

Vermont Avenue Baptist Church

September 2010

Welcome to September

Can you believe it? It's September already! Our fervent hope is that each of you was able to take advantage of the vacation months of the summer to enjoy a measure of rest, relaxation and reflection. With September comes the rebooting of our efforts and energies toward the work of the Kingdom. We're ready and rested; let's GO!

Renovation of Our Historic Sanctuary

It is happening! The Sanctuary building renovation is progressing; the room is filled with scaffolding, workmen, tools and machinery that God will use to replace our Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning systems. The old steam heating system which was probably installed when the church was erected in 1872 and the air conditioner that was installed in the late 1950's have served us well; and for their service, we praise God. But like anything mechanical, they have worn out and have failed. The new systems will provide years of a comfortable environment in which we can worship, study, praise and grow – all to the Glory of God.

The contracted cost just for the replacement HVAC systems is \$473,500. Thus far, we have also incurred additional related costs as follows:

Organ Protection - \$6,250 (We will incur an additional cost of \$6,250 to rebuild the organ sections that were disassembled upon completion of the work.)

Erection of Scaffolding - \$23,000

Architectural/Consulting Services - \$11,512.15

Our progress is wholly dependant on us. As we complete the installation of the HVAC system (which will take about 195 days), we will have many decisions to make regarding the aesthetic restoration of our Sanctuary. Those decisions will be greatly influenced by the bottom line costs and by the resources we have available. Though we may eventually have to borrow some money, we want to go as far as we can on a "cash and carry" basis. We are thankful for every gift you give, and pray that, even in these difficult economic times, your heart will lead you to remain loyal and liberal with our cause.

Additionally, we want to remain aggressive in our work as a church! Hence, we trust that you will not "rob God" in your tithes and offerings for the mission and ministry of the church.

To whom much is given, much is required. We have been given so much. We are moving forward – *To God be the GLORY!!!*

The Month of September at a Glance

- **Sunday, September 5**, we will worship in **ONE SERVICE** at 10:00 AM with *DRESS DOWN* as our attire. (*So long, summer!*)
 - **Sunday, September 12**, we will worship, and celebrate the Holy Communion Ordinance in our 7:30 and 10:45 AM worship services.
 - **Sunday, September 12 at 3:30**, we will worship in celebration of our Former Pastors in our Pastors' Memorial Service. Reverend Dr. J. Madison Thomas, Jr. and the members of Riverside Baptist Church, Ft. Washington, MD, will be our guests.
 - **Tuesday, September 14, at 7:00 PM**, we will gather for our Anniversary Week Prayer Meeting.
 - **Wednesday, September 15, at 7:00 PM**, we will worship in our **Pre-Anniversary Revival**, with Reverend Rudolph Stewart, III and the members of Sankofa International Baptist Church. A light supper will be available beginning at 5:30 PM for a nominal cost.
 - **Thursday, September 16, at 7:00 PM**, we will worship in our **Pre-Anniversary Revival**, with Reverend Dr. Bobbie Livingston and the members of Mt. Bethel Baptist Church. A light supper will be available beginning at 5:30 PM for a nominal cost.
 - **Friday, September 17, at 7:00 PM**, we will worship in our **Pre-Anniversary Revival**, with Reverend A. Michael Charles Durant and the members of Tenth Street Baptist Church. A light supper will be available beginning at 5:30 PM for a nominal cost.
 - **Sunday, September 19, Anniversary Sunday**, we will worship in **ONE SERVICE** at 10:00 AM. Reverend Dr. James H. Harris, pastor of the Second Baptist Church, Richmond, VA, and Professor of Homiletics, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA, will be our guest preacher. Our anniversary Dinner will follow service.
 - **Sunday, September 26**, we will worship in our 7:30 and 10:45 AM worship services.
 - **Sunday, September 26**, at 3:00 PM, the Washington, DC Club will present Brother Solomon Sparrow and Friends in a *Gospel Jazz Fest*.
- See our complete calendar at www.vabc.org for a details.

Club, Ministry and Auxiliary Meeting Schedule

Here's a look at the schedule of club and auxiliary meetings for the month:

Wednesday, September 1

Usher Boards 7:00 PM

Saturday, September 4

South Carolina Club 12:00 PM

Friendship Council 1:00 PM

Wednesday, September 8

Craft Class 10:00 AM

Hope & Happiness Senior Citizens Club 1:00 PM

Thursday, September 9

Christian Reading Ministry 10:00 AM

Saturday, September 11

North Carolina Club 10:00 AM

Missionary Society 12:00 Noon

Youth Missionaries 12:00 Noon

Reverend C.T. Murray Memorial Club 2:30 PM

Wednesday, September 15

Craft Class 10:00 AM

Thursday, September 16

Christian Reading Ministry 10:00 AM

Saturday, September 18

Reverend John H. Brooks Memorial Club 11:00 AM

Silver Leaf Club 11:00 AM

Reverend James E. Willis Memorial Club 1:00 PM

Tuesday, September 21

Washington, DC Club 6:00 PM

Wednesday, September 22

Craft Class 10:00 AM

Thursday, September 23

Christian Reading Ministry 10:00 AM

Saturday September 25

Good Samaritan Club 11:00 AM

Virginia Club 11:00 AM

Reverend John R. Wheeler Memorial Club 12:15 PM

Tuesday, September 28

Singles Ministry 6:30 PM

Wednesday, September 29

Craft Class 10:00 AM

Thursday, September 27

Birthday Fellowships 7:30 PM

Cruise with the December Fellowship

The December Fellowship is taking reservations for its luncheon cruise aboard the Spirit of Washington Labor Day weekend, Saturday, September 4, 2010. Reservations are going fast. See Reverend Carlyle R. Wheeler, Sister Yvette Dill, or any member of the December Fellowship for details.

The Half Dime

One hundred forty four years ago, in 1866, a new five cents piece was introduced into the coinage of the American economic system. This new coin, the nickel, replaced the small thin half-dime. The half-dime was a silver piece; the new nickel was a coin made of a copper-nickel alloy. Can you imagine the protests and complaints of the silver industry? How dare you change? How dare you introduce something new that challenges tradition and upsets the world, as we know it?

Ironically, also one hundred forty four years ago, in 1866, seven former slaves, John Slaughter, Amy Slaughter, Richard Blair, Sarah Blair, Emeline Byrd, Barney Byrd and Emeline Dade, under the leadership of, then, Minister John H. Brooks, introduced the Fifth Baptist Church of Washington, DC into the socio-religious world. Fifth Baptist Church, for them, would replace the routine and ordinary with a valued home for their spiritual growth. I can imagine that some people asked, "How dare they? Seven uneducated, but bold and audacious Coloreds, with the gall to rattle and disturb the conventional, traditional mores and customs of Washington society... Who do they think they are?"

One hundred forty four years later, in 2010, both the nickel and Fifth Baptist Church, renamed the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church, are alive and well. The socio-economic-political world has taken each through some changes; ups, downs, stagnant moments and times of incredible growth, but both are still here, doing well and contributing to the lives of people with whom they contact. The nickel still represents just five common cents in the economic system of America, while Vermont Avenue Church has grown to epitomize strength, constancy, relevance and potential in the Kingdom of God. Vermont Avenue Church has expanded its worth to exemplify value that is unparalleled, unmatched and unalterably abundant in righteousness. VABC, unlike the nickel, has grown and has been enriched and magnified for God's purpose here on earth.

As we celebrate 144 years of Vermont Avenue Church, we are thankful for all that God has done to us and through us and we pray that God will continue to guide and use us in the days, months and years of the future. We bless the name of the Lord for the intrinsic value given, the lives changed and the hope instilled during the life and times of our church. What a mighty God we serve!

Take Me Out to the Ballgame

The Men's Club and the Men's Day Committee for 2010 are sponsoring their annual outing to see the Washington Nationals play the Florida Marlins on Saturday, September 11, at 1:05 PM. Trustee Sam Scott can give you all the details and secure your reservation.

Birthday Fellowship Picnic

The Birthday Fellowships are combining their energies to sponsor a Fellowship Picnic on September 25 from 10:00 until 4:00 PM at Watkins Mill Park in Capitol Heights, MD. Brother Shawn Ruffing and the Fellowship Mothers and Fathers are giving leadership to the project; see them for more information and definitely plan to come!

Golden Age Day

On Thursday, September 30, at 11:00AM, the Deaconess Board will host our Annual Golden Age Day. Deaconess Marie Quick, the president of the Deaconess Board, and Deaconess Jessie Fox are planning for a GREAT DAY. We use this luncheon to honor the blessing of AGE; those members of our congregation who have attained the age of 80 (and beyond) are invited to come, fellowship, eat and receive the tributes, accolades and admiration that you so richly deserve.

The Deaconess Board will be sending invitations. To assure that you receive one, simply call the church office, or see any Deaconess and assure that your name is one of the invitees. Invitations can only be certain when you confirm that you are among our known octogenarians. If you have any questions contact Deaconess Marie or Deaconess Jessie Fox for details. We look forward to your company on September 30 at our Golden Age celebration.

Laptops to the College Bound

Because of your generosity, VABC has invested in the futures of our college bound graduates. In today's educational world, a laptop computer is an absolute necessity. With it, papers can be written, research done, organization perfected, calendars and schedules easily updated... All of these functions, and more, can be performed by and on a laptop. We are committed to endow and equip our graduates; and a laptop is, in educators' opinions, a good investment in today's educational world.

So we have given all of our graduates a Dell Laptop, loaded with an education- oriented package of software and ready to use. The recipients are;

Donnell Carroll who will attend the University of the District of Columbia

Sade Culmer who will attend Trinity University in Washington, DC

Shanaye Hurtt who will attend Cedar Crest College in Allentown, PA

Tony Jones who will attend the Art Institute of Washington

Christopher Wheeler who will attend the Art Institute of Washington

All bona fide members of our church, who graduate from high school and enroll in a college, university or technical

school, are eligible to participate in our Laptop Project. It's an investment from whence we will get a great return.

Men's Day Bible Study

As a part of the 2010 Men's Day Drive for Excellence, a Bible Study series entitled, *Real Men Make Great Christians*, will meet on September 22 and September 29, each night at 7:00 PM. The class is, of course, open to everybody, but a special invitation is extended to the Men (young and seasoned) of the church. During this series, we will examine some of the heroic men of the Bible, their challenges and their decisions and how those decisions impacted their lives.

Our Bible Study is always informative, inspiring, life altering and plain old downright fun. Make a point to join the Men as they open their Bibles and their minds for growth and development.

The Friendship Council 2010 Scholarship Awards

Each year, the Friendship Council honors deserving youth of our church for their academic achievements and outstanding work within the church and community. This year, we continued that tradition by awarding scholarships to two young ladies who have already taken steps to further their education. The two recipients of the scholarship awards are Sadé Culmer and Shanaye Hurtt.

Sadé Culmer:

Sadé, a graduate of Calvin Coolidge Senior High School, is the winner of the Council's First Place Scholarship Award in the amount of \$1,200. She is attending Trinity University, where her field of study will be Nursing. Out of a class size of 143, she ranked number 13 with a grade point average of 3.10. She is an active member of various clubs within the church and community and has received several awards throughout her high school years. Her School Counselor states that she has excellent communication skills; is well mannered with a funny, pleasant, and caring personality; has the intellectual creativity necessary to complete a highly advanced bachelor's degree, and can ultimately do post graduate work. Her Youth Leader at Vermont Avenue Baptist Church states that she has great leadership skills and is a "peacemaker" within the Young People's Missionary. As the current president, she is focused and productive on all their mission activities and serves as a role model for the younger children. Sadé states that her mission work has had a great impact on her. One of the mission activities that is most memorable to her is when they were able to show some other children and teens that they visited that there are people in this world that love and care about them.

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Shanaye Hurtt:

Shanaye, a graduate of Elizabeth Seton High School, is the winner of the Council's Second Place Scholarship Award in the amount of \$800. She is attending Cedar Crest College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, where she plans to study Forensic Science. During her high school years, Shanaye was a member of the Seton Decorators Club, the Step Team, the Volleyball Junior Varsity Team, and the Gospel Choir. Not only was she an active and participating member, she also held several offices. She has been a member of the Girl Scouts for nine years and has won silver and bronze awards. Her talents include playing the piano, writing poetry, and cooking, which she has demonstrated here at Vermont Avenue while working in the kitchen. Her Youth Leader at Vermont Avenue Baptist Church states that Shanaye is a confident, articulate, well-mannered, cooperative, and graceful Christian teen who is respectful of her elders. When asked to participate in the various Sunday School programs, she has done so willingly and without hesitation. Shanaye states that over the years, she has learned when to step up to be a leader and when to be an active follower. As the current president of her Girl Scout troop, she has assisted with charity events and other fund raising activities through the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital; and she is currently working on completing her Gold Award with troop members by teaming up with a Home for Women that have been victims of domestic violence. They hope to raise teen awareness of this crime in the Washington, D. C. area.

The Friendship Council congratulates both Sadé and Shanaye for their outstanding achievements and we hope that the scholarship awards will help them as they pursue their dreams.

Vermont Avenue Baptist Church

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Cornelius R. Wheeler, M. Div., Pastor Email: pastor@vabc.org

Office Hours: 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM Daily

Worship Services at 7:30 AM and 10:45 AM each Sunday

On fifth (5th) Sundays we worship at 10:00 AM

Holy Communion – 2nd Sunday each month at both Worship Services

Sunday School – Sunday at 9:00 AM

Prayer Meeting – Tuesday at 7:30 PM

Our newsletter is a monthly publication to share information and inspiration,
compiled by the Communications Ministry of VABC.