



# THE EPISTLE

*Newsletter of the  
Nineteenth Street Baptist Church*

*"You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men..." 2 Corinthians 3:2*



## Nineteenth Street Baptist Church

4606 16th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20011  
202-829-2773

[www.everyblessing.org](http://www.everyblessing.org)

### Ministerial Staff

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Church School, Sunday 8:45 AM  
Morning Worship, Sunday 10 AM  
Prayer Meeting, Thursday 6:30 PM



**GOD** is Our Passion. Serving **People** is Our **Mission**.

The mission of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church is to profoundly *experience*, joyfully *celebrate*, and meaningfully *share* God's grace.

We do this through Christ-centered *worship*, *biblical instruction*, *prayer*, *nurturing fellowship*, and *caring acts* that are reflective of our love for God and one another.

We, through the power of the Holy Spirit, proclaim the Gospel and Jesus Christ to all people while supporting the work of missions in our church, our community, our country, and the world.

### The Epistle

is an official publication of the  
Nineteenth Street Baptist Church.

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#### Questions?

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# Lent: A Pilgrimage of Prayer, Praise and Purpose

By Rev. Dr. Darryl D. Roberts



Beloved, as we make our pilgrimage through this high and holy season of Lent—a time of prayer, self-denial, penitence and spiritual refreshing for God's people—we praise God for the opportunity to reexamine our lives and draw upon divine power to line up with God's will. As we journey through the stations of the cross, we look forward to Resurrection Sunday when we will yet again rejoice in the

gift of God's unconditional love and the possibility of new life through Christ Jesus.

As people of faith, we believe in the power and purpose of rituals. There are so many rituals that have shaped the contours and context of our faith: baptisms, baby dedications, weddings, funerals, communion, ordination and building dedications, just to name a few. All of these rituals are important because they function as a thread that connects the tapestry of the human family. According to the renowned symbolic anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, rituals and symbols are vital because they help us make meaning of public life.

These rituals help us to understand what we say we believe and shape how we communicate, think and act each day. But rituals can become dull, stale and rancid if we do not connect them to present day reality. Although the Word stands forever, rituals and traditions must always be open to change to stay relevant

and vibrant. Additionally, we must always look for ways to elevate the way we practice rituals so that we can continue to grow and nurture the best in others.

During this season of Lent, let us reflect on ways that we can elevate how we practice this ritual. It is not enough to give up sweets, fried food, soda, Reality TV, alcohol, cigarettes, etc. As Dr. Martha Simmons reminds us, Lent is not just about giving up something bad. It is an invitation to do something good. In other words, don't just stop eating junk food, add fruit and vegetables to your diet. Don't just give up binge TV watching, add 30 minutes of prayer, meditation and devotion to each day. Don't just give up selfishness, add volunteering in a homeless or domestic violence shelter. Don't just give up gossiping, add mentoring a youth at Nineteenth Street Baptist Church.

As we pray and seek God during this Lenten Season, I am asking that each member of Nineteenth Street commit to do the following.

First, pray daily and join the pastor and associate clergy on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6 AM on the prayer line for a 15-minute devotional. The Lent brochure is available through the church [website](#). Second, follow the daily scripture itinerary provided in the brochure (and on page 5) so that we are one people reading and meditating on the one scripture as we consecrate ourselves in service to the One True God.

*continued on next page*



Third, fast/abstain from something you enjoy eating and/or doing for the 40-day period. Remember, fasting is a spiritual discipline in which we deny the flesh its desires so that we can feed the hunger of the spirit within us. However, as you remove one “bad” or “not-so-good-thing,” it is important to replace it with something else that can help you deepen your relationship with God.

Fourth, attend at least one Lent worship service on Wednesdays at 12 noon. Hear a dynamic Word and songs that will feed your souls and strengthen your fellowship with people from the community who are also praying fervently and seeking God during this pilgrimage of prayer, praise and purpose. As we pray, mediate, reflect, write, worship, fellowship and chase after God during this Lenten Season, we will hear from God and declare with the royal prophet Zephaniah, “The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior, who will rejoice over you with gladness, and renew you in his love.” (3:17, NRSV) ❖

**FOLLOW US:**



**Please support Pastor Roberts by coming with him to guest preaching engagements!**

**Thursday, March 22 and Friday, March 23, 7 PM  
Seventeenth Annual Preaching Mission Revival**

Trinity Episcopal Church  
Rector, Reverend Canon John T. Harmon  
7005 Piney Branch Road NW  
Washington, DC 20012

## Pastor Roberts on the Air

Mark your calendar to tune into the Coach Butch McAdams Show on Sunday, March 18 from 12:30 to 1 PM to hear Rev. Dr. Darryl Roberts talk about Nineteenth Street ministries and initiatives.

Listen live on radio stations WOL (1450 AM) and MAGIC (95.9 FM) or listen to live radio streaming on a computer or cellphone device by going to [www.woldcnews.com](http://www.woldcnews.com).

Pastor Roberts is on the show every third Sunday at 12:30 PM. ❖



# Make A Lent Covenant

The Period of Lent is a time of prayer, self-denial, penitence and spiritual refreshing for God's People. It began on Ash Wednesday, February 14, and ends on Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018. Although Lent has already begun, it is not too late for you to commit to a personal plan of action. Our Pastor has provided guidance and asks each member of Nineteenth Street to covenant to do the following during Lent.

- **Pray** daily and join the pastor and associate ministers on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6 AM on the prayer line for a 15-minute devotional. The dial-in number is 605-472-5349; conference code is 348952#.
- **Fast/Abstain** from something you enjoy eating and/or doing for the remainder of Lent. Replace it with a spiritual practice, e.g., exercising the Fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:13, 19-22. (You should consult your physician before making major changes to your diet.)
- **Attend** at least one Lenten Service and invite a friend. (See Calendar on page 17 for Lenten services and speakers.)
- **Complete a prayer journal**, starting today. As you read, meditate, pray, reflect and respond as God reveals to you how he wants you to proceed.



## ○ Follow the daily Scripture itinerary.

### February 26 – March 3: The Promises of God

|                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| Monday, 2/26:    | Joshua 1:5    |
| Tuesday, 2/27:   | Psalm 84:11   |
| Wednesday, 2/28: | Psalm 89:34   |
| Thursday, 3/1:   | 2 Peter 1:3-4 |
| Friday, 3/2:     | 1 John 1:9    |
| Saturday, 3/3:   | 1 John 2:25   |

### March 5 – March 10: Obedience

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Monday, 3/5:    | Deuteronomy 28:1 |
| Tuesday, 3/6:   | 1 Samuel 15:22   |
| Wednesday, 3/7: | Luke 11:28       |
| Thursday, 3/8:  | John 14:23-24    |
| Friday, 3/9:    | Romans 12:11     |
| Saturday, 3/10: | James 1:22-25    |

### March 12 – March 17: Giving

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Monday, 3/12:    | Deuteronomy 15:10     |
| Tuesday, 3/13:   | Psalm 37:21           |
| Wednesday, 3/14: | Proverbs 11:25        |
| Thursday, 3/15:  | Proverbs 18:16        |
| Friday, 3/16:    | 2 Corinthians 8:12    |
| Saturday, 3/17:  | 2 Corinthians 9: 7-11 |

### March 19 – March 24: Hope

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Monday, 3/19:    | Psalm 25:5     |
| Tuesday, 3/20:   | Psalm 31:24    |
| Wednesday, 3/21: | Proverbs 13:12 |
| Thursday, 3/22:  | Micah 7:7      |
| Friday, 3/23:    | Romans 15:4    |
| Saturday, 3/24:  | Romans 15:13   |

### March 26 – March 31: Sacrifice

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Monday, 3/26:    | Mark 10:45        |
| Tuesday, 3/27:   | Luke 9:24         |
| Wednesday, 3/28: | Luke 12:32-33     |
| Thursday, 3/29:  | John 15:13        |
| Friday, 3/30:    | Romans 6:13       |
| Saturday, 3/31:  | Philippians 3:7-8 |

Lent should be approached with a prayerful spirit and a penitent heart, with which we sincerely seek God who responds with spiritual results. ❖

## First Anniversary of Pastor Roberts & People Celebrated on February 18



*Chair of the Deacon Board Fred Leftrict, Chair of the Deaconess Board E. Louise White and Chair of the Trustee Board Franklin Smith congratulate Pastor Roberts on successful first year.*



*Rev. Dr. James E. Victor Jr., Senior Pastor, Mount Olive Baptist Church, was the Guest Preacher.*

# Anniversary Service Participants



*Taylor Weldon thanked Pastor Roberts for his work with youth.*



*Guest soloist Anika Sampson Anderson sang "Great is Thy Faithfulness."*



*Evelyn Sellers gave heartfelt remarks about the Pastor on behalf of church ministries.*



*Karen Williamson spoke about interactions with the Pastor as editor of The Epistle.*



*Deaconess Hester Jones baked the special anniversary cake.*



*Violetta Graham read announcements during the service.*

# Trustee Board Changes and Improvements

*By Trustee Donza M. Poole*

February was another busy month for the Board of Trustees, as we welcomed a new member, elected officers, hosted training, and oversaw the first stage of the church's phone system upgrade.

The Board welcomed its newest member, Trustee Patrick Wesley Cooper, who was elected to a three-year term at the January church business meeting. Trustee Emerson Bretous was elected to a second three-year term. Both bring a wealth of experience to the Board.



Trustee Cooper is an architect and real estate developer with over twenty-five years of experience as a project leader on a broad range of residential, commercial, and institutional development projects. He serves as Principal of Compass Design & Development. He joins retired architect, Trustee James Rodgers, in bringing invaluable knowledge and skills to the Trustee Board, which is charged with the care of the church's buildings, Jones-Handy House, and grounds. Trustee Cooper is a graduate

of Hampton University, where he received a Bachelor of Architecture. He is a proud member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. One of his first trustee assignments is to help oversee the design of a handicap access ramp for the church.



Trustee Bretous is an experienced IT professional who has worked with area law firms in managing their IT departments. He is a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and is a Prince Hall Mason. Currently Trustee Bretous is overseeing the upgrade of the church's new phone system. The first part of the installation began in February and involves rewiring the church to migrate us from a copper landline system to a fiber optics platform plus wiring for cable. The upgraded system will improve phone

and internet reliability, allow for conference calling, add cable TV access, and provide increased capacity for new technologies, such as live streaming, digital sound and social media.

February also saw the election of the Board's 2018 officers. Trustees Franklin Smith and Ave' Cannady were re-elected chairman and vice chair, respectively. Trustee Donza Poole was elected secretary. ❖



# Active Shooter Seminar Held

*By Trustee Donza M. Poole*

In keeping with our emphasis on ongoing training, Pastor Roberts and the Trustee Board co-hosted an Active Shooter Seminar on February 17. The seminar was presented by Earnest Walker of the Homeland Security Division of Prince George's County. Walker is the Outreach and Education Director of the county's Emergency Preparedness Branch. The seminar was designed to educate church leaders and the Pastor on what to do in the event of an "active shooter" situation at Nineteenth Street. Over 60 church leaders and employees attended,

including deacons, deaconesses, trustees, ushers, ministerial staff, office staff, and nurses. The seminar covered such topics as identifying suspicious characters and packages, knowing church escape routes, and conducting churchwide active shooter drills. Mr. Walker left the attendees with the immediate charge to develop and implement active shooter procedures for the church.

Next Up - CPR and first aid training at the church on May 5, from 9 AM to 1 PM. ❖



*Deacon Howard Smith listens intently during Earnest Walker's presentation.*



*Trustee Charles Sprow addresses attendees at Active Shooter Seminar.*

## THE NEW MEMBERS CORNER

# New Members Ministry Launches New Column

*By Deacon Deborah Crain Kemp and Violetta Graham*

The New Members Ministry of Nineteenth Street is proud to introduce The New Members Corner, a regular column of The Epistle to highlight activities of The New Members Ministry and individuals who have recently joined our church.

Under the direction of Pastor Roberts, the interim director of The New Members Ministry Violetta Graham reorganized the new member's curriculum in 2017. Classes are held on the fourth Saturday of each month, now known as "Super Saturday, at 11 AM in the deacon's board room. Anyone joining Nineteenth Street is encouraged to attend this dynamic one-day session featuring the church's history, beliefs, membership privileges, stewardship, and exploring our spiritual gifts.

The New Members Ministry motto states, "It is our desire to encourage you to become an informed member of NSBC, so that you may in turn become an involved member of NSBC." All members of the church—old and new—are welcome to attend.

For more information, contact Interim Director Violetta Graham at [violettagraham@gmail.com](mailto:violettagraham@gmail.com) or 202-570-2554. ❖



## New Members in February

*By Baptism:*

Dr. Renee Bovelle

*By Experience of Grace:*

Brother William E. Hunt

Sister Wanda Barrett



*Pastor Roberts and Deacon Yvonne Dickson with new members Dr. Renee Bovelle and William Hunt*

# Helping Hand Club Speakers Look at Our History and Personal Ancestry

By Deacon Billy F. Gay

The Helping Hand Club led the church's annual worship service in celebration of African American History on February 11. The featured speaker was Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, the granddaughter of Rev. Walter H. Brooks, pastor of Nineteenth Street from 1882 to 1945. She is currently the national president of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). She also is the Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. In 2014 Dr. Higginbotham was presented the National Humanities Medal of Honor by President Obama for "illuminating the African American journey" and named

one of the Top 25 Women in Higher Education by Diverse Magazine.

The church was also privileged to hear from Dr. Gina Paige, CEO of African Ancestry/DNA, as she offered us a



Guest Speaker  
Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham

in which Professor Henry Louis Gates of Harvard University assisted celebrities in discovering their legacies through DNA with the African Ancestry/DNA company.

In the fellowship hall following our worship service, Dr. Paige gave a presentation on the process of determining our roots. During the session, a number of church members entered a drawing for a free African Ancestry/DNA kit. Evelyn Sellers was the happy winner and will soon know her African heritage.

As it has in the past, the Helping Hand Club solicited support from the congregation for the NAACP and ASALH. As Dr. Higginbotham intimated, the current political establishment has been observed to be hostile toward minorities; however, African Americans have been down that road before. Through the collective support of our protective organizations and through faith, we as a people are confident of prevailing. ❖



Dr. Paige revealing  
Pastor Roberts' ancestral roots

gateway to our roots. During the morning service, she publicly revealed to Pastor Roberts his roots as determined by a DNA sample. Dr. Roberts had provided the sample earlier in the month via a mouth swab that was scientifically analyzed and tested. The "reveal" was reminiscent of the popular TV program



Edith Bullard-Britt with Dr. Paige

# African Sculptures Added for Jubilee Sunday

During the month of February, Nineteenth Street's sanctuary walls and balcony railings are beautifully decorated in African textiles in honor of African American History Month. On Jubilee Sunday, February 25, we were awed by the added presence of Chi Wara sculptures at the front of the sanctuary. The sculptures symbolize the Legend of Chi Wara of the Bambara People in the Republic of Mali in West Africa.

The Bambara are a Mandé people living in West Africa, primarily in Mali, but also



in Guinea, Burkina Faso and Senegal. The mythology of the Bambara people of Mali tells the story of an antelope named Chi Wara who first taught farming skills to humanity. The headpieces were worn by a Bamana society to represent the mythical agricultural animal during dances held at sowing and harvesting times. At the start of the rainy season, after the fields have been seeded, the Chi Wara crests are danced in the evening.

The male represents the power and energy of the sun and the female the

*African textiles adorn the church's walls and railings. Rufus Stevenson with male ChiWara sculpture across the sanctuary from the female sculpture*

power of the earth and fertility. Straw (raffia) is used to symbolize rain (water). Twice a year the Chi Wara appears in the village. The first time it is a sign to clear the land and plant (millet). The second and final time is to celebrate the harvest.

We thank Mr. Rufus Stevenson for sharing his gifts and talents by curating the display of African textiles and sculptures in our sanctuary. In addition, special thanks to Lee Hairston, who proposed the idea 17 years ago, as well as to Ron Taylor who helps to keep it going. ❖



# Minister of Music Search Committee on Its Way

*By Deborah Lewis Thornton*

The Minister of Music Search Committee is off to a good start. The committee has been meeting bi-weekly in keeping with our time table. Thus far, all meetings have been in person at the church. Meeting face-to-face has been very effective as the committee attempts to carry out its mission. However, the next meeting will be a conference call now that the final draft of the job description is completed.

Committee members have critically reviewed and revised the current minister of music job description to ensure that potential applicants will have clarity about the church's expectations. Committee members also compared our job description to one currently being used for an active minister of music search.

The final draft of the job description was completed at the February 13 meeting and is ready to be formatted for various media outlets. Advertising outlets being considered are LinkedIn, IDEALIST.org, DC Baptist Convention, Simply Hired, Indeed, Facebook, WHUR, 104.1, and National Baptist Convention.

Stay tuned! ❖

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to Dr. Jeri Baucum McKinney who was recently named as Director of Psychological Services for Casady School in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, beginning August 2018. Previously she worked as a school psychologist in the Durham and Greensboro, North Carolina public school systems. Dr. McKinney received her BA from Hobart and William College in Geneva, New York; MS in Child Development from the Erikson institute in Chicago, Illinois; and MS and PhD in School Psychology from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She holds a National Certification in School Psychology and has a passion for developing curriculum to teach children healthy behavioral and social-emotional skills. Although Dr. Baucum lives out of the area, she continues to be a member of Nineteenth Street Baptist Church. Her proud grandmother is Deacon Yvonne Dickson.



Congratulations to Dr. Laura Morgan Roberts, our First Lady, who was generously quoted in an article in the Business Section of The Washington Post on Sunday, February 25, 2018. The article discussed a report that Dr. Roberts helped research and author on the career paths of Harvard Business School's black female alumnae from 1977 to 2015. Dr. Roberts, a professor at Georgetown University, worked with a Harvard Business School professor and Morehouse College president on the project, which was done in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the founding of Harvard Business School's African American Student Union. ❖

# Nineteenth Street Youth Attend The Rock

*By Edith Bullard-Britt*

Thirty youth were bused from Nineteenth Street to Ocean City, Maryland to attend The Rock January 26 to 28. Every year over 2,000 youth attend The Rock, a youth-centered retreat hosted annually by the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church. This is the fifth year that Nineteenth Street has taken a group to the retreat.

The Rock is a powerful and fun-filled retreat that allows youth to take a step back from their busy lives and learn

about the amazing love of Jesus Christ. It is a great experience for our youth to more fully connect with God and their friends while listening to great bands and speakers.

This year the scripture that guided The Rock was 1 Thessalonians 5:11:

*Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

This year's speaker was Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, the first black woman bishop to lead the 233-year-old Baltimore-Washington Conference. Bishop Easterling focused her sermons on youth knowing and loving themselves and being open to what God can do in their lives...using the theme of STAND (Stand True and Never Deviate). Additionally, our youth experienced diverse breakout

*continued on next page*



sessions—from a session on Human Trafficking to one on Games with Camping & Retreat Ministries. And they were able to round out the breakout session experience with both Zumba and Yoga classes. Throughout the weekend youth participated in debrief sessions to distill the information they received.

The Youth Ministry extends a special thanks to Pastor Roberts, planning committee members Anika Cooper, Deacon Howard Smith and Chaplain Eddie Martin, and the chaperones:

- Trustee Emerson Bretous
- Edith Bullard-Britt
- Shirley France
- Kenyatta Hobson
- Sandra Howell
- Giovanna Jean-Baptiste
- Deacon Kevin Little
- Karyn Sanders
- Emmanuelle St. Jean
- Rev. Lorise White Wolfe
- Deacon Gerald Young



*Our young men with a member of the Urban Street Level band.*



*Pastor Roberts has a session with retreat participants.*



*Bishop Easterling*



*Shaine Craft, Jara Wilensky and Alicia Dawson try out Yoga.*

## Nineteenth Street Called Hidden Gem of the City

WUSA-TV reporter Bruce Johnson spotlighted Nineteenth Street as a DC hidden gem in an on-air segment and blog on the station website on February 14. Johnson recognized Nineteenth Street as the oldest Black Baptist church in the city and gave an explanation for why we didn't change our name when we moved to our current 16th Street location.

[Click here to see Nineteenth Street on the news!](#) ❖

### Wanted: Volunteers for The Epistle!

The Epistle is looking for volunteers to help report, conduct interviews and write stories each month. This is a great way to meet and connect with other church members and be involved with the work of the church. It is also very rewarding to see the results of your efforts every month and know you are helping to improve communications to and within our church family. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Karen Williamson at 202-829-5973 or [williamsonke@gmail.com](mailto:williamsonke@gmail.com).



# Calendar

## MARCH

**Friday, March 2 – Saturday, March 3** – Men's Retreat, Stafford, Virginia

**Wednesday, March 7** – Lenten Service and Lunch, Rev. Judy Fentress-Williams, Assistant to the Pastor, Alfred Street Baptist Church, Noon

**Sunday, March 11** – Scholarship Day Worship Service

**Sunday, March 11** – Daylight Saving Begins at 2 AM (set your clock ahead 1 hour)



**Wednesday, March 14** – Lenten Service and Lunch, Rev. Marcus E. Turner Sr., Pastor, Beulah Baptist Church, Noon

**Wednesday, March 21** – Lenten Service and Lunch, Rev. L. K. Floyd, Pastor, Heart Changers Baptist Church, Noon

**Thursday, March 22 and Friday, March 23** – Seventeenth Annual Preaching Mission Revival, Pastor Roberts, Guest Preacher, Trinity Episcopal Church, 7005 Piney Branch Road NW, Washington, DC, 7 PM

**Sunday, March 25** – Palm Sunday Worship Service

**Thursday, March 29** – Maundy Thursday Supper, Communion and Foot Washing, 7 PM

**Friday, March 30** – Good Friday

**Saturday, March 31** – Church School Easter Play Dress Rehearsal and Easter Egg Hunt, 10 AM – 2 PM

## APRIL

**Sunday, April 1** – EASTER SUNDAY Worship Service

**Sunday, April 1** – Church School Easter Program, fellowship hall, 8:45 AM

**Friday, April 20** – Church Business Meeting, 7 PM

**Saturday, April 21** – Progressive Adults Theater Outing, August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*, Arena Stage, 2 PM

**Saturday, April 21** – Contemporary Worship Service, Praise & Worship, 5:45 PM; Service, 6-7 PM

**Sunday, April 22** – Women's Day Worship Service and Reception, Guest Speaker First Lady Laura Morgan Roberts

**Saturday, April 28** – Ushers Ministry Presents *Jazz on the Lawn*, 6 PM

### Join Pastor Roberts at Good Friday Service

**Friday, March 30, Noon  
Rock Creek Baptist Church**

Rev. Jeffrey Mitchell, Pastor  
6707 Woodyard Road  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland