

The People's Pride

The People's Community Baptist Church

Summer/Fall 2004

31 Norwood Road • Silver Spring, Maryland 20905 • The Late Rev. Dr. T. J. Baltimore, Sr., Founder • (301) 384-2601 • www.tpcbc.org

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A Message From Our Interim Pastor

Dear Church Family:

It is by God's grace that I am blessed and allowed to serve this marvelous congregation. As the interim pastor, and having served for 10 months, I am delighted to say that my experience has been both a blessing and a joy. My family and I thank you for your continuous prayers, support and words of encouragement.

Another blessing for me is the opportunity to serve with fellow ministers in the gospel who are friends, mentors and are profound in God's word. I truly enjoy our time together at Saturday Night Church, Sunday Worship Services, Sunday School, family meetings and Tuesday Night Bible Study. I pray that we continue to follow God's guidance and apply our talents in all we do to carry out his will.

I am elated about the goodness and promises God has in store for our church. The People's Community Baptist Church remains strong in all of its undertakings and our flock continues to grow. For these we give thanks. As you are aware, our primary concern is the search for a new shepherd. We know that God is watching and protecting us, and in His time he will send a shepherd to lead our flock.

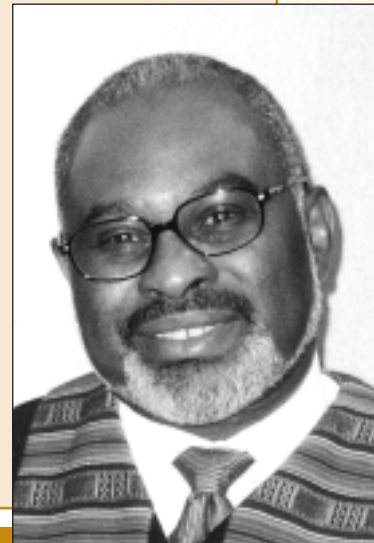
Meanwhile, let us continue to pray for harmony and for the leaders of our church.

Psalm 131 reminds me of the need to pray everyday. David said, "My heart is not proud, O Lord my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have stilled and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore." (NIV)

In closing, I thank you for your prayers and support, and ask that we stand together firm in our faith.

Blessings and Peace,

Reverend Donald R. Kelly
Interim Pastor



"One Dream, The People's Vision"



The People's Community Baptist Church One Year Later . . .

The late Reverend Dr. Thomas Jeremiah "T. J." Baltimore Sr., Founder and Senior Minister of The People's Community Baptist Church (TPCBC) died 16 months ago. God gave him the courage to challenge, plant his dreams and put his vision into action. T. J. Baltimore was special.

Reverend Baltimore dedicated his life to creating a caring environment for people who wanted to become Christians, understand the fundamental teachings of God, and created a church for those who wanted to capture the knowledge of Christian growth.

T. J. shared his personal lifeline to eternity, which is best summarized by his lifetime of service to God. He preached to his congregation continually about reaching beyond the walls of our church, evangelizing and serving the oppressed and assisting the needy through social action and community outreach program. Following the legacy of AME Bishop Richard Allen, T. J. believed that the "church could best serve God by serving His people." T. J. was indeed special for his time.

On Monday, June 16, 2003, with the precious Will of God Almighty, T. J. Baltimore was called from a life of labor to one of eternal reward. A very special person left The People's Community Baptist Church with a legacy and some unique challenges.

Many of us wanted to know how TPCBC would respond to the various challenges remaining after the death of our beloved pastor, minister and friend. Some of us however, did not know or somehow ignored T. J.'s most important legacy to his congregation and commitment to God.

T. J. worked his entire life to build what he called the "The Church of My Dreams", a church where the old and young are comforted, challenges the youth, inquires as well as avers, looks forward as well as backwards, and encourages. Our church has good men, women and the living God. T. J.'s dream church was never about the work of an individual. He supported the growth of all the church ministries led by Christian men and women who commit their time, talents and treasures to making a difference.

One year later, June 2004, a new day dawned upon us. It represented new mercies, blessings, needs, challenges, promises, directions, and opportunities for a new vision. In fact, one year later, TPCBC remains strong, vital and fervently united in its religious mission.

The church's foundation, leadership and vision of T. J.'s dream all prove to be stronger and substantive. As a community of believers, we know and understand that much more remains to be done at People's. Over the past year, we have recognized the need to recommit ourselves to overcoming the weaknesses of private agendas and to stand fast in our faith. We have much for which to be thankful. Our church has grown over the past year. It continues to pursue its goal of Empowering Kingdom Growth and new members joining our branch of Zion has increased. Additionally, I'd like to share a few relevant actions that have transpired during the past year.

- The Deacon Board, Deaconess Board and Board of Trustees collaborated to address the vacant leadership left by a long-serving pastor. They moved with precision to assure that the ongoing operations, spiritual and administrative needs of the church were not faltered.
- Recognizing the need for grieving, a mourning period was formally established. The mourning period gave members an opportunity to rebound, embrace and accept changes that were forthcoming.
- An Interim Pastor and Interim Business Manager were announced and ministries were encouraged to focus on their respective programs. Family meetings became another forum for disseminating church information, decisions, and updates during the transition period.
- The Trustee Board presented the church's financial status to the membership and budgets for the coming year were available for public review and discussions.
- Sunday School, Tuesday Night Bible Study, Evangelism, and our legacy programs, such as the International Multicultural Ministry, Family Life, the Chamber of Commerce, Health and Wellness, and The T. J. Baltimore Scholarship Program increased their levels of performance with outstanding results.

- The T. J. Baltimore Scholarship Program awarded 71 college scholarships, 20 more than in 2003. The program also supported six high school students who participated in the college tour of eight Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The program continued its sponsorship of the increasingly popular College Fair and Financial Aid Workshop, with more than 40 financial aid associations participating.
- Our Youth Church, Youth Choir, Music Ministry, Social Action and Christian Education, among others, are examples of the continued faith and work of TPCBC. And, everyone seems to agree that attendance at this year's Vacation Bible School was larger than ever. "All things are possible through Christ Jesus who strengthens us."
- Saturday School continues to offer SAT preparation classes to assist children in need of additional academic sustenance. In August 2004, our Baptist Men's Fellowship Ministry Rites of Passage Program, with the church's support, successfully led a group of young men on an educational and evangelism tour to the Republic of South Africa.
- In October, 2003, a Pulpit Search Committee (PSC) was selected and given its charge. The strength of the church, its foundation, commitment, and faith, was illustrated through the committed work of this church-wide committee. Less than one year after its creation, and with fervent prayer, much thought and careful deliberation, the PSC recommended to the Deacon Board the names of two individuals believed to be most highly qualified to lead TPCBC. On Sunday, September 19, the Deacon Board mentioned that a candidate was selected for the position and will be presented at a church meeting on Thursday, September 22.



This congregation, grateful and obedient, is composed of special believers. One year later, The People's Community Baptist Church is spiritually guided, harmonious, administratively strong, confident, financially stable and reliable. Our church, a year later, realizes the significance of looking back but only to honor its past. It is moving forward with divine momentum and expectations to meet the challenges and fulfill the mission for its future.

As a body of the chosen, we know and claim steadfastly that we are truly a blessed church, and for this we declare without doubt, and without shame, that GOD is good all the time. One year later, the congregation of The People's Community Baptist Church remains "a flock well worth flying with".

Robert Cummings
Chairman, Christian Education Board



Paul Bennett . . . Appointed Interim Church Manager

In October 2003, Mr. Paul Bennett joined the church's staff as Interim Church Manager succeeding former Chief of Staff, Deacon Wesley Harvey.

Mr. Bennett's professional experience makes him aptly qualified to manage the church's everyday assignments, and address the needs that better supports the congregation. Since coming on board Mr. Bennett has worked to support all ministries, staff, volunteers, church leaders, and the Human Resources Group.

Mr. Bennett says, "After a long career as a Senior Executive in the Federal government, I was honored to have been asked to fill the position of Interim Church Manager in October 2003, and to lead the business/administrative staff functions of my beloved church.

It is a quite humbling experience to be entrusted with the responsibility, when one considers the vast needs of our community and the number of residents served by our numerous ministries. God is good, all the time. Fortunately, the church is served by a quality staff and numerous volunteers who often go well beyond the call of duty to meet our congregation's needs and Empower Kingdom Growth.

Working under the auspices and guidance of the Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees, the staff has implemented a number of actions to maintain and improve recordkeeping, the business processes and functions of the church, the day-to-day interaction of staff with the congregation, the ministries and the community at large. Several improvements have been made to the church's facility and grounds. Additional changes and improvements are planned. God's Grace has brought us this far and His Grace and Mercy will see us through."



In September 2000, The People's Community Baptist Church Baptist Men's Fellowship Ministry (BMFM) launched a Rites of Passage program for young black men in our church and community. This endeavor materialized because our late Reverend Dr. T. J. Baltimore, Sr., repeatedly urged members to move beyond Sunday Worship and volunteer their time and talents to the furtherance of God's Kingdom.

In support of Pastor Baltimore's plea, The Baptist Men's Fellowship Ministry established a Men's Rites of Passage Program. Its mission is to ensure that our young black males survive in this nation, rise to heights they are capable of achieving, provides an institutional support structure that instructs and affirms, and establishes Christian Brotherhood bonds. The leadership and operational arm of the program are managed through The Rites of Passage Council of Elders, a twelve-person body from the BMFM.

The four-year program—originally intended for one year—teaches and influences the lives of teenage and pre-teenage African-American males between the ages of 11 and 16. Classes are held on weekends and consist of three one-hour sessions. The young men are taught God's spiritual laws, how to prepare themselves for leadership roles, as well as how to develop and demonstrate a Christian disposition.

The Rites of Passage Program is a developmental process. Sessions include conflict resolution, controlled response, unity, competition, communication, community involvement, career planning and fundamental concepts organized and delivered from a Christian approach. Interpersonal communication and proper use of the English language are emphasized. **Maxwell Lawrence**, who recently graduated from the program said, "This program was a wonderful experience overall. It really helped me to develop my personal qualities while promoting a sense of community with other men, young and old. I would highly recommend this program to any and all young men. It is and will continue to be a great way for them to fellowship and learn about themselves in the presence of their brothers." Fun outings such as White Water Rafting and visits to the Montgomery County Policy Academy, The Black Wax Museum, professional work environments and other areas of interest contributed positively to the youngsters' cultural awareness and spiritual development.

After 26 weeks of classroom tutoring, the first Rites of Passage graduation ceremony was held on Saturday, June 19, 2004. This achievement marks a milestone in each graduate's Christian development. Evidence shows that graduates are more anchored in their faith and have embraced the positive principles of Christian living. "My mentors helped me to stay on the straight path throughout high school, and helped keep me away from trouble. The Rites of Passage helped me to realize the importance of a good education and I was able to raise my semester GPA from 2.0 to 3.71 over the years. I have been able to have close relationships with other black youth who have helped to keep my head focused toward God," says graduate **Ibrahim Barry**.

In August 2004, The Men's Rites of Passage graduates visited Johannesburg, South Africa. Details of their tour will appear in the next issue of the *People's Pride*.

The Baptist Men's Fellow Ministry welcomes volunteers. A key requirement of the program is to identify and assign one mentor to each participant. While program planning is well under way, its overall success is centered on the availability of volunteer mentors. The program needs volunteers who are willing to serve and to receive a few hours of mentor training. Also, as permitted by law and in accordance with Montgomery County's requirements, volunteers will need to complete an application for background screening.

This is an opportunity to play a gratifying role in the lives of our youth. **Desmond Taliaferro** shared his memorable experiences of the program and added, "Throughout this program, the mentors have helped the young boys with certain problems or issues. They helped them with school work, behavior, positive thinking, how to take responsibility for their actions and showing respect for elders."

Please consider becoming a volunteer mentor. Application forms are available in the lobby area of the Christian Education Center. Or, you may contact a member of the Baptist Men's Fellowship Ministry.

Ron Sturdivant
President, Baptist Men's Fellowship
Rites of Passage Program

NCNW Girl's Rites of Passage Crossover Ceremony

Congratulations to the 19 young ladies who successfully completed The National Council of Negro Women, Potomac Valley Section (PVS) Girl's Rites of Passage Program. The Crossover Ceremony took place on Sunday, May 23, 2004 at The People's Community Baptist Church.

Proud parents, relatives and friends admired and applauded the young ladies as they demonstrated grace and elegance in their oral presentations and personal statements of promise.

The ceremony's guest speaker, Dawn Carter, Office Manager, Best Friends Foundation, Washington, D.C., delivered an inspiring address to the young ladies. Carter quoted, "Young ladies don't be in a hurry to do what you have seen others do. There are many hidden truths to everyone's path that only God knows about. Instead, allow God to guide and direct you along your path. No one can promise you endless sunshine, however, just know that with God you can get through the storms."

The Rites of Passage Program began in fall 2003 and ended in May 2004. Participants are encouraged to develop positive attitudes, strength and inner spirit through the power of prayer. An atmosphere of trust is created for the participants through interactive sessions that focus on improving their self-worth, cultural awareness, and responsibility towards self, family and community.

For learning and leisure activities the young ladies were chaperoned to various outings including tours to Howard University's Law School, Mrs. K's Toll House in Silver Spring, Maryland, and a beauty and makeup session at Nordstrom's department store in Columbia, Maryland. The young ladies also served as hostesses at the Potomac Valley Section first Annual Silent Auction and Brunch on Sunday, April 18, 2004.

We encourage teens from ages 13 to 17 to participate in the Rites of Passage Program. If you are interested and would like to receive more information, please contact a member of the National Council of Negro Women, Potomac Valley Section.

Stephanie Cummings

President, NCNW Girl's Rites of Passage Program



NCNW Rites of Passage Committee members photographed with 2004 program participants
Photo courtesy DeLores Lincoln-Willis



Wellness Center recognized for Community Services

The People's Community Wellness Center received the Acts of Caring Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). Wellness Center Project Director, Mr. Wilbur Malloy; the Reverend Joan McCarley and Maryland House of Delegates Reverend Gareth Murray accepted the award at a luncheon on April 21, 2004. The presentation was held at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Several Montgomery County Government Officials including Congressmen Chris Van Hollen, Albert Wynn and Delegate Herman Taylor attended the luncheon.



The Acts of Caring Award recognizes top volunteer programs throughout the United States. The Wellness Center was chosen after a careful review by judges from the Points of Light Foundation, the American Red Cross, American Library Association, America's Promise—the Alliance for Youth, and the National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government.

Since opening its doors in November 2002, the Wellness Center continues to provide faith and community-based health care for thousands of uninsured, low-income adults, who rely on hospital emergency rooms for non-emergency medical care. Competent medical care in a geographically underserved area of Montgomery County is provided to a large proportion of African American residents. Services include care for acute illness, chronic medical conditions, routine physical examinations, preventive care/wellness, medications, nutrition counseling, lifestyle management counseling and diabetes management.

The People's Community Wellness Center partners with Montgomery County's Health and Human Services Department, the People's Community Baptist Church and a community-based program to improve the health status of minority residents.

Wilbur Malloy
Project Coordinator, The People's Community Wellness Center



The People's Community Wellness Center Clinic Staff (from left to right): Nihad Asgari, Clinical Director; Frieda Hunter, Clinical Manager; Marietta James, IT Specialist; Shirley Forston, Nurse; Wilbur Malloy, Project Director; Millie Bryant, Administrative Support; Karen Suber, Administrative Support.

Music Ministry Blends With Voices at Lincoln Theater

Hundreds turned out on Saturday, June 5, 2004, for the first Annual Washington, D.C. Gospel Fest at Washington's Historical Lincoln Theater on U Street, N.W. Our very own Music Ministry was highlighted among several local choirs and groups chosen to participate in this inaugural event.

The People's Community Baptist Church combined choirs were well represented with more than 70 voices and rendered a medley of popular songs including Marvelous, At the Cross, and Hallelujah Is the Highest Praise. "The spirit was definitely ushered in when People's choir took the stage," said Andrea Lee, a member of the Benjamin Tribal family.

Among the talented performers headlining the first Gospel Fest were renowned gospel artist Daryl Coley. Singers Regina Belle and Alyson Williams along with Coley helped The FLOW Foundation organizers to realize their theme of "Bridging the Gap: Unity of Praise."

Renee McMullen
Chancel Choir/Music Ministry Member



The People's Community Baptist Church Music Ministry in concert at the Lincoln Theater. Photo courtesy Lawrence Hamm.

Gladiators Captures First Place in Division, Runner-up in Tournament!

Despite several rained out weekends and insufficient time to practice in between games, Coach Deacon Bill Clardy led his softball team to victory and into the playoffs.

On Saturday, August 7, our Gladiators went undefeated in the league's division playoffs for a second consecutive year. The team was also awarded first runner-up in this year's overall tournament. Clardy, who coached the team into winning its second trophy said, "The Gladiators are a group of Christian believers who love to fellowship and play softball together. I believe that if you work hard, the results would come. I don't do things halfheartedly. If I do, I can expect halfhearted results."

The softball tournament was sponsored by the Crusade Athletic League of Prince Georges County, Maryland.

Front row left to right:
Alice Crawley, Tani sha Anthony,
Zina Hoes, Coach Bill Clardy,
Leslie Caster,
Marsha Warren, and Renee Harris.
Back row left to right:
Steve Myers, Richard Orespo,
Bill Flowers, Hermond Palmer,
Courtney Clardy, Charles Snowden,
Kenny Stewart, Sean Clardy, and
Adrian Caster. Team members not
photographed are Todd Cranford,
Wesley Harvey II, and Stacey Ward,
the team's statistician.



TPCBC
Gladiators

Let's Work Together

The *People's Pride* thanks all those who contributed their time and effort to this newsletter. If you, your church family, or ministry has a noteworthy accomplishment to share, please contact a member of our newsletter staff, or leave a message in the **Communications Ministry's voice mail at (301) 384-2601, Extension 22.**

Bernice Lowe
Managing Editor

Upcoming Events

2004

October

**Men's Day
Fall Revival**

*Sunday, Oct. 24
Monday, Oct. 18 -
Wednesday, Oct 20*

**International Multicultural
Diversity Week
Observance Activities**

*Saturday, Oct. 30
Sunday, Oct. 31*

November

Church Anniversary

Friday, Nov. 12

December

**Single's Enhancement
Ministry Holiday Gala
Christmas Concert**

*Friday, Dec. 3
Sunday, Dec. 12*

The
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