reaching out to people. I understand that there is a fear of change and fear of being left behind or forgotten about, but that is not the true meaning of change.

Change in the dictionary can be either a noun or verb. As a noun, change is the act or instance of making or becoming different. What we need to be at First Baptist is the verb—to make or become different. In order to be around for another 150 years, we need to change and to actively do it at a rate faster than we may be comfortable with but are able to do. When First Baptist comes together as one force for God, we can do amazing things.

## Roscoe Nance (1948-2020): Sporty and Spiritual

By Rick Taylor, Epistle Staff Writer

Roscoe Nance, an *Epistle* staffer for 25 years, was one of a kind—but also a kind soul who touched others, as evidenced by those who paid tribute during his homegoing services at First Baptist last month.

“He could write like Picasso could paint a picture,” said Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Commissioner Dennis Thomas. “He could write like Walter Payton could run. He could write like Doug Williams could throw touchdowns.”

Roscoe, who passed away from prostate cancer on Jan. 9, was a mentor and a friend who honored God, family and friends, FBCV Pastor Vernon C. Walton said as part of Roscoe’s eulogy.

“Brother Nance had the heart of a servant,” Walton said. “He wasn’t just a part of church—the church was a part of him.”

Susan Alger of the Embury Rucker Community Shelter talked about Roscoe’s initial disappointment of only being asked to do maintenance around the shelter. But he came up with the idea for his beloved Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., to donate coats and distribute them to residents.

Roscoe’s obituary said he brought a depth and breadth to coverage of black college sports that had never been seen. He chronicled the careers of Jerry Rice as well as Marcus Dupree, a running back who ended up as a Heisman Trophy winner at the University of Oklahoma.

There was no question that Roscoe was well-known in and out of the media. He was Mississippi’s first African-American sportswriter at a mainstream newspaper, *USA TODAY* jack-of-all-trades sportswriter, a proud alumnus of Tuskegee University, member of the Black College Hall of Fame selection committee, and an Omega life member who was one of the founders of his Fairfax County graduate chapter.

But to his *Epistle* colleagues, as well as the First Baptist congregation, he was just “Roscoe.”

“Roscoe loved reporting on our Spiritual Bowl as if it were one of his *USA TODAY* feature stories,” said *Epistle* co-editor Ann Williams. “I’ll miss his dry sense of humor, expertise and friendship.”

Anita Morton, who’s been on the *Epistle* staff since 1992, said Roscoe knew what he was doing and was a cool guy. “He was always wearing his paraphernalia,” she joked.

“Roscoe ‘Sco’ was our go-to guy on the *Epistle*,” said Sandra Graham. “Whenever we had a question on correct style or format, Sco had the answer. On top of being a journalistic expert, he was just a nice man. I’ll miss his humble and kind spirit.”

Debating was also a part of Roscoe’s persona. Six days before his transition, Roscoe was visited by Deacon Carl Biggs. They had a friendly, but spirited debate about 3-point shooting and diversity in the National Basketball Association. Roscoe felt Biggs’ views were “incomplete.” Roscoe said after Biggs left that the back-and-forth “was a lot of fun. I enjoyed that.”

Biggs recalled later that he and Roscoe never agreed on anything, including the day of the week. “He would say ‘You can’t talk more than me and you are not going to win,’” Biggs joked.

Roscoe’s final homegoing service was in, as he called it L.A., Lower Alabama on Jan. 17. Union Springs was his childhood home and he bragged about it often. He was laid to rest in Fort Mitchell, Ala.

As former *USA TODAY* colleague Erik Brady said, Roscoe got a double-header. “And that’s just what he deserves.”

## January Altar Flowers

A very special “Thank You” to the following persons who provided altar flowers during the month of January.

**JAN. 5:** Alees Coates-Richardson and children to commemorate the birthday of her husband, Saul Richardson.

Esther (Tippy) Carter and family in memory of her husband and their father, Charles Carter.

**JAN. 12:** Esther (Tippy) Carter and family in memory of her son and their brother, Gordon Carter.

**JAN. 19:** The children, grandchildren and great grand children of Deaconess Hazel Carter, to commemorate her 107th birthday.

**JAN. 26:** Sandra Battle Graham, son Derek, and granddaughter Aija, in memory of their parents, grand- parents, and great-grandparents, Dr. Huey J. Battle and Dr. Jimmie L. Battle, of Petersburg, Va.

Pamela Charlesworth in loving memory of and to acknowledge the 27th anniversary of the passing of her father, Arnold Lewis.

—Compiled by Ceola Allen



## Money Matters: What is debt management?

**D**ebt management is learning to live on a budget day by day, no matter the cause of your debt.

Debt management plans help people decrease and eliminate debt. The plans work best with “unsecured debt,” or debts such as credit cards, bank overdrafts and personal loans. “Secured debt,” such as mortgages, rent and utility debts, cannot be included in a debt management plan.

Debt management plans are necessary if you have too much debt. If you cannot meet your monthly payments, your creditors will record it on your credit history, which may lower your credit score, decrease your ability to find a new loan or take out new credit cards, and increase your interest rate.

If you’re a do-it-yourself individual, you can create your own debt management plan by prioritizing necessary expenses such as mortgage or rent, food and utilities such as electricity bills.

You can also sign up with a credit counseling company that can help you with debt management. Companies often charge an upfront administration fee to handle your debts. Debt management companies can negotiate with your unsecured debt lenders to reduce your total owed or lower your monthly payments. But you must pay on time every month.

One strategy that some credit counseling agencies may suggest for debt management is debt consolidation. With debt consolidation, you roll all unsecured loans into one low-interest, fixed-rate loan. But you must have excellent credit history and an asset, such as a house or car, for this debt management approach to work.

It can take many years to effectively reduce your debt through debt management. Debt management isn’t a quick fix. However, actively managing your debts is preferable to declaring bankruptcy, which can impact your credit score for up to 10 years.

If you are interested in developing a debt management plan, please feel free to contact your First Baptist Church Federal Credit Union for advice.

—Submitted by Willie Boykin based on a Bankrate article: “What is Debt Management?”



**Trustees Honor Tony Bland  
for 16+ Years of Service**

**CORRECTION:** Rev. Alvin Thomas' name was omitted as the author of the last month's article: WHAT IS FOLLOWERSHIP?

## SELF-REFLECTION

**H**ave you ever thought about your own thoughts or questioned your mental processes? Do you sometimes take time to clarify your values in a moment of doubt or uncertainty? If you answered "yes," you are no stranger to self-reflection.

What is self-reflection? I want to share two definitions. The first, from the lexicographers at Oxford Dictionaries, defines self-reflection as "meditation or serious thought about one's character, actions and motives." The second definition is from the link [www.aconsciousr-ethink.com/10258/self-reflect](http://www.aconsciousr-ethink.com/10258/self-reflect). This link indicates that "self-reflection is the process by which you grow your understanding of who you are, what your values are, and why you think and act the way you do. It is a form of personal analysis that allows you to bring your life into alignment with what you wish it to be."

This definition reminds us that we should want to be a reflection of Jesus. When we spend time with Jesus, we begin to look more like Him. We begin to act more like Him. And we begin to talk more like Him. Even Jesus was a reflection of His Father. Jesus said: *"Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do."* (John 5: 19b NKJV). So in essence, we are not only reflecting Jesus, but God Himself.

Scripture on self-reflection is found in the New and Old Testaments:

- **(Romans 12:2 NKJV)** *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

- **(2 Corinthians 13:5 NKJV)** *"Examine yourselves, as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that, Jesus Christ is in you? Unless indeed you are disqualified"*

- **(Joshua 1: 8a NKJV)** *"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it."*

The question for church leaders—and disciples in general, is: "How can you best reflect Jesus in your ministry?" The answer requires some self-reflection. Self-reflection provides an opportunity to re-evaluate one's ministry, look inward and redirect efforts as necessary to ensure that the ministry reflects Jesus and is always relevant. —Rev. Alvin Thomas, Interim Pastoral Assistant

## WORDS FROM WORSHIP AND ARTS MINISTRY

### New Opportunities for the Coming Year

*"We open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called opportunity and it's the first chapter of our new year."*

**T**hese lines are paraphrased from a quote I read early in the new year. We are excited about the new opportunities in front of us as we move forward!

We are so grateful for all those who participated in our Annual MLK Day Worship Service. As we have done in the past, and strive to do regularly, we continue to find creative new ways to add to our worship. This year for our MLK Service we added a classical piano performance. Pendar Kordnavasi, a piano performance major at George Mason blessed us, and we are grateful to him for accepting the invitation. We were also blessed with the amazing sound of saxophonist by Courtney Nero. Mr. Nero is no stranger to FBCV and he blessed us as well. Last, but certainly not least, we had the distinct pleasure of leading the MLK Day Community Choir. We had representation from several of our sister churches, including Greater Little Zion Baptist, Vienna Presbyterian, Vienna Baptist, Chantilly Baptist, Floris United Methodist and our very own FBCV music ministry. A special thanks to our Sound and Media Ministry. We are ever so grateful for their service.

February is a new month with new opportunities. One of many opportunities is our HBCU Sunday. We are forming an HBCU choir for our HBCU Sunday on Feb. 9 at 10 a.m. You do not have to be an HBCU alumni to participate in the choir. You can represent an HBCU you admire or would have chosen to attend. We are going to shout out the school who has the largest representation. Rehearsal dates are Feb. 5 at 7 p.m. and Feb. 8 at 10 a.m. All selections will be from composers who graduated from an HBCU. Come join us as we celebrate God for the gift of HBCUs that Sunday.

We are grateful for February more than any month of the year. It's a month that we as a people celebrate overcoming. Worship and Arts will do our best to keep this message of conquering adversity throughout the month.

Be sure to share your encouragement with a choir member, a sound and media technician, or a dance ministry youth or adult. They all put in a tremendous amount of heart-work for you all to see and hear Jesus through the arts. —Kwan McKnight





Vera Garrant and family for the loss of her son-in-law, Willie Felton

Donald, William, and Warren Ellis; and Deloris Emerson and family for the loss of their sister-in-law Gereldine Ellis

Ricky Crosby and family for the loss of his mother, Ruth Murray

Jacqueline Wilborne and family for the loss of her father, Horace D. Jones



**T**he College Connection Ministry extends Happy Birthday wishes to the following students celebrating birthdays during February:

- **Kia Courtney**—a senior at Prairie View A&M University majoring in computer science.
- **Brittany Crosby**—a sophomore at Old Dominion University majoring in communications.

**TIME IS RUNNING OUT...**The Spring Semester Incentive Grant and Database update is now available and due **Feb. 1**. Submissions can be made by contacting Arnitra Duckett (arnitrad@mac.com) for the electronic link. NOTE: only electronic submissions will be accepted.

**DO YOU HAVE NEWS TO SHARE?** Your First Baptist family is interested in hearing from you. Did you... make the dean's list? Get elected as a school officer or official? Get inducted to an honor or professional society? Receive an internship or new job? Pledge a sorority or fraternity? Share your college stories with the College Connection Ministry and have it published in the *Epistle*. Send your news to share to Jennifer Spriggs (jenniferspriggs@aol.com) or Arnitra Duckett (arnitrad@mac.com). We can't wait to hear your exciting news.

—Jennifer Spriggs

## Ushers Needed

*Are you willing to serve?*

### Ushers Annual Day, Called to Serve You!

**G**reetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! FBCV Senior and Junior Ushers Ministry's will be celebrating our Annual Ushers Day on Sunday, Feb. 23, at 3 p.m. Rev. Dr. Tyrone Jones, IV, First Baptist Church of Guilford, Columbia, Maryland and choir will be our guests. Dinner is served following our 10 a.m. service.

We love our First Baptist Church Family! Please join us, as we celebrate serving you in the Name of Jesus Christ! — *Constance T. Bails, Ph.D. Senior Ushers' President, Nadia Wilborne, Junior Ushers' President*

### Preservation of the Historic West End Cemetery

**D**o you have family members buried here? Are you concerned about the maintenance? Do you want to preserve this historic site?

If you answered "Yes" to these questions, we are seeking supporters and volunteers to help preserve and beautify the cemetery and become members of "Friends of the West Cemetery."

Here is a brief history: The land was donated by Captain Harmon L. Salsbury, who granted this land on Feb. 25, 1884, for use as a cemetery by "colored people." The first burial site was Lucinda Jackson who died March 10, 1884 and the last burial was Mabel F. Harris (nee Hurley), who died March 28, 1978.

It was first named the "Borgus Cemetery" then later renamed "West End Cemetery." Historic Vienna, Inc., dedicated this cemetery as historic site in 1986.

We are seek individuals and groups who love nature and gardening, and anyone needing scout badges, please call Dee Dee Carter @ 703-508-1799.



# Minister B's Backpage

## Christian Education for the Youth: A Critical Tool for the Development of Generation Z

It is a universal truth that all forms of education will have a particular perspective on life. It may not always be obvious or implicitly stated, but it will give form to how things are understood and communicated, how praxis (practice) is developed, and curriculum. This might be in the form of assumptions about the nature and origins of the world, or it might be evident through suggestions about the purpose of life and indeed what it means to be fulfilled as a human. No form of education is neutral as it will always be providing a particular lens through which the student sees the world and their place in it.

Christian Education and Christian Leadership Academy (CLA) invites young people to see and understand the world through the perspective of God's truth. The Bible becomes the lens in which students view what they are learning. The lens critically helps children develop thinking on ultimate

truth—a biblical vision for life where the world is created and sustained by God; where God has acted in history to deal with the distortions of creation caused by human rebellion; and where history is advancing toward a new creation in which all things are reconciled to God through Jesus who is not only the climax of the biblical story but is also the focal point of the lens.

However, Christian education is not just about a Christian way of understanding. It is also about a Christian way of living. When Jesus said "Follow me," He was demanding people to dedicate their whole lives to serving God. Christian education aids in informing, inviting, and inspiring young people to live this way.

## Major Benefits of Christian Education and CLA

### VALUES SYSTEM

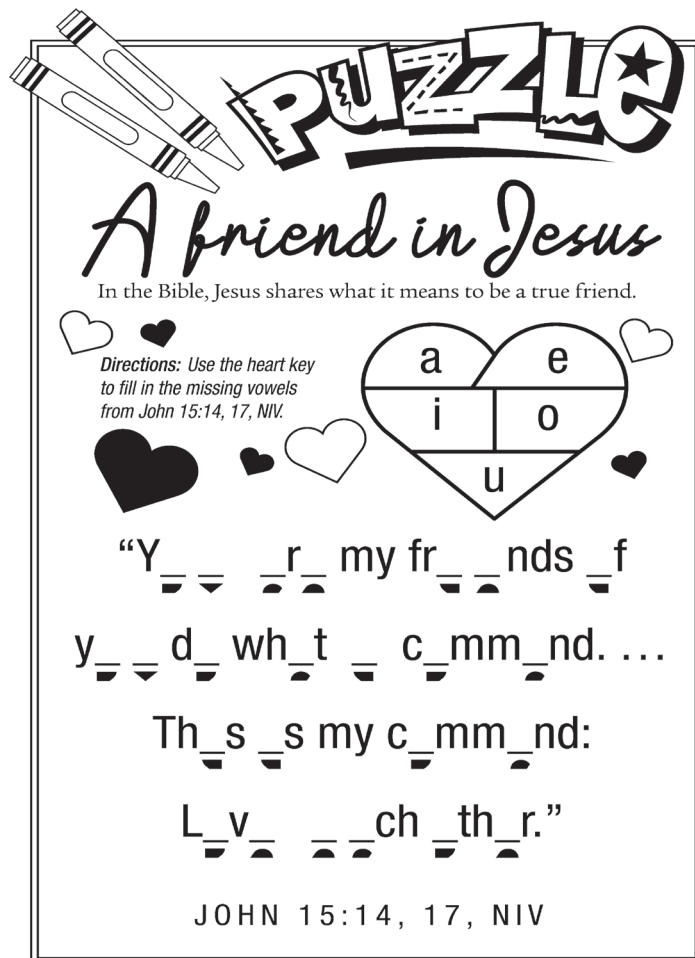
A Christian education centers on the same values you teach at home: love, kindness, discipline, and a relationship with the Lord. At a Christian Leadership Academy course, the teachers are consistently modeling these values to your child. Your child's school years are a critical time for their developing worldview, and having continuity between what is taught at home and constant reinforcement can have a big impact on their development.

### DEVELOPING GOOD HABITS

As parents, we all try to teach our children the importance of building good habits, like brushing their teeth every day. A Christian education helps your child develop good spiritual habits. Consistent prayer time and Bible study are a part of Christian Leadership Academy and are two habits that will benefit them their entire life. Not only do they allow your child to reflect on their actions throughout the day, but it grows their relationship with God. Plus, they learn how to study God's word on their own.

I want to see our young people taking full advantage of our Christian Leadership Academy. With the tools developed and cultivated in CLA our young people will be able to demonstrate the examples of Christ wherever they may go.

With Spirited and Agape Love, Minister B



Answer: "You are my friends if you do what I command. ... This is my command: Love each other." John 15:14, 17, NIV

**FACEBOOK**  
@fbcvyouthministry  
**TWITTER**  
@fbcv\_vienna

**INSTAGRAM**  
FBCV Youth  
Ministry  
@fbcvyam

# FEBRUARY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<i>BLACK HISTORY MONTH</i>					<b>1</b> 8:30 Stephen Ministry
<b>2</b> BAPTISM AND COMMUNION <i>Justice &amp; Legislative Sunday</i> 7:45 Worship 9:00 CLA 10:00 Worship <i>SOCIAL JUSTICE FAIR</i>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 12:00 Bible Study	<b>5</b> 6:00 ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT HERITAGE LECTURE SERIES@7 P.M. 8:00 VOP	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> HBCU Saturday Youth Conference 10:00 Evangelism
<b>9</b> <i>HERITAGE SUNDAY</i> HBCU/Pan-Hellenic Sunday (one worship service) 9:00 CLA 9:30 Burden Bearers 10:00 Worship	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 12:00 Bible Study 6:30 PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL	<b>12</b> 6:00 ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT HERITAGE LECTURE SERIES@7 P.M. 8:00 VOP	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 8:30 Stephen Ministry
<b>16</b> <i>GO RED SUNDAY!</i> Birth Month Celebration 7:30/9:30 Burden Bearers 7:45 Worship 9:00 CLA 10:00 Worship 10:00 AWAANA	<b>17</b> Presidents' Day	<b>18</b> 12:00 Bible Study	<b>19</b> 6:00 ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT 7 P.M. THE CHURCH AT PRAYER 7:00 NEW MEMBERS' ORIENTATION 8:00 VOP	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> ANNUAL USHERS' DAY 7:30/9:30 Burden Bearers 7:45 Worship 10:00 Worship 10:00 AWAANA 3:00 Ushers' Day Svc.	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 12:00 Bible Study	<b>26</b> ASH WEDNESDAY 6:00 ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT HERITAGE LECTURE SERIES@7 P.M. 8:00 VOP	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>