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THE ALLEN CHAPEL REPORT

and outside the church walls.

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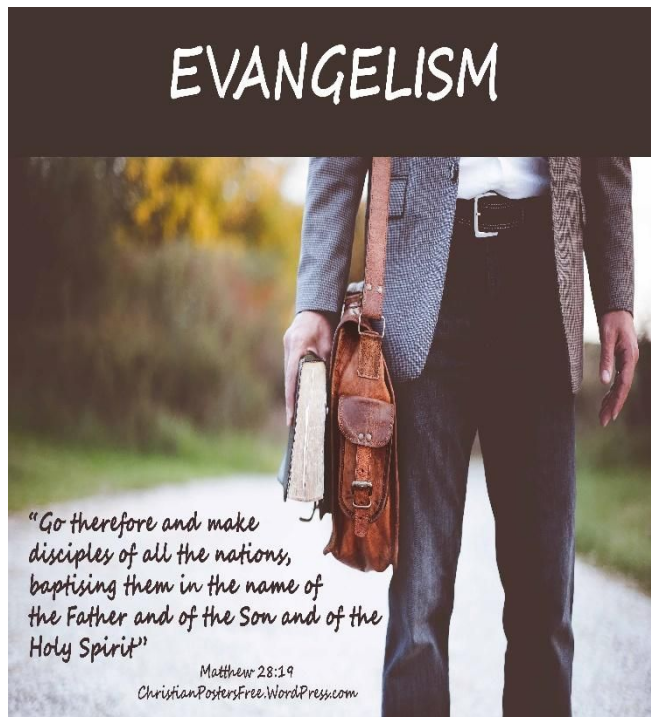
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ALLEN CHAPEL MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT:

THE EVANGELISM MINISTRY

BY: CHARLENE A. BARCLAY M.ED



“But you shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto me in both Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and to the outermost parts of the earth.” Acts 1:8

The Evangelism Ministry of Allen Chapel A.M.E., Silver Spring, Maryland has been in existence since November of 2017. The ministry was originally established

and is currently lead by Allen Chapel's church steward Richard Crump, with Pastor Alan Gould, Sr., as Commissioner. The purpose fulfilled through this ministry is for Christians to understand that "they have not fully worshiped God without complying with His call to fulfill His directive in going to the outer most parts of the world, and bring souls to him, that they may be saved." In essence, the ministry's vision is to inspire believers of Christ to "share ones' faith with unbelievers of all facets of life in a loving non-confrontational manner.

Meetings occur on a monthly basis. Along with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, ministry members learn the components of evangelism and how critical one's personal relationship with God is in developing their call to evangelize. Ministry members are also encouraged to receive education within the areas of formational, transformational, relational, mission based, and reproducible aspects of evangelism. As members grow in their understanding, they will in turn learn how to more effectively reach out to those within their personal lives, hence, intentionally evangelizing for Christ.

According to the ministry's guidelines, an effective evangelistic process should include 3 three essential elements:

The Approach...The Bible... The Close

1. The "Approach" entails and acronym known as (S.A.V.E.D.)

- Do you have any kind of spiritual belief (Spirituality)
- To you, who is Jesus (Alpha and Omega)
- Do you think there is a heaven and a hell (V is for heaven)
- If you died right now, where would you go (Either/Or)
- If what you believe were not true, would you want to know it (Doctrine)

2. Including "Biblical" precepts when evangelizing involves:

A. Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

- Ask the individual to read and tell you the meaning
- More clarification ask questions like: "Have you ever committed murder? Have you hated or let the sun go down on you anger?"

B. Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"

- Ask person to read and tell you the verses' meaning in their words

C. John 3:3 “No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”

- Tell story of Nicodemus
- Read scripture
- Why did Jesus die?

D. John 14:6 “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.”

- Read the verse
- Question- According to the verse, “Is there any other way to get to heaven, but through Jesus?”

E. Romans 10:9-11 “If you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame.”

- Ask person to read
- Ask who it includes: murderers, addicts, alcoholics et...etc...
- Belief in forgiveness

F. Revelation 3:20 “I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”

- Read verse aloud, ask for meaning
- Pray

3. Providing “Closure” upon evangelizing to a non-believer consists of applying G.R.A.C.E.

- Are you a sinner? (**G**uilty) Romans 2:23
- Do you want forgiveness of sin (**R**estoration) Romans 6:23
- Do you believe Jesus died on the cross for you and rose again? (**A**gain) John 3:3
- Are you willing to surrender yourself to Christ? (**C**hristian) John 14:6
- Are you ready to invite Jesus into your heart and into your life? (**E**ternal Life) Romans 10:9-11
- Allow time for person to answer these questions and offer a “prayer of confession”

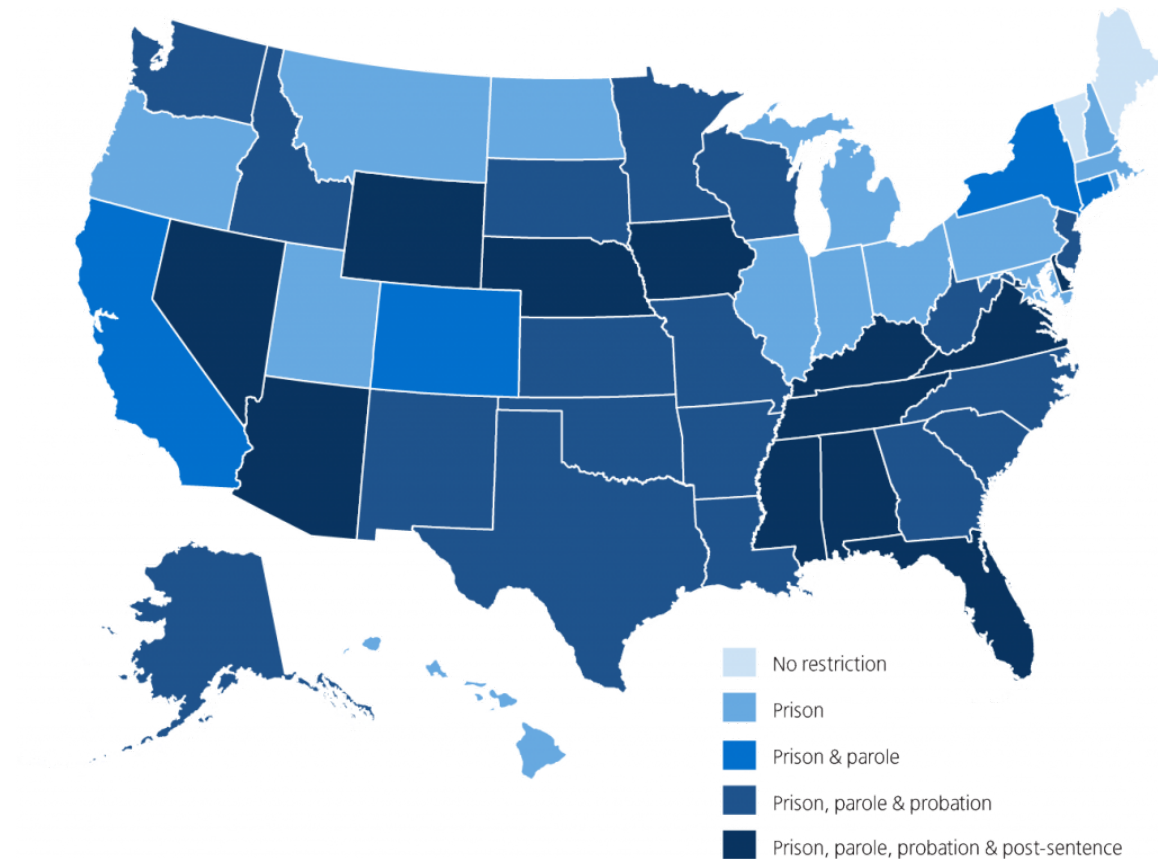
As a church, it is essential that each saved member, and not solely individuals within the “Evangelism Ministry,” does as the bible requires in Mark 16:15-19 to, “*Go into all the world and preach the gospel* to all creation.” Doing so, uplifts the essence of our faith as Christians to a lost and dying world.

For more information about this Ministry, contact:

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FELONY DISENFRANCHISEMENT

By: FRED WALLACE



On April 22, 2016, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe issued an historic executive order that changed the lives of 200,000 ex-felons in the commonwealth

of Virginia – granting them the immediate restoration their right to vote. (The Atlantic Magazine) (New York Times). This order left only the states of Kentucky, Florida and Iowa with blanket lifetime voting disenfranchisement policies for ex-felons. In these three states, no citizens convicted of a felony are allowed to vote, regardless of the crime committed, absent government-granted exceptions to the policy.

The term is known as Felony Disenfranchisement, which is a fancy way of “stripping voting rights from millions of citizens on the basis of criminal convictions.” (Brennan Center for Justice). This is a succession of suppressive actions, like poll taxes, literacy tests, etc., used to keep segments of the electorate from voting. (The Library of Congress). This act of disenfranchising affects people of color, severely. One in every 13 voting –age African American cannot vote, a rate that is more than four times greater than that of all other Americans. (Sentencing Project – 6 Million Lost Voters). In four states (Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia), more than one in five black adults are denied their constitutional right to vote. (Sentencing Project – 6 Million Lost Voters).

Governor McAuliffe’s act is a reminder that public support for giving ex-felons the right to vote after prison is significant, and growing. While his actions were unique and novel, it exposes the lengths States and jurisdictions have attempted to suppress the vote. When colonists came to this country, they practiced at common law “civil death”, which was a “set of criminal penalties that included the revocation of voting rights.” (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer). For colonists, losing the right to vote was based on “egregious violations of the moral code”; however, after the American Revolution, states began enacting provisions, which expanded disenfranchisement to all felony offenses. (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer). Section one of the Fifteenth Amendment of the Constitution states “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” This Amendment, passed by Congress in 1869 and ratified by the States in 1870, was an important beginning, granting the constitutional right of all black men to participate in local, state, and national government for the first time in American history. However,

this Amendment did not provide a means for stopping disenfranchisement laws. Historians have argued “the elimination of the property test as a voting qualification may help to explain the popularity of felony disenfranchisement policies, as they served as an alternate means for wealthy elites to constrict the political power of the lower classes.” (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer). “Before the Civil War, most states already had some form of disenfranchisement on the books, but these new laws were significantly broader, imposing disenfranchisement as a consequence for all felonies, rather than only a few select crimes. In rapid succession between 1865 and 1880, at least 13 states — more than a third of the country’s 38 states — enacted broad felony disenfranchisement laws.” (Brennan Center for Justice).

The motive for providing such sweeping felony disenfranchisement laws was simple: to impede newly enfranchised black men from being a participatory force in “exercising political power.” (Brennan Center for Justice). Once these laws were enacted, their enforcement was discriminatory and unjust. States would broaden their felony disenfranchisement law to include crimes in which white politicians would believe black citizens could be easily convicted and imprisoned. (Brennan Center for Justice). Even after the Reconstruction Era, several Southern states made their disenfranchisement laws as a bar against black male voters, “targeting those offenses believed to [have been] committed most frequently by the black population.” (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer). These policies would remain prevalent for over a century – while it is arguable whether such laws today are intended to tailor and reduce the political clout of people of color, this is their irrefutable effect.

Currently, 6.1 million Americans cannot vote due to a felony conviction. (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement). Only two states, Maine and Vermont, do not restrict the voting rights of anyone with a felony conviction, including those in prison. (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer) Thirty-five states currently restrict parolees from voting, and thirty-one states restrict offenders on probation from voting. (SSRN) While there has been efforts to reform these laws, the overall disenfranchisement rate has increased

along with the growing U.S. prison population, up from 1.7 million in 1976 to 6.1 million by 2016. (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer).

Based off polling, the eight out of ten U.S. residents believe that voting rights should be reinstated for citizens who have completed their sentence and almost two-thirds believed support voting rights for those on probation or parole. (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer). Since 1997, 24 states have changed their felony disenfranchisement provisions; as a result, an estimated 840,000 citizens have regained their right to vote. (Sentencing Project – Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer). The most recent changes in felony disenfranchisement laws affected the voting rights of ex-felons. This category can be further subdivided into two types of restrictions: a full voting ban and a partial voting ban. A full voting ban is when a state has a general rule excluding ex-felons from voting for life. In some cases, states provide a narrow path for ex-felons to regain their voting rights by petitioning the state's parole board or governor, typically in conjunction with seeking a pardon or executive clemency. However, if this process is unlikely to be successful, or is not utilized by most ex-felons, this is classified as a full voting ban. On the other hand, a state has a partial voting ban if a clearly defined subgroup of ex-felons is eligible to vote when certain conditions are met or become eligible to apply for the restoration of voting rights through a non-discretionary process. The criteria that define the subgroup vary from state to state and may include the nature of the crime, whether the individual is a first-time or repeat offender, and the time passed since completion of the sentence. (SSRN).

The right to vote is automatically restored after one's prison term in Washington, D.C. (Pro Con). Recently, the Maryland state Senate, overrode Governor Larry Hogan's veto, allowing the restoration of voting rights to felons on probation or parole, providing approximately 40,000 felons the right to vote. At issue was a Maryland bill, which sought to restore voting rights to felons who have completed their prison sentence but are still on parole or probation. The bill passed the legislature in 2015, but Governor Hogan vetoed the measure. Unlike in many

states, ex-offenders in Maryland already had the right to vote after all terms of their sentences were met (felons still in prison remain unable to vote). (Baltimore Sun).

President Lyndon B. Johnson once said, “A man without a vote is a man without protection.” This is one reason why voting is critical, important and necessary. For felons, voting not only helps integrate ex-offenders back into their communities – it forces elected officials to directly address their needs. (USA Today, to deny this precious right is problematic to humanity and is inefficient for those trying to ingratiate themselves to an effectual societal reentry. While reforms and changes are still happening across this country to allow improve voting disenfranchisement, such as the actions of Gov. McAuliffe, there is still much to be done that will make this country comparable to other nations that allow full democratic participation of its citizens.

EASTER (RESSURECTION) SUNDAY

TRADITIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

BY: CHARLENE A. BARCLAY M.ED



For millions of Christians worldwide, the Lenten season marks a period of fasting, moderation, and self-denial; traditionally observed by Catholics and many Protestant denominations. It begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with Easter (Resurrection) Sunday (gotquestionsministries, 2018), a pivotal holiday honoring Jesus Christ' resurrection from the grave 3 days after his death and burial. It has been called a moveable feast because it doesn't fall on a set date every year, as most holidays do (timeanddate.com.2018).

In 2018, Easter Sunday, will occur on April 1st; yes, the same as April Fool's day. Easter, along with Christmas is one of the most important Christian holidays, one filled with contemplation and celebration. Depending on the region of the world one resides, such festivities can range from conservative observances to more eccentric gatherings.

NORTH AMERICA



Since Easter Sunday commemorates Jesus' resurrection for Christians living in the United States; attending Sunday service decorating eggs, distributing chocolate covered candies shaped like bunnies, and enjoying a sizeable meal among family and friends for dinner is a common occurrence (timeanddate.com.2018). The insertion of Easter eggs originated in Pagan times. During this period, many groups organized spring festivals celebrating the re-birth of nature, the return of the land to fertility and the birth of many young animals. These are the origins of the Easter eggs that many Americans still hunt for and eat on Easter. Over time, Spring began to be associated with Jesus Christ's crucifixion and resurrection in replacement of Pagan traditions and symbolisms. The crucifixion is remembered on Good Friday and the resurrection is remembered on Easter Sunday.

Easter Sunday is not a federal holiday but a number of stores are closed in many parts of the US. If open, they may have limited trading hours. (timeanddate.com.2018).

AFRICA



In **Ethiopia**, Easter is one of the most revered festivals, celebrated after 55 days of fasting. Followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church offer daily prayers at the church and do not eat until 3 PM, except Saturday and Sunday when prayers are conducted early in the morning.

Gifts are made for the children and most people are resplendent in their best clothes, usually the dazzling white traditional dress. Everyone spends Easter Eve at the Church praying until 3 am when it is announced that Christ has risen! Ethiopian Orthodox Christians celebrate Easter anywhere from a week to two weeks after the western Church (sometimes, they occur at the same time, due to the vagaries of the Eastern Orthodox calendar, which Ethiopians follow). Fasika (Easter) follows eight weeks of fasting from meat and dairy (Kyany'a , M. 2017).

In **Kenya**, Good Friday and Easter Monday are public holidays, marking the long weekend commemorating Jesus Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Good Friday often sees processions through the streets with dramatic recreations of the Stations of the Cross, culminating in church services. Saturday often involves a bonfire outside the church and the lighting of candles and prayers inside, with Sunday being a feast marked by singing, bell-ringing, church services, and family togetherness (Kenya Holidays, 2017).



There are palm leaves all near the Church of God — home to the Burendwa Child Development Center. Sebastian and his sibling are ready to pick up their palm leaves and run to church because they want to participate in the march on the road to and from church with the other Sunday school children. This is done to commemorate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a colt. At this point they sing loudly and carry palm leaves like the disciples and people in Jerusalem did. Sebastian is ecstatic because he will take the part of Jesus on the colt, and his best friend Moses will take the part of the colt (Kenya Holidays, 2017).

For **Nigerians**, Easter is an important Christian celebration and public holiday. Nigeria is a country which is deeply religious with a population that is evenly divided into almost equal numbers of Christians and Muslims. In Southern Nigeria, the Christian population is more than compared to the north where they are more Muslims. The Holiday always falls on a Sunday but spills over to Easter Monday another public holiday. Attending Church service, which is normally overwhelmingly full, having a family feast, visiting family members and organizing traditional marriages are common occurrences.

Additionally, for many people living in Nigeria's urban cities majority of the year, Easter also presents an opportunity to visit one's native home in the village which is mostly in rural areas that may not have all the utilities like the city but is a serene environment nevertheless, with less pollution (Okoli, F. 2014).



ASIA

In **Philippines**, Catholics in the Philippines mark Good Friday with a re-enactment of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Good Friday is part of the Christian Holy Week which ends with Easter Sunday, Christ's resurrection from the dead.

The crucifixion ceremony mixes Roman Catholic devotion with Filipino folk beliefs on sacrifices and miracles (Krol, C. 2017).



For the **Chinese**, Easter is only a special holiday for the Catholics, Orthodox and most established Christian churches. Millions of Christians celebrate in some fashion. But most people don't observe it or believe in the resurrection at all, and other millions of Chinese have taken up Western children customs such as Easter eggs hunts just for the fun or novelty. For Christians in the Mainland and Hong Kong, the point of Easter is to commemorate Christ's resurrection from the dead three days after crucifixion. Some of the established churches with buildings treat it like a mini Chinese New Year complete with red paper slogans called *chūnlián* on the church building and in the homes, special bands or music, and special decorations. For many people, especially for children, eating and painting Easter eggs (*Fuhuojie caisedan*) is the most important and fun custom on Easter Sunday (Wu, A., 2016).

EUROPE

French children don't get treats from the Easter bunny; they get them from the Easter bells. According to Catholic teaching, no church bells can ring between Holy Thursday and the Easter Vigil, on account of the solemnity of the days around Jesus's death. Eventually, a legend evolved that said the church bells weren't rung because they grew wings and flew to Rome to be blessed by the Pope. Then they returned Easter day with chocolate and presents for local kids (NOWAK, C. 2017).



Norwegians have an interesting tradition for the season known for “Easter-Crime” or *Paaskekrim*. According to “The Norway Post,” many around the country read mystery books or watch the televised crime detective series on national television. Families also escape up to the mountains for the vacation week beginning the Friday before Palm Sunday and ending the Tuesday after Easter Monday (Gusman, J. 2009).

LATIN/SOUTH AMERICA

Easter in **Mexico** is a two-week holiday consisting of *Semana Santa* (The Holy Week, beginning on Palm Sunday and ending Easter Saturday) and *Pascua* (Starting with Easter Sunday and ending the following Saturday). *Semana Santa* is undoubtedly the most important holiday in Mexican

culture. Schools and often businesses in Mexico close during these two weeks and many Mexican families go on holiday during *Semana Santa* and *Pascua*. Across the country, Mexicans celebrate the last days of Christ during Holy Week with elaborate and much anticipated processions, ceremonies, and rituals.



Most of the larger *Semana Santa* celebrations include a dramatic reenactment of the capture, the trial, and the crucifixion of Jesus. To be a part of these productions is a great honor and the actors are known for delivering inspiring and moving performances. Different regions of Mexico are known for practicing unique traditions during *Semana Santa* such as acts of physical torture, public displays of political/social ridicule, and displays of resolutions and commitment (Mexico, J. (2015).



In **Brazil**, Despite the 25% drop in proclaiming oneself Catholic since the 1970s, Brazil boasts the largest Roman Catholic population in the world (with 123 million followers). Easter, as one of the main Catholic holidays, is therefore largely celebrated in a land that also happens to host one of the wildest parties in the world (Carnival).

Easter, or Páscoa in Portuguese, falls on the day after the culmination of Holy Week, which also marks the end of Lent. Since many institutions and businesses allow for an extended weekend, many Brazilians spend the holiday either traveling for the sake of traveling (and to witness religious processions such as the one in Ouro Preto) or spending the time with family. Aside from merely passing the weekend with loved ones, it's a popular custom to give gifts of large chocolate eggs, either filled with candy or hollow inside. The tradition in its most basic form goes back to several longstanding or ancient cultures, where the egg, especially a decorated one, is associated with the new life and fertility. Lent is known as being a time of refraining from dairy, and eggs fall into that category; hence, eggs are to be eaten before and right after Lent (streetsmartbrazil.com, 2017).

In summary, whether you're fortunate enough to visit one of the countries previously highlighted or another part of the world during the Easter holiday season, it is important to reflect on the primary purpose behind the Holiday, which is to honor the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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