



Big Bethel
African Methodist Episcopal Church

176
CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

**“Be
Strong”**

***“Be strong and courageous. Do not
be afraid or terrified because of them,
for the Lord your God goes with you;
he will never leave you nor forsake you” -***

Deuteronomy 31:6

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023

BISHOP REGINALD T. JACKSON, PRESIDING PRELATE, 6TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT

MRS. CHRISTY DAVIS JACKSON, ESQ EPISCOPAL SUPERVISOR, 6TH DISTRICT

REVEREND LARRY W. HUDSON, PRESIDING ELDER, NORTH ATLANTA DISTRICT

REVEREND JOHN FOSTER, PH.D., SENIOR PASTOR

220 AUBURN AVENUE, NE, ATLANTA, GA 30303

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From Our Pastor



The Foster Family

Dear Big Bethel Family and Friends:

I greet you in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ!

Today, Big Bethel AME Church - Atlanta's oldest African-American church congregation - celebrates One Hundred Seventy-Six (176) years of worship, fellowship and ministry. Big Bethel has withstood the test of time and yet, God still signifies Big Bethel as a Beacon of Light for downtown Atlanta which still proudly proclaims that "Jesus Saves." At this time of celebration - let us all give thanks and honor to the glory of God for Big Bethel AME Church.

We joyously welcome Bishop John R. Bryant as our anniversary preacher. We welcome Bishop Bryant and his guests to Big Bethel AME Church.

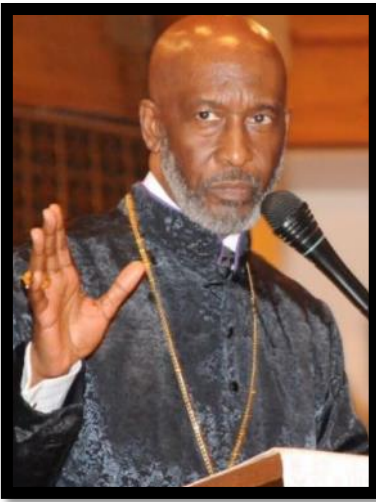
Please allow me to give God praise for our Church Anniversary Chairpersons: Rev. Andrea Lewis, Ph.D., Dr. Stan Pritchett, and Sis. Donna Williams. Let me also thank the entire Church Anniversary committee for a job well done!!! We thank God again for all of the wonderful Anniversary Month activities - the Tailgate Kickoff Sunday, the Pilgrimage to Oakland Cemetery, the Fall Revival, the Beauty For Ashes III Outreach & Concert, the Children's Sabbath Weekend, and the Millennial Empowerment Zone (Parking Lot). Sis. Mary Ann, Kristina (Dewey, Zoey, and Dewey IV), John Jr., Jessica, and Mother Laura Mae join me in wishing our 'Big Bethel Family' a blessed 176th Anniversary!!!

Sincerely,

Rev. John Foster, Ph.D.
Senior Pastor

“Be Strong!”

BISHOP JOHN RICHARD BRYANT—RETIRED 106TH ELECTED & CONSECRATED BISHOP OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Bishop John Richard Bryant is the son of the late Bishop Harrison James Bryant and Edith Holland Bryant. He was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland and is a graduate of Baltimore City College High School and is a graduate of Morgan State University in his hometown. After college, Bishop Bryant joined the Peace Corps and served as a volunteer in West Africa from 1965 to 1967.

He has taken seriously the words "study to show thyself approved..." Bishop Bryant received his B.A. in 1965 from Morgan State University, Master of Theology in 1970 from the Boston University School of Theology and a Doctor of Ministry degree in 1975 from the Colgate Rochester Divinity School. He also received several Honorary Doctoral Degrees from Wilberforce University, Paul Quinn College, Payne Theological Seminary, the Southern California

School of Ministry, Virginia Seminary and his alma mater, Morgan State University. In addition, he was honored as an outstanding alumni of Boston University School of Theology and was inducted into the Baltimore City College High School Hall of Fame.

Bishop Bryant was a Martin Luther King, Jr. Fellow and while pursuing his doctoral studies at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, he completed special studies at the University of Lagos [Nigeria] and the University of Ghana at Legon and served as a Peace Corp volunteer.

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me..." is reflected in the witness of John Richard Bryant. He has pastored three churches, Bethel A.M.E. Church, Fall River, MA; St. Paul A.M.E. Church, Cambridge, MA; and Bethel A.M.E. Church, Baltimore, MD. Under his pastoral ministry, 103 men and women have entered the Christian Ministry. With an emphasis on church growth, community development and political empowerment, he has preached and/or taught on more than 35 college campuses and across five continents. Bishop Bryant has served on several denominational, academic, community, ecumenical boards and was the recipient of many awards.

In 1988, John Richard Bryant was elected and consecrated the 106th Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church at the General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. He was assigned to serve in the 14th Episcopal District (West Africa) where he presided over 101 churches and 25 schools. During his administration, he expanded the A.M.E. Church to include the first Francophone, the Ivory Coast. While in West Africa, he was given the additional assignment of the 10th Episcopal District (Texas) in January 1991.

At the 1992 General Conference he was officially assigned to the 10th Episcopal District, where he presided over 300 churches and served as the Chairman of the Board of Paul Quinn College. Under his leadership, this historically Black institution moved from probationary status to full accreditation and successfully raised \$29 million dollars for the Capital Fund Drive. In July 2000, the Episcopal Committee of the 46th General Conference assigned Bishop Bryant to the 5th Episcopal District, where he presided over the A.M.E. churches in 14 states west of the Mississippi. Under his episcopacy, the 5th District partnered with businesses and banking institutions that resulted in the purchase of new homes by the members of the district valued at more than \$100 million dollars. In addition, Bishop Bryant's economic development initiatives resulted in several creative ventures, which included the construction of a new hotel in the St. Louis, MO area.

In 2008, at the 48th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference, Bishop Bryant became the *Senior Bishop* of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and presided over the 4th Episcopal District which included seven (7) mid-western states, Canada and the AME India Annual Conference where the Lord allowed him and his wife, Reverend Cecelia Bryant, to officially bring the India Conference into the African Methodist Episcopal Church. At present, there are one hundred and sixty (160) churches in the AME India Annual Conference.

Bishop Bryant is the recipient of many honors and awards including Ebony Magazine's Honor Roll of Outstanding African-American Preachers and was recognized on their list of the 100 Most Influential Black Americans. He has published a collection of sermons entitled, **"God Can: Sermons of Encouragement from the Life of Elijah."** He and his wife, The Rev. Dr. Cecelia Williams Bryant are both the authors of **"Healing For Wounded Vows."** Bishop Bryant has been a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. He preached the gospel for over 55 years and in July 2016 at the Historic 50th Session of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Bryant's request for retirement from the episcopacy of his beloved church was granted.

Even though retired from active administrative duties he is still serving the Lord with gladness. Bishop Bryant is currently on staff at Payne Theological Seminary as a Mentor for the Doctor of Ministry Degree Program and he continues to preach the length and breathe of this nation. He loves to proclaim the Good News of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to compel men and women to acknowledge Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

Bishop John and Rev. Dr. Cecelia Williams Bryant are the parents of The Rev. Dr. Jamal Harrison Bryant and The Rev. Dr. Thema Simone Bryant Davis and both are proud grandparents.

Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

REVEREND JOHN FOSTER PH.D., SENIOR PASTOR

176th Anniversary Worship Service

Sunday, October 15, 2023 10:00 AM

“BE STRONG”

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you - Deuteronomy 31:6.

WORSHIP LEADER
Bro. Sam Stephens

THE PRELUDE

BRO. PHILLIP SKERRETT, JR.

THE DOXOLOGY

AME HYMN #647

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Amen.

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

BRO. SAM STEPHENS

- Leader:** I was glad when they said unto to me, “Let us go into the house of the Lord!” Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!
- People** For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.
- Leader** For the sake of the house of the Lord Our God; I will seek your good.
- People** They are planted in the house of the Lord, they flourish in courts of our God.
- Leader** O Lord, I love the habitation of your house, and the place where your glory dwells.
- People** For the Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him.
- Leader** Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my Rock, and my Redeemer.
- People** O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things! I will sing of loyalty and of justice, to you, O Lord, I will sing.

The Hymn of Praise

AME Hymn #53

Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

1. Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah, Pilgrim through this barren land; I am weak, but Thou art mighty. Hold me with Thy powerful hand; Bread of heaven, Feed me till I want no more; Bread of heaven, Feed me till I want no more.
2. Open now the crystal fountain, Whence the healing waters flow; Let the fire and cloudy pillar Lead me all my journey through; Strong Deliverer, Be thou still my strength and shield; Strong Deliverer, Be Thou still my strength and shield.
3. When I tread the verge of Jordan, Bid my anxious fears subside; Bear me through the swelling current, Land me safe on Canaan's side; Songs of praises I will ever give to Thee; Songs of praises I will ever give to Thee. Amen

THE INVOCATION

BRO. RAUSHAN MURRAY

THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

BIG BETHEL MUSIC MINISTRY

Leader: ⁶ Be strong! Be courageous! Do not be afraid of them! For the Lord your God will be with you. He will never fail you nor forsake you.

People: ⁷ Then Moses called for Joshua and said to him, as all Israel watched, “Be strong! Be courageous! For you shall lead these people into the land promised by the Lord to their ancestors; see to it that they conquer it.

All: ⁸ Don’t be afraid, for the Lord will go before you and will be with you; he will not fail nor forsake you.”

THE PREFACE TO THE DECALOGUE**(IN THE TUNE OF #258)**

FROM ALL THAT DWELL BELOW THE SKIES, LET THE CREATOR PRAISE ARISE,
LET THE REDEEMER’S NAME BE SUNG, THROUGH EVERY LAND, BY EVERY TONGUE.

THE SUMMARY OF THE DECALOGUE**Sis. Zaire Carmichael**

And Jesus said to him. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second it like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

THE GLORIA PATRI**AME HYMN # 627**

“Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. A-men. A-men.”

THE WELCOME TO BIG BETHEL**THE PHILIPPIN MINISTRY****THE BIG BETHEL MINISTRY MOMENT****HEAVEN BOUND****THE WORSHIP THROUGH CREATIVE EXPRESSION****KWANZA SOL DANCE MINISTRY****THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BISHOP****PASTOR JOHN FOSTER****THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PREACHER**

THE RIGHT REVEREND REGINALD T. JACKSON
132ND ELECTED AND CONSECRATED
PRESIDING PRELATE 6TH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC**BIG BETHEL MUSIC MINISTRY****THE 176TH ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE**

THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN RICHARD BRYANT
106TH ELECTED & CONSECRATED BISHOP
African Methodist Episcopal Church—Retired

THE INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**PASTOR JOHN FOSTER****THE WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING: TITHES AND OFFERINGS****BRO. TIMOTHY CRIM****THE REMARKS****PASTOR JOHN FOSTER****THE BENEDICTION****BISHOP BRYANT**



Rev. John Foster, Ph.D.
Senior Pastor

BIG BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH

176TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS 2023

THEME: **"Be Strong"**

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you - Deuteronomy 31:6.

**TAILGATE KICK-OFF CELEBRATION
(IN YOUR CAR)
10:00 A.M., SEPTEMBER 24, 2023**

**PILGRIMAGE TO
OAKLAND CEMETERY
1:30 P.M., SEPTEMBER 24, 2023**

**176TH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY REVIVAL
7:00 P.M., OCTOBER 10-12, 2023**

GUEST PREACHERS:

October 10 - Rev. Cynthia Parnell-McDonald, Ph.D., Pastor, Cosmopolitan A.M.E. Church



October 11 - Rev. Robert L. Johnson, III, Pastor, St. Phillip-Griffin A.M.E. Church



October 12 - Rev. Ammie L. Davis, Ph.D., President Dean, Turner Theological Seminary



**BEAUTY FOR ASHES III
COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

9:00 AM TO 1:00 P.M. OCTOBER 14, 2023

**176TH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY
WORSHIP SERVICE**

10:00 A.M., OCTOBER 15, 2023

GUEST PREACHER:
Bishop John R. Bryant —
106th Elected and Consecrated
Bishop (Retired)



Wear your Purple, Black & Gold

**18TH NATIONAL INTERFAITH
CHILDREN'S SABBATH WORKSHOP
10:00 A.M., OCTOBER 21, 2023**



Theme: "A Little Child Leads Them"

**YOUTH & CHILDREN'S SABBATH WORSHIP
10:00 A.M. - OCTOBER 22, 2023**

**MILLENNIAL
EMPOWERMENT ZONE
10:00 A.M., OCTOBER 29, 2023**

220 AUBURN AVE. NE, ATLANTA, GA 30303 ~ WWW.BIGBETHELAME.ORG ~ (404)-827-9707

****VISITORS MAY REGISTER THEIR ATTENDANCE ONLINE ON
THE BIG BETHEL GUEST REGISTRATION FORM.**

THANK YOU FOR WORSHIPPING WITH US AND FEEL FREE TO COME AGAIN!!!!



SERVING IN TODAY'S WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

Acolytes	Stewards
Choir	Big Bethel Anniversary Choir - Nathaniel Fisher, Jr., Director
Philippians	Racquel Battle & Jakeilla Rouse
Stewardesses	Corene Jordan and Teresa Robinson
Stewards	Ed Jones
Trustees	Floyd Baxter
Ushers	Samuel H. Giles Usher Ministry
AV Ministry	Brandon Collins, Phyllis Smiley, Aniya Law
Finance Team	Team 2-B



Let us remember our sick and shut-in with our calls.



Sis. Patricia Coles (404) 254-4806

Sis. Elizabeth Parks (Liz) (404) 691-4590

Bro. Horace Ford (770) 478-3013

Sis. Brenda Queen (404) 274-0705

Sis. N. Nannette McGee (678) 961-5220

Bro. Don Stewart (678) 289-2579

Rev. Betty Miley (770) 323-6841

Sis. Lillian Taylor (404) 284-6414

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost	First* reading and Psalm	Alternate* First reading and Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
October 15 ,2023	Exodus 32:1-14 Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23	Isaiah 25:1-9 Psalm 23	Philippians 4:1-9	Matthew 22:1-14

Big Bethel AME Church ~ A Brief History

Significant milestones have been etched into the fabric of Atlanta's growth and development by the leaders and members of Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church during its 176-year history. Prior to Emancipation, slave masters of the Methodist Episcopal Church provided a facility for our ancestors to worship at Bethel Tabernacle Church on the corner of Courtland and Jenkins Streets (now Georgia State University). However, our founders' never lost sight of their vision to organize a church for self-expression, self-help, self-government, and worship. This dream became a reality when the members of Bethel Tabernacle united with the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1866. This year's theme, "Be Strong" Deuteronomy 31:6:4 as we celebrate One Hundred and Seventy-Six Years.

At last, we are coming to grips with the importance of each generation sharing these special events with one another.

A warm handclasp between Rev. James Lynch, sent to organize the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the South, and Rev. Joseph Wood, member of Bethel Tabernacle, in Atlanta resulted in the 'Tabernacle' becoming united with the African Methodist Episcopal connection in 1866.

Rev. Jesse Peck became a member of the Prince Hall Free and Accepted Masons while living in Boston, he became convinced of the organizations' merits. Later, while pastoring at Big Bethel AME Church (Atlanta), established the first chapter of Free and Accepted Masons in Georgia, which became Saint James Lodge # 4, on March 5, 1871.

Morris Brown College was established in 1881, when Big Bethel AME Church (Atlanta) hosted the North Georgia Annual Conference.

The first National Convention of the National Association for The Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was held at Big Bethel AME Church (Atlanta) in 1920.

One of Atlanta's Historic Landmarks is Big Bethel's "Lighted Cross" bearing the message 'Jesus Saves', the sign was installed in 1922. This blue neon- lighted sign on the church's steeple is still shining as a symbol of "Hope for the World".

A Black Community Activist, Mr. Jesse O. Thomas, was able to convince the Atlanta City Council and the County Commission to each give \$ 5,000 for rebuilding Bethel church, after it was severely damaged by fire in 1923. The reason for supporting this request was due to Bethel's capacity to hold mass meetings of a non-denominational nature in the 1920's.

The National Convention of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity was held at Bethel AME Church (Atlanta) in 1929. The Big Bethel AME Church's "Heaven Bound Choir" was featured at the premiere of the film "Gone With The Wind", gaining an international reputation since 1930. The morality play "Heaven Bound" was authored and produced at Big Bethel AME Church and has been performed for 88 successive years since that time.

In 1953, Rev. Harold I. Bearden made arrangements with the first Black Radio Station in Atlanta, WERD, to broadcast directly from the church, the Sunday morning "Worship Service" as an inspirational gospel feast for the "sick and shut in".

In 1967 there was a legal change in the name of the church. The name was changed from Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Tabernacle to Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The October 25, 1943, issue of "The Christian Recorder" commended Big Bethel Church for raising \$65,000 to clear the church indebtedness made in 1924. This article recognized the leadership of Rev. D. T. Babcock. Rev. Babcock's tenure of 14 years at the helm of Big Bethel Church has not been exceeded to this date.

The last segregated graduation ceremony for Grady Hospital Nurses of Color was held on August 16, 1965, in Big Bethel's Sanctuary.

During the administration of Rev. Ruben T. Bussey, the church celebrated significant anniversaries and recognition of official founding as 1847. One of the highpoints of his administration was the erection of Bethel Towers (a Resident Housing Facility,) erected in 1968. On August 11, 2013, the mortgage for this \$3,514,700 building was burned.

Big Bethel's "Great Moller Organ" was installed in 1924 with sixteen ranks, three manuals and a pedal organ. In 1987, the organ was completely restored and expanded under the pastorate of Rev. McKinley Young, when the instrument was raised to thirty-two ranks. Additionally, during the Young years (1980-1992), a major renovation of the church was completed, including upgrading, upholstery of the church furniture and carpeting added throughout the sanctuary.

Rev. James L. Davis (now Bishop James L. Davis) was appointed as pastor of Big Bethel AME Church in 1992 until his election as Bishop in 2004. The establishment of new and innovative ministries including served as a catalyst for revitalizing "Sweet Auburn" and other communities. Some of its positive outgrowth includes: the Trinity-Bethel Partnership, Big Bethel Senior Village, acquiring the Parking Lot and Renaissance Walk. Under his leadership, he initiated the changing of the landscape of Auburn Avenue through renovation of church (\$1.3 million dollars), property acquisition and development with support of (Trustees, Stewards, Floyd Baxter, Stanley Pritchett chair pro tempore respectively, Stewardship and Finance, and Church conferences). Projects were initiated to include interior and exterior renovation of the church (including installation of elevator and upgrades to the kitchen), and the purchase of surrounding and auxiliary property around the Big Bethel Church to extensively increase the campus for future development.

Subsequently, additional improvements included: the development of new Administrative Offices, established the Big Bethel Credit Union, established the church Endowment Fund, property purchases for the development of the now completed Renaissance Walk, the Big Bethel Senior Village, the computer room at Bethel Towers, the Parking Lot, the Bethel-Trinity Partnership, the Youth Retreat Station, and the Amphitheater. Special Services and New Ministries established were "Come On Home For Christmas" (Dr. Jackie Michael), the Palm Sunday Parade and the Palm Sunday Concert, the Richard Allen Outreach

(events for financial support), the Philippians, the Signing ministry (Dr. Monica Jones), the Kwanza Sol dance ministry, the Signs of Praise mime ministry, the Joseph Lane (male) and Horizon of Hope (youth) Usher Boards, revitalization of the Bell Choir, the Johnson-Schofield male chorus, inception of the Praise Team (a small choral group singing selections as a prelude to the worship service), Fishers of Men Bible Study, MOBB (Men of Big Bethel), annual Golf Tournament to raise money for scholarships (Michael Brown-Dr. Price Michael).

Wings of Faith travel ministry (included trips to South Africa and Zimbabwe), 5th Sundays designated as "All Music Worship International Sunday" (flags), the Sandwich and Food Pantry ministries, the Tape Ministry, the 2000 Millennium Service (New Year's Eve relighting of the "Jesus Saves" sign), the Voter Registration initiative, the Habitat for Humanity ministry building houses (partnered with the Cathedral of St. Philip and other churches), Exchanging Pulpits with The Cathedral of St. Philip (with the Very Reverend, Dean Sam Candler), Annual Big Bethel/Wheat Street Thanksgiving Service, the Nehemiah Project, PROCEED (Prayerfully Reclaiming Our Community Emphasizing Economic Development) Community Outreach project, Juvenile Justice Arc of Safety (which included worship at the detention center), The Family Visitation Center hosted in fellowship hall, reuniting children in foster care with their parents (Reverend Bessie Robinson Donaldson), and the Big Bethel Towers Board preparing for "expiration" of its original syndication. All these ministries were instrumental in Bishop Davis' successful campaign for Bishop 2004.

Rev. Mark Thompson: 2004-2005 Highlights: Seed and Proceed, History and Heritage Ministry, Computer Lab Restoration from the Canadian Group, the Babcock -Young Voices of Unity choir, inception of the Praise Team (a small choral group singing selections as a prelude to the worship service), the Bearden-Scott Youth Choir (Reverend Maurice Wright) and the Katrina Relief project. Presiding Elder David Rhone, Jr. served as interim Pastor (several months in 2005). Additionally, the "Big Bethel Saturday Academy" was established during the Thompson, Rhone year

Reverend Gregory V. Eason, 2005-2013 Highlights: During the administration of Rev. Dr. Gregory V. Eason, Sr. in addition to his mantra of "Radical Hospitality", FOCUS (Faithfully Obeying Christ with Unwavering Stewardship) was launched to raise funds for the church to retire the debt incurred from the parking lot repurchase.

Radical Hospitality, the Youth Church, and the Youth Ministry Advisory Council (Reverend Nate Robinson), completion of Renaissance Walk, the Crown Ministry, the Ministry Fair, the Original Mortgage Burning Ceremony for Bethel Towers 2012, the Appointment of Steward Pro Tem, Dr. Stanley Pritchett as President of Morris Brown College, serving 12 years from 2006-2018.

The "Save The Parking Lot" financial campaign, the addition of the contemporary "Heaven Bound" performance set on the day following the traditional performance, the Worship and Arts Ministry (an umbrella for all choirs and the dance and mime ministries), the Praise Team serving as a featured choir for the entire worship service and often as part of the Pastor's travel team for worship services, the Signs of

Praise mime ministry, the Hands For Christ signing ministry, continuation of the "Heaven Bound" morality play, and the establishment of "A Taste of Big Bethel" (organized by MOBB), the Recitals for the Youth Talent Development of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (Mrs. Azira Hill). A special conference with Congressman John Lewis with the Officials of the church and the History and Heritage ministry pursuing compensation for damage and partial destruction of the original church on Jenkins Street during the Civil War (never satisfied through several "court of claims" attempts in our history).

In May 2013, Rev. John Foster, Ph.D, was appointed as pastor of Big Bethel AME Church. In addition to continuing the excellent programs and projects that were in progress, he launched a "New Video Ministry", the "Big Screens" becoming a reality, and the church services being streamed LIVE on the Web weekly. The latest initiative that the church has embarked upon is The Vision for Big Bethel 2020 now updated to The Seven Pillars of the Vision for Big Bethel 2027 to be the preeminent religious presence on the Auburn/Edgewood corridor in Atlanta, GA.

The ownership of Bethel Towers being officially under the banner of the Bethel Towers Board and church again along with the First Phase of total renovation of Bethel Towers (\$32 million dollars). The development of Phase 2 Parking Deck and Family Life Center, Phase 3 of Market Rate Housing taking space in the parking Lot and Phase 4 encompassing the church property on Auburn Avenue.

With the advent of COVID -19, under the Foster leadership team the church has continued church operations with live streaming of the Worship services, including special events and funerals. Free COVID-19 testing, and vaccines have been administered on-site since March of 2021.

Other innovative ministries and services include: the Social Action ministry, the Monday -Saturday 6a.m. prayer line, the modernization and technology of various giving platforms, the Thrive Young Adult ministry "Next Shift" afternoon worship services which have celebrated five years of existence, the Big Bethel Chorale and the Remnants of Praise ensembles, revitalization of Emily's Haven, Candidacy for Bishop, 2020-2021, Tail Gate and Parking Lot Service, and the Caregivers Ministry. Additionally a digital marquee was installed in front of the church and Big Bethel gained income and advertising access to major billboards along I-75 near the church. On June 11, 2023, Rev. John Foster, Ph.D., celebrated his 10th year of service as pastor of Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the 176 years of Big Bethel's history, thirty-six ministers have served as pastor -'sainted spiritual leaders' of this flock. Three of those ministers, the Reverends Harold I. Bearden (1964), McKinley Young (1992), & James L. Davis (2004) were elected from Big Bethel's pulpit and consecrated as bishops in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In addition, three other pastors, who were spiritual leaders of Big Bethel were elected and consecrated as Bishop in the AME Church, they are the Reverends Wesley J. Gaines, Joseph S. Flipper, and Isaac N. Ross.

*To God Be The Glory,
Great Things He hath Done!*

"The Spiritual Leaders"
Pastors of Big Bethel AME Church
1847 - 2022

REVEREND JOSEPH WOOD

REVEREND WESLEY JOHN GAINES

REVEREND FRANCIS JESSE PECK

REVEREND CHARLES L. BRADWELL

REVEREND WILLIAM D. JOHNSON

REVEREND L. H. ROBERTSON

REVEREND R. A. HALL

REVEREND RICHARD GRAHAM

REVEREND JOSEPH SIMEON FLIPPER

REVEREND LAWRENCE THOMAS

REVEREND ROBERT M. CHEEKS

REVEREND WELLINGTON G. ALEXANDER

REVEREND E. W. LEE

REVEREND C. W. NEWTON

REVEREND C. C. CARGILE

REVEREND ISAAC NELSON ROSS

REVEREND CARL M. TANNER

REVEREND F. R. SIMS

REVEREND RICHARD H. SINGLETON

REVEREND I. F. HALL

REVEREND JOEL L. BUTLER, SR.

REVEREND C. G. WYLIE

REVEREND B. G. DAWSON

REVEREND CHARLES S. WILLIAMS

REVEREND G. B. SCOTT

REVEREND DEWITT T. BABCOCK

REVEREND DWIGHT V. KYLE

REVEREND HAROLD I. BEARDEN

REVEREND REUBEN T. BUSSEY

REVEREND LEE JEROME JONES

DR. D. C. GRANT

REVEREND MCKINLEY YOUNG

DR. JAMES L. DAVIS

DR. MARK W. THOMPSON

DR. GREGORY V. EASON, SR.

REVEREND JOHN FOSTER, PH.D.

"Be Strong"





Big Bethel AME Church

176th Anniversary Committees

Rev. Andrea Lewis, Ph.D., Dr. Stanley J. Pritchett, Sr., and Sister Donna M. Williams, Co-Chairs

Sub-Committee Chairs

Anniversary Sunday Worship

Sis. Donna Williams

Communications

Bro. Keith Burnett

Anniversary Sunday Brunch

Sis. Shelley Webster

Fall Revival

Rev. Andrea Lewis, Ph.D.

Beauty for Ashes

Bro. Kelvin Thompson

Pilgrimage to Oakland Cemetery

Sis. Racquel Battle

Budget and Finance

Dr. Stanley J. Pritchett, Sr.

Millennial Empowerment Zone

Rev. Jessica Buford

Children's Sabbath

Sis. Rae Fortes

Tailgate

Bro. Ed Jones

Church History

Bro. Ernest Tate

Van Ministry

Sis. Racquel Battle

Thank You!

Special thanks

to every person who assisted each committee chair with the work of their respective areas.

God Bless You!

HISTORICAL MOMENTS @BIG BETHEL AME CHURCH

**Anti-Apartheid Leader, South African President,
Nelson Mandela's historic June 1990 visit to Atlanta
including Big Bethel AME Church.**





children's
defense fund
Leave No Child Behind

CHILDREN'S SABBATH WEEKEND 2023

OCTOBER 21-22, 2023

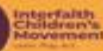
**"AND A LITTLE CHILD
SHALL LEAD THEM"**

(ISAIAH 11:6)

For more information visit:

www.icmgeorgia.org

Sponsors and Collaborative Partners:



SATURDAY

DAY ONE: ADVOCACY DAY



Facilitator:
Jeff Willard

- * "How to Influence Your Legislators" Workshop for Adults
- * "Train Your Brain for Justice" Workshop for Children & Youth
- * Exhibit Hall Resources + Giveaways
- * Breakfast + Lunch Provided

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023

10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (Check-in at 9:00 a.m.)

Big Bethel AME Church

220 Auburn Avenue, NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

***FREE & OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC**

Diwan (prayer service) and Langar (meal)

Guru Nanak Mission Society Gurdwara Sahib
1158 Rockbridge Rd NW | Norcross, GA 30093

**Head covering and conservative dress requested.*



**Caravan with us immediately following
the morning service to:*

**Big Bethel AME
Church**

220 Auburn Avenue, NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2023

Service begins at 10:00 a.m.

***FREE &
OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC**

SUNDAY

18TH ANNUAL
DAY TWO: CHILDREN'S SABBATH INTERFAITH SERVICE

Do Everyday ACTIONS
Determine YOUR
Hereafter?

You don't
want to miss

Heaven Bound

Traditional
version

FRIDAY

November 10th
7:00PM

Contemporary
version

SATURDAY

November 11th
7:00PM

Experiencing it might help you decide.

TICKET PRICING
\$15.00

Tickets available online:

www.bigbethelame.org or Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/91st-heaven-bound-tickets-724076230497?aff=oddttdtcreator>



91st HEAVEN BOUND

The Church Office - **404-827-9707 ext. 109**
204 Auburn Avenue NE • Atlanta, GA 30303



Big Bethel Sunday School Schedule

Join
Us!!

Children and Youth,
Primary, Junior and Teens Classes

**Catch the
EXCITEMENT!**

**MAKE THE
CONNECTION!**

EVERY MONTH

First Sunday @ 9AM....In-Person and Zoom

Second SundayZoom

Third Sunday.....Zoom

Fourth Sunday.....Zoom

In-person Sunday School each 1st Sunday at 9:00 AM
in Big Bethel's Fellowship Hall.



Rev. Monica C. Jones, Ph.D.
Director of Christian Education
Rev. John Foster, Ph.D., Senior Pastor

**+ In-person
Youth Church!**



Join us on 2nd Sundays @ 10AM

Contact Rev. Ali Holness-Roland for more info.
aholness.bigbethelyouthchurch@gmail.com



JOB VACANCY

Position Title – Courtesy Officer

Pay Rate - \$11.00 Per Hour

Work Schedule – Saturday's – 8:30 am to 2:30 pm, Weekday Evenings & Sunday's Periodically

General Responsibilities– Open & Close Church, Monitor Parking Lot & Fellowship Hall, Assist Member's, Other Duties as Assigned

Qualifications – Successful Completion of Interview and Background Check

Interested - Please Contact

- Ed Jones
- Chief Operating Officer BBAMEC
- 404.827.9707 ext 109
- erjones@bigbethelame.org

**WE ARE
HIRING!**



Weekly 10AM Sunday Worship

www.bgbethel.com WATCH LIVE
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUugr0dM7YmFuo07K3w4g>

BBAMEC VIRTUAL *Blessings*

Weekly 2PM Sunday Thrive Next Shift Worship

www.bgbethel.com WATCH LIVE
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUugr0dM7YmFuo07K3w4g>



Tuesday 7PM Women's Bible Study

Meeting ID: 789 708 6175
Passcode: 389966

NEW



Prayer Call

6AM Mon-Sat
PH: (605)-472-5512
Code: 772576#

Wednesday Noon & 6 PM Bible Study

Rev. Monica Jones, PhD
SAME AS Adult Sunday
School ZOOM LINK

Wednesday 7PM Discipleship Bible Study

PH: (605)-472-5512
Code: 772576#

Big Bethel Village Bible Study Monday 4PM Worship Sunday 3PM

PH: (202)926-1123
Code: 673604#

Isaiah 43: ¹⁹ See, I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

Youth Church 2nd & 3rd Sundays 12:30PM

Zoom Meeting ID:
775-4987-0483
Password: YER10W

Big Bethel Saturday School 12:30 -2:00PM

New meeting in person!

NEW



Adult Sunday School 8:30AM

PH: (309)205-3325 Code: 7789893084#
ZOOM LINK:
ID: 847-251-8679 PassCode: adultclass
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8472518679?pwd=NzRGRGlnNmVYY0RzRFY2VzV6ZGlnZz09>

Youth Sunday School 8:30AM

Email Everett Jolly
jolly@comcast.net

Don't miss your opportunity to receive God's Blessings!