

*Happy New Year!*

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## PASTOR'S CORNER

*"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14).*

### A New Year: What Will You Do with Your Dash Time

**T**ombstones are marked with a person's birth date, followed by a dash and their date of death. The common denominator for everyone is they are born and they die, but each individual finds his uniqueness in what took place in his dash time.

As we start a new year, we have to create our dash time. At one second after midnight on Dec. 31, 2011, we started our dash time for 2012, and if we are still living, it will end on Dec. 31, 2012 at midnight. We too will gain our distinction by what we do in and with our dash time. Time is a precious commodity and we have none to waste. Once it is used it cannot be recaptured, and we do not get a do-over. We should pray to the Lord as the Psalmist, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:12).

As we start the New Year, what will you do with your dash time? In the text, Paul provides insights that may help guide us as we plan our dash time.

First, we should recognize who and Whose we are. Paul says, "Not as though I had already attained,

PASTOR, continued on next page

# Epistle

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## 2012 Stewardship Theme: Loving Never Empties Your Heart nor Giving, Your Hand

Special to the Epistle, Rev. Clevester Hawkins

**O**ur 2012 Stewardship Campaign theme, "Loving Never Empties Your Heart nor Giving, Your Hand", focuses on what happens when we continue to love and give. However, experiencing the reality of our theme is based upon the dependability of our God. When we display acts of love, can we depend on God to replenish our heart's capacity to continue to love? When we give sacrificially, can we depend on God to replenish our financial resources? Let's explore these questions.

Indeed, you can depend on God to keep Earth rotating on its axis at 1,000 miles an hour. If it slowed to 100 miles an hour, nights and days would be 10 times as long.

You can depend on God to keep the temperature of the sun's surface at 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit, which is exactly right for its distance from Earth. If it changed slightly, everything on earth would be roasted or frozen.

You can depend on God to keep Earth traveling around the sun at 18 miles per second. If that rate changed to, say, six miles a second, or 40 miles a second, life couldn't exist.

You can depend on God to keep the moon 240,000 miles away. If it moved to within 50,000 miles, the tides of the oceans would be so enormous that even the mountains would be washed away.

And you can depend on God to keep Earth's atmosphere just right. If the oxygen content were 50% instead of 21%, all combustible objects would burn or explode.

All of life, from the billions of stars in the universe to the net amount of your paycheck, is controlled by the dependable hand of God. He has fashioned it all for you and me and has entrusted every last bit of it to us. His bounty is boundless.

What can be said about stewardship that you haven't already heard? Maybe nothing. But there's one thing you can be sure of—God is dependable.

The only limitations you have are those you place on yourself by not following God's conditions of prosperity. And God has promised over and over again throughout scripture that He will definitely prosper you when you support the work of His Kingdom.

And you can depend on God to keep every promise.

The only question, then, is this: "Can God depend on you?"

Remember, loving never empties your heart nor giving, your hand. Praise God! Our God is dependable, and He will replenish both your heart and hand.

Article adapted by Clevester Hawkins. Originally published in *Loving Never Empties Your Heart nor Giving, Your Hand*, October 2005; Hensley Publishing, Tulsa, Okla.



*Happy Birthday to*  
**Pastor Kenny Smith on January 26!**

## New Mercy for the New Year

either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (v12). Paul was aware of where God had brought him from. (Acts 7:58; Rom. 7). We should have a correct estimate of self. Paul wanted his readers to know that he was not perfect, but was becoming. As we go through our dash time, we should strive to be what we already are.

Second, "we should forget those things which are behind" (v13). Last year is gone never to rise again. Paul uses the metaphor of a runner in a race leaning or throwing himself forward stretching himself out with his energies. He does not look back nor compare himself to the relative position of the other runners. Looking back can slow you down. Looking back can cause you to stumble as you move forward. As we enter into this new year we should forget the past hurts, the past mistakes, and the past failures. We should forget the lost jobs, broken relationships, and worries. Yes, we should even forget our victories and achievements. Sometimes if we put too much focus on what we have done we may begin to think we have arrived.

Finally, we should be, "...reaching forth unto those things that are before us, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ" (vv13c-14). We should have a heavenly goal and a divine purpose for the year. We should be single-minded in our determination to be Kingdom people. Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). We should not allow ourselves to settle for lesser goals than the heavenly one - "the high calling of God."

How will you spend the next 365 days forging your dash time? You now have a clean canvas, paint and a brush; you are the artist. You are at the starting line of your race. You have an open door. You can do now that which at the end of the year you will wish you had done!

Mary and I wish you and yours a glorious, safe and prosperous new year!

**P**raise God for His faithfulness. Two-thousand-eleven was a year filled with God's mercy. God gave us new mercy each morning, each afternoon and each evening. He protected us, delivered us and sustained us.

Two-thousand-twelve is a new year. It will bring new challenges, new obstacles and new opportunities. But we can rejoice because with each new morning God will supply new mercy; with each new afternoon there will be new mercy, and with each new evening there will be new mercy. How will you respond to the new opportunities that you will face this year? Will you offer them to God as opportunities to display His all-sufficient mercy? Will you present your bodies as a living sacrifice by the mercies of God this New Year? Look up II Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 4:24-29, Colossians 3:10, and Lamentations 3:22-33 then reflect on the following questions:

- (1) *Eph. 4:24-29* commands you to put off the old man. What behaviors and attitudes is the Holy Spirit leading you to put off this year?
- (2) *II Cor. 5:17* declares that you are a new creature. How will you reflect this new nature this New Year?
- (3) *Col. 3:10* says that the new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created him. How will you respond to that truth this new year?
- (4) *Eph. 4:24* declares that the new man is created in righteousness and holiness. How should that impact you?
- (5) *Lamentations 3:22-23* declares that God's mercies are new every morning. How will you respond today to God's faithfulness?

Thank God for His new mercy this new year.

—Rev. Clevester Hawkins

## The Guide

**P**icture a man stumbling along in a heavy fog, completely disoriented. Then, off in the distance, he sees the light of one small lamp. Its glow is sufficient neither to burn off the fog nor to illuminate the obstacles that might be on the ground between the man and that lamp. Still, it is a steadily burning lamp. Something within the man prompts him to believe that if he heads toward it, he will be going in the right direction. That "something" we can call "faith."

While heading toward the lamp, he finds another lost man whose eyesight is so poor he can't see the lamp. The first man takes the second by the hand and helps him toward the lamp also. The act of reaching out to another we can call "love."

And the lamp that draws him? It's called "hope."

—*The Wired Word* (August 7, 2011)

### *With Our Deepest Sympathy*

Kenneth Ririani and family for the loss of his father, Geoffrey Gatheki

Carolyn Johnson and family for the loss of her mother

Markay Chichester and family for the loss of her brother, Deacon William Bolling

### *Welcome New Members*

**Rutledge Simmons** and **Lori Brown-Simmons** live with their family in Fairfax. Rutledge is originally from Boston, MA and Lori is a native of Buffalo, N.Y. They work for a law firm; Rutledge is a lawyer and Lori works in operations. Rutledge enjoys First Baptist and Lori likes our attempt to make First Baptist a community church.—*Compiled by Anita Morton*

**FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS MINISTRY:**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**What's in a Name?**

**K**enya, located in East Africa, has 42 tribes with different languages and cultures. Most of the tribes in Kenya get their names from events, occupations, animals or status. For example, a Kikuyu boy named after his grandfather who was a farmer would be "Murimi", which is my first born son's name. A boy is named after a wealthy grandfather would be "Gitonga". If a girl child is born when it is raining, she is named "Nyambura".

The Luo tribe names for men begin with the letter O, such as Obama, Onyango, Odhiambo or Otieno and the women's start with the letter A, such as Anyango, Adhiambo, Atieno or Ayango. In the Kikuyu tribe, children are named after their grandparents. The first son is named after his paternal grandfather and the first daughter is named after her paternal grandmother. The second son and daughter are named after their maternal grandfather and grandmother respectively. A child born to a single mother is named after the maternal grandmother or grandfather.

In Kenya, respect is paramount and people who have children typically are not called by their first names but are referred to as Mama or Baba usually followed by the name of the first born son or daughter. A husband does not refer to his wife by her first name, but calls her Mama Nyambura or Mama Anyango, for example. This is done because it is a belief that that calling someone's mother or father by their first name is a sign of disrespect. It is not uncommon to live a lifetime without knowing someone's first name. It is the custom and people accept it.

—By Keziah Ririani AKA Mama Murimi



**Thirsty? You Can't Go Wrong With Water**

**W**ater –Water –Water! Water is essential to life. A healthy adult can survive for weeks without food but only several days without water. The human body is about 75% water. Therefore, water affects every essential bodily function. It allows blood to flow freely, passes nutrients through membranes, renews cell structures and facilitates the elimination of waste products.

Unless advised otherwise by one's doctor, every human being needs to drink six to eight full glasses of plain water. Although other beverages such as lemonade, coffee, tea, soda and alcohol contain a portion of water, the sugar and other ingredients substantially reduce the benefits of just plain water. In addition, failure to drink enough plain water leads to poor circulation, lack of energy, accelerated aging, kidney dysfunction and constipation.

As a New Year's resolution, do yourself a favor and drink the right amount of plain water daily for a two week trial. After 14 days, consider how much better you feel. Your body will tell you when it is functioning better. Accordingly, water may just be the new year "medicine" that you need.

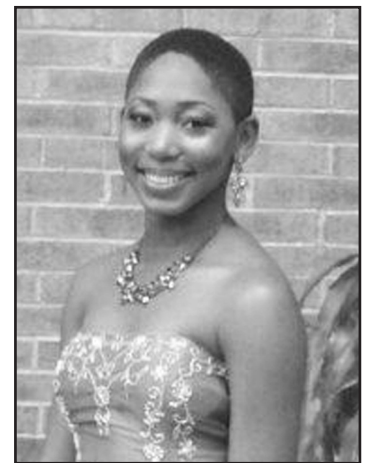
—Deacon Joseph Edwards

**COLLEGE CONNECTION STUDENT SPOTLIGHT**

*Hello First Baptist Friends and Family!*

First of all, I'd like to thank each of you for your thoughts, prayers and words of encouragement as I have transitioned into this new period of my life. Howard Univesity is a phenomenal school and I'm enjoying myself each and every day. Although it's definitely known as a party school (and with good reason) Howard has offered me new insight into the world of African-American culture, our contributions, and our role and significance in society. At the end of the day, I'm glad I chose Howard.

I've gotten very involved in campus life at Howard, participating in a few events and organizations. I've begun making spiritual videos on Facebook, each week receiving countless views from my peers in college and at home. I ran and placed for Miss Freshman 2011, and I'm also active in our religious organization called Wednesday Night Live, held once a month with sort of an "Eagle Eyrie" experience. I attend their weekly bible study "Word Up!" and currently attend Reid Temple in Glendale, Md. They hold evening services specifically geared to college students, which I really appreciate.



Jamé Jackson

As the semester dwindled down, I was swamped with essays, exams and prerequisites. I have declared English as my major with a minor in African-American Studies, so as of second semester I'll begin taking courses geared toward those. I hope to see many if not all of you very soon and I ask you to keep me in your prayers as I keep you in mine. Finally, I'd like to thank Pastor Smith and the College Connection Ministry for sending the extra dollars that really help show the love First Baptist has for its youth and the investment you all still have in me. You all stay blessed.

# Happy Birthday

John Johnson .....	1
Marcus Clinton .....	1
DeAndre Bacon .....	2
Rev. Linda Bullock .....	2
Alfred Bunaugh, Sr. ....	2
LaShawn Williams.....	3
Joselyn Boayue .....	3
Juan Carter .....	4
Barbara Robinson .....	4
Neah Morton .....	4
Mary Jones-Riley .....	4
Beverly Harris.....	5
Trinita White.....	5
James Davis .....	6
Pamela Dockins .....	6
Maria Ellis.....	7
Audrey Jefferson.....	7
Crystal Bowman .....	8
Cheryl Phillips .....	8
Bernadette Keitt .....	8
Alayna Brown .....	8
Ashley Ivey .....	9
Kamilah Quash.....	9
Karen Cathey.....	10
Vivian Morton .....	10
E. Savannah Little.....	10
Brittanie Thomas.....	11
Richard Brooks.....	12
Larry Henderson.....	13
Joni Blizzard .....	13
Bryan Morris.....	13
Sara Cox .....	14
DeArmond Carter .....	14
Erin Carpenter.....	15
Erica Taylor.....	15
Erin Carpenter.....	15
Alonzo Carter .....	16
Shara Gibson.....	17
Lisa Sales .....	17
TiJuana Bunaugh .....	17
Patricia Swoope.....	17
Roy Heron.....	18
Patricia Taylor .....	19
Rey Forrest.....	19
Derrick McCann.....	19
Dana Thomas .....	20
Dee Clark .....	20
Carla Brown .....	20
Patricia Jackson.....	20
Anthony Harris .....	21
Monique Hampton .....	22
Monica Evans.....	22
Carl Cooper, Jr. ....	22
Beverly Bush.....	22
Debbie Biggs.....	23

## ALTAR FLOWERS

A very special "Thank You" to the following persons who provided ALTAR FLOWERS during the month of DECEMBER.

**Dec. 4** Sharron Terry in celebration of her birthday. Sharron Terry and Helen Catchings to commemorate the 131st birthday of Helen's aunt, Mrs. Ella Miller.

Esther McCullough and Emmer Carter to commemorate the birthday of their friend, Judi Taylor.

Mary Sulton in celebration of her 75th birthday.

Wyndell Carter and sons, Warren (Jeanine) and Hoyt, in loving memory of his wife and their mother, Cora Carter.

**Dec. 11** Loretta Berry and Wilma Hudson, their niece Pamela Charlesworth, grandchildren and great grandchildren, in memory of their father and grandfather, Willard (Cap) Harrod. Also, in memory of their sister, mother and aunt, Phyllis Lewis.

Naomi Pearson in memory of her mother, Blanche Borgus Payne to commemorate her 130th birthday.

The Fisher family in memory of Martha Jones, Sarah Mercer, and Barbara Taylor.

Deaconess Augustine Twyman in celebration of the birthday of her husband, Deacon Thomas Twyman.

**Dec. 18** Marion Wiggins, Wyndell and Vondell Carter in memory of their parents, Deacon and Mrs. William Carter, their brother, Maurice Carter, their grandparents, Deacon and Deaconess William Thompson, and their uncle and aunt, Deacon and Mrs. Junius Monroe. Also, Wyndell and sons, Warren (Jeanine) and Hoyt, in loving memory of his wife and their mother, Cora Carter.

Irene Carter in loving memory of her husband, Maurice Carter.

**Dec. 25** Daughters Alees Coates-Richardson and Helen Carter and the grandchildren of Welton Smith to commemorate his 101st birthday.

Lorraine and Ted Thomas in loving memory of her parents, William Beverly Taylor and Horine Taylor Riley, and stepfather, Deacon George Riley in celebration of the Christmas season.

Dora Carson .....	23
Edward Hansborough.....	24
Mary Roy .....	24
Edward Brooks.....	25
Nate Davis.....	25
Joseph Haggler IV .....	26
Fredric Wilson.....	26
Pastor Kenny Smith .....	26
Bessie Mulabah.....	26
George Cohen .....	27
Robert Robinson.....	28
Joanne Courtney.....	29
Lenita Meade .....	29
Patsy Ramroop.....	29
Vicki West.....	30
Robert Franklin .....	30
Carolyn James .....	31
Jeremy Biggs.....	31
Patricia Jackson.....	31
Camah Mulabah .....	31

## Youth Birthdays

Aliyah Cotton.....	7
Terez Newman.....	12
Ashley Morgan.....	22
Tiffany Flowers.....	23
Amber Hones .....	26
Myles Carpenter .....	26
Courtney Emerson .....	28
Amanda Denny.....	28
Natalie Howard .....	30

