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"The LEADER'S EDGE" by drmichaelbell

For decades, church leaders and committee members have sat in fellowship halls and church classrooms and around conference tables discussing future plans for their congregations. Inevitably, someone mouths those familiar six words: "We've always done it this way." At first, it can feel like an uninspired longing for what used to be. But if we listen a little closer, we just might recognize that it can be more about pride in the track record of the congregation. It's more "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" and less "Over my dead body!"

"We've always done it this way" can be an important ode to church culture and long-standing tradition, but it can also be a major impediment to innovation. The "we've always done it this way" mindset may inhibit a ministry of the church or even the church proper from adapting to evolving circumstances

You might recall what we were saying during the height of the novel coronavirus global pandemic. Most of us found ourselves relying on the church's digital witness and outreach. The IT Ministry was front and center, the youth ministry explored fresh approaches to reaching young people, the potluck gatherings were replaced with more health-conscious options, worship was restructured and many of us were saying, "Church has changed forever, it will never be the same."

But now that the pandemic has receded, little by little the "back to the past" movement has taken hold and some churches have lapsed back to exactly what they did before. For a hot minute churches tried the new, the creative and the unprecedented and now an appreciable number of those same assemblies have reverted to the comfortable, the predictable and the customary. There are a whole lot of people who are perfectly satisfied with church the way it used to be.

On the real, if Covid-19 taught us anything it's that our congregations aren't nearly as mature or discipled as we'd thought, hoped or even imagined. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, the church was already in decline. According to several recent surveys and polls, many Americans already had dropped out of church life before the pandemic, Covid just gave them a reason to let go completely. And no matter

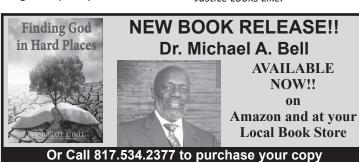


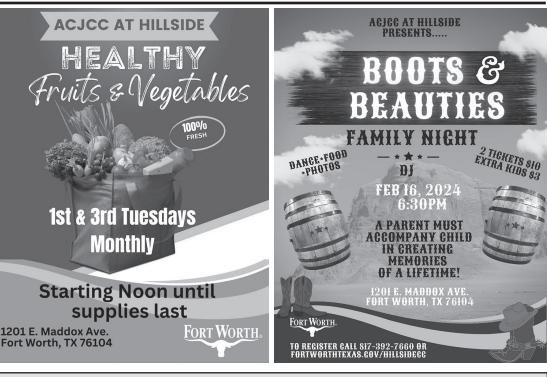
how much we long for what-usedto-be, church leaders need to acknowledge the unyielding truth that "Church has changed forever, it will never be the same."

A November 2022 Christianity Today article titled, "Here's Who Stopped Going To Church During The Pandemic," reported that "According to the data, Black Americans are more likely than others to have experienced a sharp decline in church attendance. In 2019, 45 percent of Black Americans attended religious service regularly. But by 2021, the share dropped to 30 percent, a difference of 15 percent. The decline in other racial/ethnical groups is between 5 to 6 percent."

Now, if you've heard what I've said in the previous paragraphs, I've just made a compelling argument for innovation and for church leaders to become "innovative instigators." And when I talk with church folk about innovation, evebrows are raised and there is a natural resistance or push-back, but I quickly and gently remind them that one of the reasons the Christian witness has survived and, in many cases thrived, is directly related to the willingness of believers to learn, grow, and innovate. Now hear this: If you want to lead a cutting-edge ministry, dominate an industry, change a city, help your community solve massive problems or meet the needs of hurting people, you will have to learn to innovate.

drmichaelbell is Senior Pastor-Resident Theologian of Greater St. Stephen First Church FtW, a seminary adjunct professor and a certified Life Coach. He conducts leadership seminars and conferences across the country. He is the author of "Finding God in Hard Places." He also contributed to the anthology "Justice Looks Like."





The Greenway Church Virtual Services & Worship

Faith and worship don't happen in one room, they happen wherever you are. The Greenway Church offers virtual church services to customers in Fort Worth and beyond. We celebrate our shared faith and fellowship even when we can't physically come together, to nurture shared community and spiritual needs. Http:thegreenwaychurch.mymobisite.us



Speak Life Thought

with First Lady & Co-Pastor Yolanda G. Butler

A Disciplined Life

"For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7 NLT)

The Apostle Paul provides sound words for Timothy, pastor of the Church of Ephesus. While he is young, Paul affirms the call upon his life. Paul reminds Timothy that no matter who or what comes up against him, he is anointed for the assignment and encourages him to live a disciplined life.

Timothy as a leader and pastor of the church is urged to live a self-disciplined life. A disciplined person follows rules and practices or a standard set of behaviors that allows them to maintain self-control and the ability to efficiently define, actively pursue, and successfully achieve their goals. For the Christian, "self-discipline" is a manifestation of the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:22) that Holy Spirit empowers in the believer to live a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing unto Him (Col. 3:9-10).

"Self-discipline" in this passage is the Greek word "sophronismos," from which the word "sozo" is derived from and means literally "saving the mind." This brings to life the scripture that says to not be conformed to this world but be transformed by renewing the mind daily through the Word (Rom.12:2). That is powerful. As you yield to the fruit of "temperance" (self-control) you are bringing salvation to your mind, the seat of the soul. Self-discipline testifies that one operates with a sound mind. Have you ever heard the saints testify thanking God for a "right and sound mind"? A sound mind is a blessing. When you walk in self-discipline you act sensibly, with sound judgment, and common sense—that is a sound mind in action.

A similar word for self-control is "enkrateia," found in Galatians 5:22. It means a rational restraint of natural impulses. In other words, you voluntarily restrain yourself from the urge of acting like a fool or cussing and knocking someone out. Self-mastery of our natural impulses are impossible apart from the indwelling power of Holy Spirit.

Quite frankly, exemplifying a life of self-discipline applies to all believers. If we fail to walk in self-discipline (or self-control), we will become imprisoned for what controls us: food, lust, money, our own negative words, etc. Without self-control, we may find ourselves overwhelmed by life, and even worse fall into



sin. Walking in the spirit and behavior of self-control is the very foundation for living a right life (righteousness) and selflessness, which is a reflection of Jesus Christ that brings glory to our Father. Self-control gives us the power to bring sin and its indulgences under control.

If you are struggling in the area of self-control/self-discipline, take the time to fast, pray, and meditate on scriptures that will transform your mind and help you make the right decisions. This investment in you helps line up your behavior and actions to God's plan. So dear hearts, be determined to maintain control with the help of Holy Spirit and live a life of discipline.

Dr. Yolanda G. Butler is Co-Pastor and Church Administrator of Praise Center Community Church, where her husband Bishop Donald H. Butler is the Senior Pastor. She is an intercessor, evangelist, mentor, and published author. Follow her on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and www.firstladybutlerministries.net. CHURCHIN' www.churchinnews.com

2024 marks the tenth year of Unity in the Community Coalition (UITC)!



New Year Blessings!

2024 marks the tenth year of Unity in the Community Coalition (UITC)! We began as a consortium of varied Community organizations and leaders focused on building and strengthening relationships between the law enforcement and the Black and Brown Communities. The Black Police Officers Association (BPOA) and a handful of Black clergy agreed that we needed to organize to improve the severely deteriorated relationship underserved racial/ethnic communities and the BPOA and Latino Police Officers Association (LPOA) had with the Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD). At that time, both the BPOA and LPOA complained about the internal racism officers of color were experiencing with the FWPD, particularly the largely white Police Officers Association (POA). That was in 2014.

Almost a decade later, UITC has morphed into a network of Com-

munity Organizations and leaders actively working together through our partnerships to expand. strengthen and empower the Black and Brown Tarrant County Communities with the tools necessary to achieve economic empowerment, educational equality and equitable access to goods, services and opportunities that heretofore have been intentionally denied to historically oppressed racial/ethnic groups through discriminatory practices and the misallocation of resources. That's a mouthful...isn't it!

UITC doesn't exist to replace or usurp any mainline or grass-roots racial justice organization! We GATHER TO FIND COMMON GROUND, PROVIDE MUTUAL SUPPORT AND IDENTIFY THOSE AREAS AND ISSUES WE CAN CO-ALESCE AROUND FOR THE UPLIFT OF PEOPLE OF COLOR. Our Monthly Meetings have been and continue to be informative, with the objective of nurturing a context of reflection, listening, learn-

ing and positive action.

In this our tenth year, your participation and ingenuity are NEEDED now more than ever! Everybody knows that 2024 will be a pivotal year in electoral politics. Every UITC meeting will be planned with this in mind. We already have an Education Committee, but we need more. We need a Coordinating Council to help foster vision and provide direction for UITC. I'm asking for your input to suggest what other committees are needed. Please email or text me individually with your suggestions.

Our first meeting of the year will be virtual and is scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 2024, 4:30pm-5:30pm. You will receive specifics on tomorrow. I'm so grateful for Sharon Burkley and Rochelle Terrell for their continued invaluable assistance. I'm honored to know each of you and to struggle for societal change alongside you.

Let's take UITC to the next level!

In One Peace!

For more information about Unity in the Community, please contact, Dr. Michael A. Bell mbell817@aol.com 817mbell@gmail.com 817-929-6111

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Wild'n Out In The Sanctuary (I might as well go ahead and say it)



We are on the verge of a gospel IMPLOSION because we have ordained and consecrated people who were not ready to be leaders in God's church. Some of those who don't go to church seem to have more respect for God than many who do. And the silence of church leaders in the wake of bold sanctuary defilement concerns me greatly.

In times past, we would chastise folk for clubbing on Saturday and trying to sing in the choir on Sunday. Now we are so afraid of folk "clapping back" that we condemn them under our breath while watching them turn the sacred place of worship into a cesspool of ungodliness. My colleagues won't appreciate me for saying this, but WE ARE THE PROBLEM!

We complained about our predecessors being rigid, but here we are trying to preach while swinging from disco balls before a crowd that we caused to forget that they were in the sanctuary. We want to rebuke the church for addressing a teacher who clearly and admittedly renounced the "an-

gry God of the Bible", and then we think no one should rebuke us when we desecrate the temple.

Let me clearly state my position: I have more respect for those who go to the club than I do for so called Christians who love the club so much that they will defy all logic to try to bring the club into the church. And if I ever condemned anyone in the past for coming to church on Sunday after being in the club on Saturday, I apologize...and thank you...for at least KNOWING THE DIFFERENCE!

Many people have offered that it doesn't look right to see Christians calling out other Christians; and I agree. But seeing as how our silence is a screaming confirmation to those who have lost confidence in the church, I think we need to RAISE OUR VOICE and condemn practices that we know are ungodly. People need to know that there is still a remnant that believes a Holy God should be approached in humility and true reverence.

I don't have the authority to speak for every pastor, but I do have the conviction to speak to anyone listening. If you need the club, trust me they can do it far better than the church can. But if you need JESUS... come to his sanctuary with a reverence for the institution He commissioned to help you develop in your relationship with him.

Erwin Scofield | #ThePeoplesBishop





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Historic Stop Six



The historic Stop Six neighborhood in southeast Fort Worth was founded by African-American pioneer Amanda Davis (1865-1960), who purchased

a one-acre tract in the undeveloped area in 1896 for \$45. Mrs. Davis had 10 children. raised poultry and worked as a laundress. Amanda Avenue is named for her.

Alonzo and Sarah Cowan paid \$200 for three acres in the community of small farms and homesteads in 1902. Mr. Cowan donated land for the area's first church, Cowan McMillan United Methodist Church. The community was segregated, and it became known for its successful black-owned barber and beauty shops, barbecue

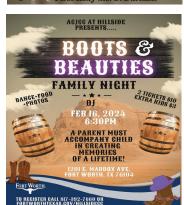


stands and other businesses

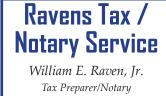
The Northern Texas Traction Co. ran an electric-powered, interurban streetcar through the community from 1902 to 1934. Cowanville was the sixth stop on the 90-minute trip from the Tarrant County Courthouse to Dallas. The nickname "Stop











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Congratulations to our Choir Director, Bro. Demetrius Ethley of Samaria Baptist Church, Dr. William McKinley Jackson, Pastor Demetrius was an Inductee in the 2024 Hall of Fame of the Dallas Metroplex Musicians Association

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This year's Parade and Rally had to be rescheduled due to inclement weather. Therefore, below is the new date. Please mark your calendars and plan on helping us to celebrate and commemorate the life, legacy and impact of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr !

39th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Parade and Rally 2024—February 19, 2024

Around In the Community with Pastor Sharon Ford-Turner



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Birthday Holiday Parade in East Ft Worth. Pic1) With Xerox Harris Twins and Mason Ford riding in Parade; Pic 2) Pastor Sharon with Donnell Ballard of Cha. 42 interview about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; Pic 3) Trinity and Mason Ford ridings in Parade.



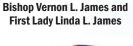
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Reginald Andrews, Pastor/Teacher

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Sunday Worship10:30 a.i	n.
Wednesday Bible Study7:15 p.i	n.

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Wed. Bible Study (Classes for all ages)	7:15pm
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.7:00 am

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Community Cable TV Channel 28 n 7:30-8:30p; Wed 12n-1p, Sat 4:30p-5:30p

SERVICE TIMES

WEDN. NIGHT PRAYER...6:00 PM - 6:30 PM

INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDY

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

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SUNDAY SERVICE.

Baptist Church

SUNDAY SCHOOL	9:15 am
SUNDAY SERVICE	10:30 am
SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE	4:00 pm
(Every 2nd & 3rd Sunday)	
BIBLE STUDY (Wednesday)	7:00 pm
PRAYER MEETING (Wednesday)	6:30 pm

7101 Wichita St - Forest Hill, TX 76140 Office: 817.446.9408 / Cell 817.675.3402

The Church at Philadelphia 4716 Wichita Street Fort Worth, Texas 76119

Service Times ing Worship (In-Person or Virtual) 10:30am

>



The Rising Star

Church of God in Chris

3909 Reed Street

Fort Worth, TX 76119

817-534-6963 ~ Fax: 817-413-742

Email: therisingstarcogic@att.n

...11:00 am

....7:00 pm

orners one Missionary Baptist Church

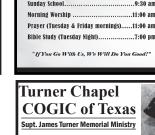
4916 Ramey Avenue Ft. Worth, TX 76105 817.413.8771 Fmail: combant02@aol.com



-- Service Times --SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 AM SUNDAY MORNING WEDNESDAY PRAYER

ch.org | 817.361.8860

MEETING &
BIBLE STUDY @ 7:00 PM



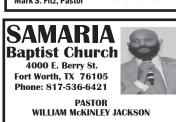
Furner Chapel COGIC of Texas

Supt. James Turner Memorial Ministry

Evangelist Sharon Mason-Turn P.O. Box 330401 Ft. Worth, TX 76163 . 817-294-244 Email:slford@academicplanet.com

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OUR PURPOSE IS TO: EXALT THE SAVIOR, EQUIP THE SAINTS AND EVANGELIZE THE SINNER:

Renee Spearman ft. Kim Burrell soars to #1 on Billboard! "Tap Into It"



(Los Angeles, CA) Stellar Award nominee Renee Spearman's hit single "Tap Into It" feat. 4-Time Grammy nominee Kim Burrell, soars to #1 on Billboard this

The highly anticipated follow-up to "I Love Him", Renee's Top 5 smash feat. 10-time Grammy nominee & multiple winner Hezekiah Walker, "Tap Into It" feat. Kim Burrell is a churchy Renee Spearman toe tapper for the

"This past year has been such an exciting time for my career so for "Tap Into It" to go #1, I am truly speechless!! With over 30+ weeks cumulatively on the Billboard & Mediabase charts, recently being named one of BMI's Trailblazers of Gospel, to working with the incomparable legend Kim Burrell, this incredible year is vet another reminder that 'God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that we ask or think!

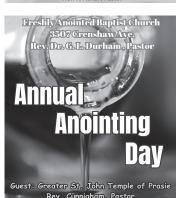
Also, a special shout to my incredible team - JDI Entertainment, Damon Stewart, Sony Orchard Distribution, and all the program directors & radio announcers around the world - I am

truly humbled by your amazing support of my music over the years!! says Renee Spearman

JDI Entertainment/Sony recording artist Renee Spearman is one of gospel music's top singer/ songwriters having worked with some of music's biggest stars including Grammy winners Gladys Knight, Yolanda Adams, Dr. Bobby Jones, and Byron Cage, just to name a few.

Produced by Michael Bereal (Earnest Pugh, Beverly Crawford) and James Roberson (Brent Jones, Dr. Bobby Jones), check out the powerful new video for "Tap Into It".





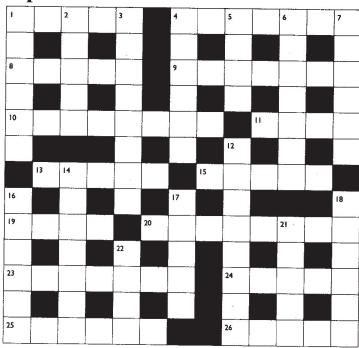




want any money for this piano, but wanted the piano, they would have t ome get it themselves.



BIBLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE Topic: BIBLE ANIMALS



ACROSS

I Excavated again, such as a well (Gen. 26:18) 4 Large bird in coastal gal Son returned areas (Lev. 11:16) 8 A hard gem (Exod. 28:17) 9 Tempted by arousing desire (Nah. 3:4) 10 Deerlike mammal related to the ox

(Deut. 14:5) I Hebrew tribe appointed to offer animal sacri-

fices (1 Sam. 2:28) 13 Remains from burnt

offerings (Lev. 4:12) 15 "The boy became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the ____ looked good

to him" (Luke 15:16) 19 Jacob's funeral site in Canaan; threshing place (Gen. 50:10)

20 Young steers used as sacrifices (Ps. 50:9) 23 O.T. prophet who spoke

against offering God sick animals; O.T. book 24 Brother who was angry when the Prodi-

home (Luke 15:28) 25 Settle snugly into a sheltered location (lsa. 34:15)

26 Scattered (Lev. 19:9)

DOWN

I Ceremonial form or traditional procedure (Hos. 8:13)

2 Storage and distribution site (Jer. 38:11) 3 Slender, swift-running mammals of Africa and Asia (1 Kings 4:23)

4 "Your teeth are white as ____ wool, newly shorn and washed' (Song. 4:2)

5 Industrious insects working in colonies (Prov. 6:6)

6 Not pure; unapproved for Hebrew consumption (Lev. 7:19) 7 Endearing term for

young boy (Luke 7:14) 12 Small, migratory birds associated with sparrows (Ps. 84:3)

14 Horse barns (1 Kings 4:28)

16 Large game fish of northern waters (Matt. 1:4)

17 Short-winged, stoutbodied game birds given to Hebrews in wilderness (Exod. 16:13)

18 Large hawk (Deut. 14:13)

21 Evergreen tree with aromatic, reddish wood used in Hebrew ceremonies (Lev. 14:49)

22 Recipient of proverbial messages from Agur (Prov. 30:1)

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Deliverance Church

Pastor John Reed & First Lady Alicia Reed

SERVICE TIMES Wedn. Bible Study....6:30pm Here we grow!



Zion Missionary Baptist Church

4100 Horne Street Fort Worth, TX 76107 817-737-6264

REV. K.L. HAWKINS, Pastor

SUNDAY SCHOOL	9:00 a.m.
MORNING WORSHIP	10:30 a.m.
EVERY WEDNESDAY - BIBLESTUDY	6:30 p.m.
1ST,4TH, 5TH WEDNESDAY - PRAYER SERVICE	E7:30 p.m.
EVERY WEDNESDAY - YOUTH MEETINGS	7:30 p.m.
2ND& 3RD WEDNESDAY - SMALLGROUPS	7:30 p.m.
3RD SATURDAYS - FVANGELISM	10·30 a m

West Mt. Moriah **Baptist Church** 5325 Bonnell Street Fort Worth, TX 76107 817-731-3502

Dr. W.L.D. Campbell, Pastor

Sunday School - Sunday Morning Worship - Sunday 10:05am Prayer Meeting - Wednesday

VISION STATEMENT To share the Light of Christ to a world in Darkness beginning at home.

Zion Rest

Missionary Baptist Church Fort Worth, TX 76105 3733 Ave J 817-534-8327

PASTOR RUFUS HUCKABY

11:00am Morning Worship 7:00pm

Prayer Meeting Bible Study, Mis





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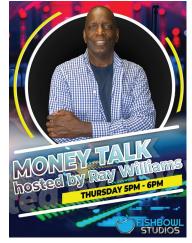
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Glorify your Father in Heaven MATT 5:16







Supt. James Turner Memorial Ministries

Sharon Ford-Twrner, Overseer 3252 Oak Timber Dr, Forest Hill, TX 76119 817.614.6808
P.O. Box 330401 Ft. Worth, TX 76163

Evang. Sharon Ford-Turner, Pastor e-mail: sharonlmasonfordturner@gmail.com

Sunday Services:

In-Person & Conference Call Services. 9:00 amSunday School

10:00 am.Worship Service SHARON

Village Creek Nursing Homes Minister following Pandemic guidelines 11:30 am 1st & 3rd Sunday

> Prayer and Bible Study Tuesday9:00 am

Conference Call Service Mon-Sat.....6:00 am Intercessory Prayer.

