

Grove Baptist Church

Stewardship Campaign

FROM VISION TO DESTINY
Behold A Miracle



Visions of Truth Newsletter

February-March 2009 Volume 17 Issue 1

The mission of this church is to spread the Word of God, to aid in the redemption of all who are lost, to holistically develop us to Christ-like maturity (everything about us that is damaged, broken, lost or lacking) and equip us for our ministry in the church and in world mission.

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And Much More!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY PASTOR!



FEBRUARY 14TH!

WE LOVE YOU!



Church Offices
are closed on
Feb. 16, 2009.

Ash Wednesday
2/25/09

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN



In recent weeks we have been led in a song of worship by our music ministry entitled "Moving Forward". It was originally performed by Ricardo Sanchez, but is currently featured on Hezekiah Walker's "Sold Out" CD. Let me share the lyrics with you as we take small and large steps toward spiritual transformation.

"Not going back, I'm moving ahead, I'm here to declare to you my past is over. I'm in you, all things are made new, I surrender my life to Christ. I'm moving, moving forward. What a moment you have brought me to, such a freedom Lord I have found in you; you are the healer who makes all things new. You have risen with all power in your hands. You have given me a second chance. Hallelujah! You make all things new, yes you make all things new and I will follow you FORWARD."

Renewal and transformation is a step-by-step journey that you must be deliberate and prayerful about. The journey at times will not provide street by street turns, but God will require your complete trust as He navigates you through the necessary process. The destination is truly miraculous and greater than anything in your worldly past. There is holistic liberation from all the "dead end" streets, situations and experiences that you have encountered. He (God) makes all things new. You will outgrow simple fulfillment from people, places or things.

On this transformative journey you will mature to desire much more than sensual fulfillment. It will be divinely personal. The pathway from your past to your future will require from you a forward determination that only uses past events as a benchmark (measuring tool) for growth. Author Stephen Smith states "that transformation is more about ordinary stumbling than dramatic moments". It will be imperative that you not allow your present deficiencies to determine your growth potential.

Consider, a young and inexperienced shepherd boy name David who walked a journey becoming King of Israel. What were the odds twenty years ago that a young man name Barack Obama and a young lady named Michelle Lavaughn Robinson would take a journey that led them to become President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama? Your name may never be announced on CNN, MSNBC or published in Newsweek, but you are just as significant to the Kingdom of God, as they are in their particular places in history. Keep Moving Forward!

On this journey that God has placed you and me, we must not become unsettled by trial or the glorious light that will shine bright upon us. Our faith and our eyes will have to take time to adjust as we venture into new dimensions of our faith in God and love for each other. If need be, stumble out of your darkness and help us seize this moment for God.

Keep "Moving Forward"!
Peace and Power,

Melvin O. Marriner, M. Div., D. Min.
Senior Pastor

Black History Month

REMEMBERING TRAILBLAZERS AND THE HISTORY MAKERS OF BLACK HISTORY

In recognition of Black Heritage Month, we honor the trailblazers and history makers whose contributions changed the face of history. Although space limits our ability to mention the countless honorees, we praise God for our history, our ancestors and the contributions of those whose relentless will for freedom, in most cases, cost them their lives. *May we remember them by choosing to never forget. May we remember by teaching those who will pave the way after us. May we remember through pictures of the past and a powerful present that altered years of stereotypical tradition. May we remember by choosing a life beyond mediocrity. May we remember by how we treat each other. May we remember ..as we press forward in unity!*



Carter D. Woodson: The Father of "Black History Month". His famous quote solidified the importance of black history. ***"Those who have no record of what their forebearers have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history."*** The first celebration of Black History Month was February 12, 1926. **Distinguished Black author, editor, publisher and historian: Dec. 1875- Apr.1950.**



Harriet Tubman: Known as the "Moses of Her People" she led hundreds of slaves, at the great risk of her own life, to freedom by organizing the Underground Railroad. A secret network of safe houses kept slaves safe as they journeyed to freedom. She became an abolitionist and a spy for the Union as she went behind enemy lines and recruited slaves to fight in the army. **Activist, Reformer: Dec. 1820- Mar.1913.**



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Led a mass struggle against racial injustice that abolished segregation and changed the American country. He appeared over 2500 times from 1957 to 1968 in protests and organized marches of non-violence. King led the Great March in Washington D.C. where his "I Have A Dream" speech still speaks today. More than a quarter of a million people of all ethnicities attended the event. In 1964, King also pinned the revolutionary "Letter From a Birmingham Jail". His relentlessness led to political success with the passing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, becoming the youngest recipient. In 1968, King was shot as he stood on the balcony of his hotel in support of a black-city worker's strike in Tennessee. His assassination led to rioting across the country where President Johnson declared a day of mourning in his honor. January 21st, officially became Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 1983. **Activist, Baptist Minister, Civil Rights Leader, The Voice of Change in the American Civil Rights Movement: January 1929-April 1968.**



President Barack Hussein Obama: He was thrust into the national spotlight when he delivered the keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention. His speech expressed hope for the future of the country, and echoed Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous 1963 "I Have A Dream" speech. Obama was born in Hawaii to an African father and a Caucasian mother, and raised briefly in Indonesia. His mixed heritage is often viewed as a representation of America's diverse population, and a bridge between many viewpoints. The young community organizer's political career began in the Illinois State Senate in 1996, followed by the U.S. Senate in 2004. Despite a relatively short term in government service, Obama's popularity during his presidential campaign was unparalleled. His election bid attracted an overwhelming number of African-Americans, first-time, and young voters. On November 4, 2008, Barack Obama became the first Black president of the United States of America. **The 44th President of the United States, The Person Representing a New Era of Hope that Changed the History of Our Country: August 4, 1961-**

COME AND CELEBRATE!
Heritage
Celebration at
Grove
2-28-09
9a.m.-11a.m.
Call 484-4149
for more info!

The Dream Lives On...The Legacy Continues

Sis. Costella Williams

Forty-five years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. to deliver his famous “I Have A Dream” speech.

Many of us remember where we were that day and the pride and enormity of those famous moments in history. For those too young to remember, read his speech and take the time to read about the rich history of our people and our forefathers. We stand proudly on the shoulders of so many who have struggled for us to be where we are today.

I recall the words as if they were uttered yesterday. Dr. King’s “I Have A Dream” speech and his life are rich legacies passed on to America that summarizes our fears of our segregated past and hope of what our future could become in America. Dr. King spoke eloquently about his dream...” that one day this nation will rise up... live out the true meaning of its creed.” “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

*Fast forward to the historic election of
Barack Hussein Obama,
President of the United States of America*

Tuesday, November 4, 2008 will go down in history as one of the most exciting and emotional times of our lives. President Obama uses some of Dr. King’s words when he

speaks of “the fierce urgency of now”—confronting the problems of the world now.

President Obama said the night of his victory: “It’s been a long time coming, but a change has come to America.” Dr. King said in one of his last speeches to his people, “I may not get there with you, but we as a people will get to the Promised Land.” There are so many emotions and feelings of hopefulness with the win and inauguration of President Obama--an African American who has become the most powerful person in the world with the exception of Almighty God. President Obama often said, “I had the righteous wind behind my back”.

Oh, what a mighty God we serve! There is still so much work to be done in our communities, but for this time, this moment, we thank God for all those persons who struggled, were jailed, marched and gave their lives so that we could witness this moment in history.

A rich legacy has been passed on to America and the American Dream that Dr. King spoke about still lives on. Dr. King spoke eloquently about when “We will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: Free at last! Free at last—Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!”

WOMEN IN HISTORY



Sis. Renee Graves

Women’s history cries out from the pages of documentaries, old books and dusty photos, Americans will revisit the historical moments that define the fabric of our nation during Black History Month. We will also acknowledge the countless contributions women made in the fight for Women’s rights and against discrimination during Women’s History Month in March. We’ve highlighted a few dates in history that altered the face of our country and most importantly, our nation’s pivotal views towards women.

- ◆ 1843: **Sojourner Truth**: lectures about suffrage and abolition.
- ◆ 1896: The National Association of Colored Women is formed. Leaders in the black women’s club movement include **Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin**, **Mary Church Terrell** and **Anna Julia Cooper**.

- ◆ 1920: **Susan B. Anthony**: The 19th Amendment, written into the U.S. Constitution, also known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, grants the right to vote to all U.S. women over 21.
- ◆ 1924: **Nellie Taylor Ross**: is elected first woman governor in the U.S.-Wyoming.
- ◆ 1948: **Antonia Hernandez**: Hispanic activist and attorney, heads the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.
- ◆ 1955/December: **Rosa Parks**: refuses to give up her seat on a Montgomery AL. bus. Leads to the outlaw of bus segregation by the Supreme Court in 1956.
- ◆ 2009/January: **Michelle LaVaughn Robinson**: The First African-American First Lady of the United States, Harvard Law Graduate and Attorney.

How Mad Are You At the Devil? Min. Shirlene Bailey

My question for you today is; How mad are you at the devil? Are you mad enough to repent and humble yourself when you have sinned- right in the devil's face? Are you mad enough to determine in your heart that you will not waver, but trust in God? Are you mad enough to stand watch at the doorway of your home, that the enemy shall not overthrow it, taking your family hostage? Are you mad enough to walk out your soul's salvation, against all adversity? Are you mad enough to lay hands on and pray over your children, even though they don't think it's cool?

Are you mad enough to let GOD lead you daily, though your flesh rises with its' own agenda? Are you mad enough to determine in your heart that you will not allow yourself to be used as a weapon against your spouse (for those married) or others (for those of you who are not married)? Are you mad enough not to allow the enemy to use you in forming yourself as a weapon, by coveting what belongs to your neighbor or by intentionally breaking any of God's other commandments? Are you mad enough to bring your flesh under subjection for Christ sake? **The devil wants to discredit God's word and he wants to discredit you!** Are you mad enough to declare that the enemy shall not have anything God has blessed you with and declare in your heart that you will not be tricked into forfeiting those blessings either?

Are you mad enough to declare that "as for me and my house I WILL SERVE THE LORD"? Are you mad enough to declared that the devil WILL NOT WREAK HAVOC IN YOUR HOME ANYMORE? Especially not through YOU! Are you mad enough to say NO to your flesh and Yes to God? **JUST HOW MAD ARE YOU TODAY???**

The word of God tells us that greater is He who lives within us than he who lives within the world. So what the enemy truly is after is that which dwells within us.

The enemy desires to destroy the relationship you have with God. The devil wants God to regret even creating you and his (the enemy) ultimate plan is to destroy us by sending us to hell.

But how many of you are M.A.D.? You must have an **M** - Made up MIND to live for Christ and an **A** - Attitude and Actions-you will be a witness of that fact, and so you will **D** - Deliberately, with all Diligence, be Devoted to God, His will and His ways, being worthy witnesses. Are you mad about what you have seen the enemy doing to God's people and you've decided you will **NOT SIT BY AND TAKE IT ANY MORE?**

In every situation given there is a "Word". Find that Word and speak it over your life and your family, Amen! Don't get so overwhelmed that you don't do anything (unless God instructs you to be still, or be quiet; in that case-do nothing). If not, pull out your arsenal of God's "spiritual weapons"! Pray, speak the name of Jesus over every area of your life, plead the blood of Jesus, rebuke, resist, and put the word on it!

People of God, there are many things I am working on/out in my life and I am not saying that it has been easy, but what I am saying is that I am a witness that WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE, because He has and will make things possible to them that believe on/in HIM.

Knowing and applying the Word of God is essential to warfare against the enemy. Attending Bible Study will only enhance your God-given power and spiritual growth to walk in victory as a believer.

*Join Pastor Marriner at
Noon Day on Tuesdays -12:00p.m. or
Wednesday Nights at 7:00p
Let God strengthen you and take you to a higher
level in Him!*



NO GREATER LOVE

Sis. Kathy Gaillard



There is much debate about the origin of Valentine's Day. One account is that St. Valentine was a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity. He died on February 14, 269 A.D., the same day that had been devoted to love lotteries. Legend also states that St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, signing it "From Your Valentine".

Another version of the legend is that Saint Valentine was a priest during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Claudius had Valentine jailed for defying him and, in 496 A.D., Pope Gelasius set aside February 14th to honor St. Valentine. Ultimately, February 14th became the date for exchanging love messages and St. Valentine became the patron saint of lovers. The date was marked by sending poems and simple gifts such as flowers.

Usually a social gathering or ball was associated with this celebration. In the United States, Esther Howland is credited with sending the first valentine's cards, while commercial valentines were introduced in the 1800's. Today, many people celebrate Valentine's Day. While it's good to love someone and to demonstrate that love with cards, candy, flowers and gifts, most Christians know that God's love and the gift that He gave us (His only son) is the greatest love of all.

The love we have for our family members, husbands, wives, children or friends feels good, but it can be fickle or faint. It also can be tested and abandoned. God's love is the highest form of love. It's called "agape". Agape is supernatural, sacrificial, unconditional love. Agape "*believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.*" (I Cor. 13:7). As the old hymn reads, "*God's love is so high you can't get over it; so low you can't get under it; so wide you can't get around it.*"

God's love is manifested in the hope and promise we sometimes feel in the face of defeat and disappointment. It's demonstrated when we are able to love the unlovable or hard-to-love individual, and it's experienced when the struggles and disappointments of life seem insurmountable. But we move forward knowing that we "*can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*"

Valentine's Day is a worthy tradition that provides us with an earthly opportunity to give our loved ones "their flowers" while they are alive, but there is no greater love than the love of God, which He demonstrated when He gave His only son for our sins.

HOW WILL YOU DEMONSTRATE YOUR LOVE FOR THE LORD AND OTHERS?

REACHING UP, REACHING IN AND REACHING OUT

Sis. Margaret DePena

That is the mission of Visions of Truth Community Development Corporation (VOTCDC). Housed in the Community Alternative Resources and Educational (C.A.R.E.) Center, VOTCDC seeks to address the issues of access, collaboration and equity, as they pertain to education, technology, and employability in Portsmouth's economically marginalized communities. A non-profit organization, VOTCDC provides the infrastructure for outreach initiatives and is affiliated with Grove Baptist Church Visions of Truth Ministry.

The STRIVE (Students Taking Responsibility in Valuing Education) program is a collaboration between the Portsmouth Public Schools and VOTCDC in the provision of a community-service based alternative to out of school suspension. Students are placed in the program at the discretion of school officials as an alternative to short-term suspensions, usually five to ten days. Instructor will provide

supplementary instruction in the core academic subjects of reading, language arts, and mathematics, during the normal school hours of 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The academic component of the program assigns students to small groups to work with highly skilled and experienced tutors on core academic subjects. The program will also offer a counseling component with a focus on personal growth and development and conflict mediation.

The program is founded on the belief that alternatives to out of school suspension can and should be positive, proactive responses to the needs of children and their families. Staff members are Sis. Kimberly Brown (OSS Director), Sis. Karen Ellis (OSS Liaison), Sis. Malea Caldwell (Strive Program Tutor) and Bro. Antonio Boone (Strive Program Coordinator). If you are interested in supporting the program, please contact Sis. Kimberly Brown at 757-484-8794.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: *The Single's Ministry*

Sis. Tekeema Foster



Valentine's Day is a Western holiday that is traditionally celebrated on February 14th. It is a designated day for couples to express their love for each other by exchanging cards and giving gifts that range from a box of chocolates to fur coats and diamond rings.

During this time of year, the price of flowers skyrocket, the malls are crowded, and the lines at most restaurants are long. With so much focus on relationships and romance, those who are single sometimes feel left out and experience loneliness.

The Singles Ministry equips men and women to rejoice in their 'status' and use their season of singleness to be whole and committed servants for Christ. It is a time that one can serve the Lord without distraction. Matthew 22: 37-38 says 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." God wants us to be in a love relationship with Him. Let God be your first love.

Join the Singles Ministry every 3rd Tuesday at 7pm for encouragement, fellowship, and fun. Trio Leaders are Bro. George Jones and Min. Lucille White. For more information, contact Christian Education at 484-8944.

“I’VE GOT A TESTIMONY”

Bro. James Lewis



When I first came to Grove Church in June 2007, I came strictly in a working capacity. I was a sixteen-year veteran of the Portsmouth Police Dept. and I was a plain clothes, undercover Narcotics Detective. For the past sixteen years, I've seen the worse of worst and dealt with most of society's cast-a-ways. The daily, constant grind of dealing with negative situations and seeing so many misfortunes of people, harden my heart toward God and the Church. Know that this is coming from a person who grew up in the church, sung in the choir and eventually became The Minister of Music at my home church in Memphis, Tenn.

I could quote the scriptures; I even preached my first sermon at the age of fourteen. Yes, I was as holy as they come. So, my daily personal struggle was great, because I knew God's word and His purpose for my life. I lived a very destructive life style, until that one, faithful June Sunday Morning. Each Sunday as I sat over in the corner of the pulpit behind the piano, Pastor would speak life and prosperity back into my dry bones. I first had to hear the word, before I could receive it into my heart. I began to understand how and why I was allowing the Devil to sift me like wheat and that he consistently comes to kill, steal and destroy. I began to understand that because I was no longer in The Word and The Word was no longer in me, that it was easy for the Devil to steal my peace, joy and happiness. I now know that my personal life and affairs were all messed up, because I was not walking in the fullness of God's potential for my life.



The Lord favored me and covered me with His grace and mercy. The Devil came once again to kill, when he tried to take my life on December 11, 2008. I was driving on I-58 West near Franklin, Va., when all of a sudden my SUV hydroplaned and flipped several times off the highway. The vehicle flipped backwards, heading down an embankment and struck several trees. I praise the Lord for keeping me in my right mind, because I knew to call His name! The vehicle finally came to it's final resting place and the roof was caved completely in, pinning me and two passengers in the vehicle. The Lord covered everyone in the vehicle and we all walked away with minor cuts and bruises. I have seen countless fatal accidents on the same stretch of highway. When I look at the pictures of my accident (above), I know that I am truly a walking, talking, breathing living miracle. Pastor Marriner, I thank you for speaking truth and prosperity back into my life, To God Be The Glory!



Exercise...the Best Medicine

Bro. Tom Taylor

The Grove Baptist Church Wellness Program was introduced during an Open House event on January 13, 2009. Our Mission is: *"To empower individuals to develop and maintain life-enhancing, healthy lifestyles through a systematic approach to improved nutrition and physical activity."*

The Wellness ministry goes beyond helping members keep their New Year's resolutions to lose weight. The ministry focuses on recognizing the BODY as belonging to the Lord and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6: 13-19). No fad diets here and no short term fixes. The GBC Wellness Program is a "team approach" that seeks to "glorify God in our body and our spirit" (I Cor. 6:20) for the rest of our lives.

In this article, I could discuss the horrendous statistics within the African American Community as it pertains to weight problems and chronic illnesses. However, it is not necessary; we have all heard that story too often. However, what is necessary is to balance our fitness approach according to the Word of God. Maintaining a proper balance will help us to be "Physically Fit and Spiritually Alive."

First, being physically fit improves the quality and length of service we can offer the Lord. Physical weakness prevents clear thinking. We can not give our best in the work of our Lord, when we don't bring our best.

We must take care of our bodies as instruments of righteousness (Rom 6:12-13). We should not allow our appetites to create chronic conditions that prevent us from rendering Godly praise or service.

Second, physical fitness without Godly spiritual exercise is vanity. Beauty is passing (Pro. 31:30) and our physical strength will eventually fail us (2 Cor. 4:16). The inner man or woman is the *true measure* of character and spirituality. Again, maintaining a proper balance will help us to be truly "Physically Fit and Spiritually Alive."



The Wellness Ministry invites you to join us as we "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness... and all these things shall be added unto you (Mt 6:33)".

The trio leaders are:

Bro. Rodney Sanders, Sis. Tamika Sublett and Bro. Tom Taylor.

Call Christian Ed. at 484-8944 for more information.

Eating With Your Health In Mind

Sis. Fredda Bryant

OVEN FRIED CHICKEN

Here is a recipe that is health-conscience, easy to make and delicious!

What You Need:

Cooking spray
20 crackers, whole-grain, saltine-like, pulsed in a food processor to fine crumbs (about 1/2 cup)
2 1/2 cup(s) cereal, cornflakes, pulsed in a food processor to fine crumbs (about 1/2 cup)
2 tablespoon sesame seeds
3/4 teaspoon pepper, cayenne
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 large egg white(s)
1 cup(s) yogurt, low-fat plain
1 tablespoon mustard, Dijon-style
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 chicken breast halves, bone in, skin removed, rinsed and patted dry
4 chicken, thighs, bone in, skin removed, rinsed and patted dry.

What To Do:

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly spray a baking sheet with cooking spray. Combine the saltine and corn flake crumbs, sesame seeds, cayenne, and garlic powder in a shallow bowl. In a large bowl, the egg whites, yogurt, mustard, and salt. Add the chicken pieces and coat thoroughly with the yogurt mixture. Then, one at a time, dip the chicken pieces in the cracker mixture, packing the crumbs evenly onto the chicken. Arrange the chicken on the prepared baking sheet and spray the tops lightly with cooking spray. Bake until the juices run clear when the chicken is pierced with a knife, 45 to 50 minutes. Serving size: 1 breast half or 2 thighs. Enjoy!



Adding Color to Your Eating Habits

Did you know that the color of the foods you eat can promote a healthier you? According to an article posted Sacramento Bee newspaper entitled, "Dr. Color", the following foods, which are rich in color, can help you stay healthy...naturally!

White produce is the color for heart disease. Eat white, such as bananas, cauliflower and garlic, and you'll lower heart disease risk, according to www.MensHealth.com. Blues and purples keep memory

sharp and reduce the risk of several kinds of cancer, including prostate. Great choices are plums, eggplant, blueberries, blackberries and purple grapes. Greens like kiwi, spinach, broccoli, Romaine lettuce and cabbage protect bones, teeth and eyesight.

Yellows and oranges boost the immune system and help prevent eye disease. For yellows and oranges, consider grapefruit, oranges, peaches, cantaloupe, mangoes, pineapple, squash, carrots and corn. Start developing a healthier you today by adding a variety of color to your food choices!



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GROVE PREMARITAL WORKSHOP



Fri., March 27, 2009
7:00p.m.-9:00p.m.
Courtyard Marriott
8060 Harbour View Blvd.
Suffolk, VA 23435

Sat., March 28, 2009
9:00a.m.-3:00p.m.
Courtyard Marriott
8060 Harbour View Blvd.
Suffolk, VA 23435

Both sessions are required for all couples (members) desiring to be married at Grove Baptist Church or by a Grove Minister.

Workshop registration is required by March 1st.

For mandatory wedding procedures and more information, contact Min. Shirley Jackson at (757) 967-9611.



GROVE CARES ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

To help us minimize paper use and save on postage, we ask that you visit www.grovebaptistchurch.com to view a "paperless" version of the newsletter or pick up a copy in the vestibules. If you do not have computer access and need a copy mailed to you, please call the church office at 484-4149.

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We thank God for you and your willingness to serve!