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#### CHURCHIN'

### "The LEADER'S EDGE" by drmichaelbell

The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic was more than a public health crisis; it was a watershed moment for the Church. Sanctuaries were shuttered and faithful routines were upended. For many congregations, the return to in-person worship still hasn't resulted in a return to pre-pandemic worship attendance levels, fiscal stability and/or ministry participation. Truth is, in most churches membership is down. Volunteers are overextended. Giving is inconsistent. The lingering question many church leaders now face is: What does faithful leadership look like in a church that's been thinned out, burned out and is facing further decline?

The post-COVID church is not the same as the pre-COVID church. Many pastors are facing empty pews and working overtime to encourage maxed out core teams. Lay leaders who once anchored ministries have stepped away. Some members have shifted to online-only engagement, while others have ghosted altogether.

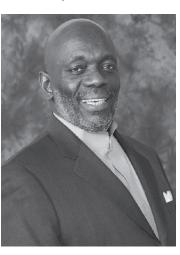
This ongoing reality has strung out both clergy and laity. Pastors feel overwhelmed and are, moretimes-than-not, under-resourced. Laity have yet to adjust to the challenges of a church that is still finding its footing. Yet, this tension isn't the end of the story. It's an opportunity to reimagine the Church, not as it was, but as it can be.

You, as a church leader, want your church to grow **but before regrowth comes reset.** Churches need to hit the reset button and revisit foundational questions, such as, "Why do we exist?" What better time than now to clarify your mission, your purpose, not your programs or traditions. Clarify what truly matters now. The church must streamline its focus by cutting what no longer aligns with its purpose.

Leaders, you may remember what the talk was almost immediately after the novel coronavirus was downgraded. Back then, churches worked overtime trying to locate pre-pandemic attendees who didn't want to be found or bothered. Instead, your local body of Christ as is should take shared ownership of what comes next.

Here are a few practical, Spirit-led steps for churches that want to become healthy, not just bloated in size:

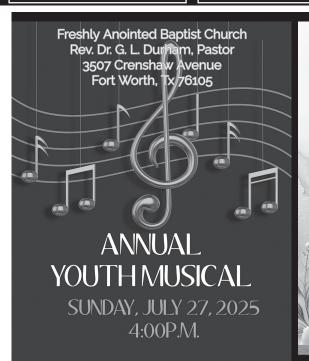
 Empower shared leadership.
Pastors can't (and shouldn't want to) lead alone. Pastor, equip, trust and release lay



leaders. Make the shift from a pastor-centered model to one of discipleship-driven delegation. Offer training, affirm gifts and let people lead even *if it* means doing things differently.

- Cultivate authentic community. People aren't looking for performance; they're yearning for connection. Follow up. Reach out. Rebuild the relational web of the church, one conversation at a time.
- Prioritize spiritual formation, which is a core part of the discipleship process. Equip the congregation to grow in faith outside the walls of the church house.
- Get caught up in serving your community. The pandemic reminded us: the Church is not a building. Re-engage the local mission field. A church that blesses its community earns the right to be heard.
- Leverage technology with intentionality. By now you know that online ministry isn't a fad; it's a new frontier. Rethink how you use social media, livestreams and digital platforms. Don't just limit technology to online Sunday worship services. Create digital spaces for prayer, conversation and engagement.
- Celebrate small wins. Keep your church or ministry in the loop on what is working. Highlight baptisms, service projects, restored relationships or answered prayers. Joy builds momentum.
- Practice pastoral and congregational care. Grief, loss, and anxiety still hover over many households. Normalize lament. Offer counseling, prayer partners or healing services.

\*Dr. Michael Bell is Senior Pastor 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*.



You are invited to come woriship the Lord with us as we sing songs of prasie

### 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 Dr. Yolanda G. Butler

### "A Life of Freedom"

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:36)

The word "freedom" in the dictionary is defined as the condition of not being in prison or captivity. It is also the condition of being free from restraints without the control or interference of another.

Freedom is what our nation claimed on July 4, 1776 since breaking away from British rule, committing to freedom and self-governance. Freedom is what Nelson Mandela claimed after a 27-year prison term that restricted him from the outside world. After his release, he committed to ending apartheid and bringing hope of freedom to the South African nation.

Freedom is never free. There is a price that must be paid. By the sin of one man (the First Adam), sin was spread unto all of mankind (Romans 5:12). We were stripped of original righteousness and condemned to death. We became slaves to sin and were held captive by its darkness with no hope. Freedom is what Jesus (the Second Adam) established for all of mankind who were enslaved to the grips of sin and the penalty of death. He paid the high price through his death, burial, and resurrection.

Having such freedom does not give us the liberty to keep sinning so that the Father can continue to show us more grace (Romans 6:1). The Apostle Paul reminds us that when we become born-again believers, we die to sin. We join with Christ and live in truth. Remember, freedom costs. It costs everything. It costs a surrendered life to the Father. We have been given a future and a hope. All the Father requires of us is that we love Him with our entire heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37). This means give Him all of you. In turn, He is faithful to watch over you, protect you, love you, and care for you (Psalm 121:3-4).

Living a life of freedom means you must maintain a relationship with the Very One who made it possible for you to live such a life. This relationship is built through the disciplines of prayer, meditation on the Word, fasting, and spending quiet, quality time with the Father. When you spend time with the Father, you



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become more like His Son Jesus. This is living a life of freedom. It is living the word out loud. You will find greater joy, love, and peace within because you are drawing close to the Father, and He is drawing close to you (James 4:8). You no longer are under the interfering bounds of the enemy but rather the power of Holy Spirit who graciously reminds you to live a life of freedom through Christ.

So dear hearts, be determined to live a life of freedom that honors the Father.

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'

### **Greater Saint Stephen First Church celebrate Brothers** who really make a Difference on Fathers' Day

Sunday, June 15, 2025, was FA-THER'S DAY and our Church Family Celebrated Brothers who MAKE A DIFFERENCE by their faithful, though sometimes unheralded, service! [Not pictured are MICHAEL COLLIER and FREDERIKC DOBBINS].

MICHAEL COLLIER is a "faithful servant of Jesus Christ" who takes the intiative to Step Up and Engage in Ministry!

FREDERIKC DOBBINS is an exemplary Brother, who quietly, goes about being the Difference!

ALPHONSE BELL is our IT Di-

Community Building.

rector but he does so much more to bring clarity and consistency to what we do at GSSFC!

KENDRICK COLLIER is a member of our IT Team who quietly but faithfully does the little things that resonates with purpose. He simply, but profoundly, just shows up and serves!

OSCAR "BIG O" SUTPHEN serves Christ through the Church in too many ways to list. He models Colossians 3:17: "Whatever you do, whether in speech or action, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God the Father through him" (CEB).

Investing in Second Chances Isn't Charity—It's Smart

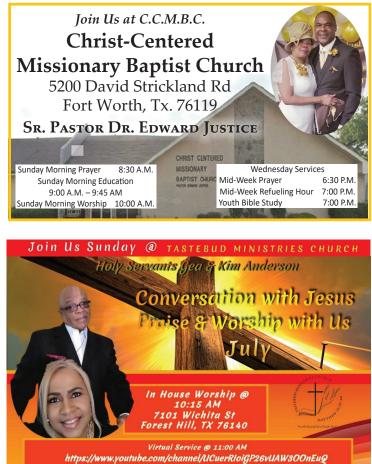


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**GREATER SAINT STEPHEN FIRST CHURCH** 

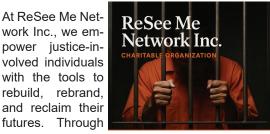






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• Served honorably for 20 years • Completed 2.5 tours in Vietnam.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

President & CEO | TPH GROUP INC. (1999-Present) Parent company of The Major Funeral and Cremation Center; Alpha Cremation Service, and Alpha Cremation-Major.



4

Born in Panola, County, Texas. Graduated from Turner High School in Carthage, Texas. Attended Tarrant County South Campus EMT course and then went onto the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science (now DIFS). Based in the historic Lake Como community she has been serving

families throughout Tarrant County and vicinity for over 25 years. After joining the Tarrant Co Funeral Directors Association, she became its Treasurer.

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# **DFW Black Authors Gala (D-FWBAG):** "Ink in Excellence"

The DFW Black Authors Gala is a premier literary event celebrating the brilliance, creativity, and impact of Black authors in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. With the theme "Ink in Excellence," this formal gala brings together authors, readers, and industry professionals for an evening of recognition, networking, and inspiration. D-FWBAG, short for Dallas-Fort Worth Black Authors Gala, is a formal event celebrating the excellence, creativity, and impact of Black authors across various genres. The gala features awards, vendor opportunities, and inspiring speaker segments that spotlight poetry, fiction, spirituality, and humor. With a mission to uplift, recognize, and connect authorpreneurs, D-FWBAG also gives back-donating a portion of proceeds to The Colorful World of Cancer (C.W.O.C.). Tickets are available at the Dockbookshop and via Zelle divap2002@yahoo.com or PavPal

Venmo TakeHeed1 or contact us for VIP TABLES AND SECURED DONA-TIONS.

Event Highlights:

Guest Speakers: Featuring powerful voices across Poetry, Fiction, Spirituality, and Humor.

Authorpreneurs: Encouraging branding, engagement, and business growth for authors.



Awards & Recognition: Honoring lit erary achievements with categories such as:

**Best Debut Author** Community Impact Award Lifetime Achievement Award

Vendor Showcase: Featuring 5-10 vendors, including Authorpreneurs and a select number of Entrepreneurs

VIP Experience: Exclusive opportunities for networking and premium event perks.

Big Screen & Award Presentations: Spotlighting the honorees in a grand fashion.

Mission & Vision

stores

The DFW Black Authors Gala is dedicated to elevating Black authors, fostering community support, and providing a prestigious platform for both emerging and established writers, from all genres. By merging literature, business, and empowerment, this event ensures that Black voices are heard, celebrated, and supported.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit The Colorful World of Cancer (C.W.O.C.), furthering its mission to support cancer survivors and warriors.

Sponsorship & Ticket Sales: To ensure the success of this impactful event, sponsorship opportunities are available at the following levels:

VIP Gold- \$100.00 Donations Platinum-\$500.00 tier, includes donation recognition Ink \$1000.00 (The highest tier, including donation recognition and Magazine success story )

With an elegant dress code and an atmosphere of excellence, the DFW Black Authors Gala is more than an event-it's a movement to uplift, connect, and inspire.

FOUNDER: D.E Jones Jonesdi10@yahoo.com

HOST:Winnie Starks I winnie. starks@louisvuitton.com

### National Baptist Convention USA, the nation's largest Black denomination, is under fire for accepting \$300K from Target during national boycott

The National Baptist Convention USA (NBCUSA) is facing criticism for forming a new partner-

ship and accepting \$300,000 from Target during a national boycott of the giant retailer.

Journalist and commentator, Roland Martin, lambasted the partnership and called on member churches of the NBCUSA to speak up

The National Baptist Convention is the largest predominantly Black denomination in the nation, with approximately 31,000 churches and 7.5 million members, according to stats released by the organization.

The national boycott of Target came in response to the Minnesota retailer's rollback of its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DFI) initiatives.

The boycott began to gain traction when Pastor Jamal Bryant of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church launched #TargetFast, a national call to abstain from patronizing Target for 40-day.

While the official 40-day "fast" has ended, many protesters and proponents of DEI have continued the boycott as an means to apply sustained pressure on Target. Since the boycott, Target has reported a

Critics argue that NBCUSA's partnership with Target undermines the DEI cause and the push for meaningful accountability. Moreover, they assert that \$300K is a pittance for Target who made \$4B in 2024.

The NBCUSA's partnership with Target is to continue for only 3-years.

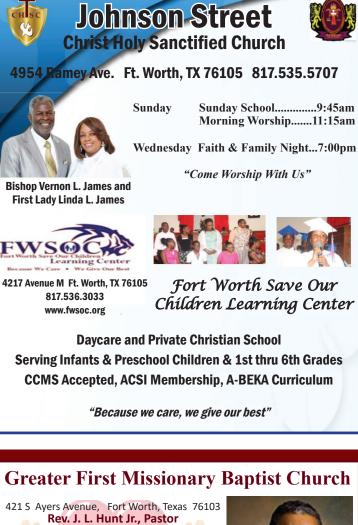
While the NBCUSA never officially endorsed #TargetFast or the national boycott, many of its churches and members participated in and even championed the Dr. Kimber's announcement further explained, "Target's generous donation will help us to provide scholarships, support senior citizens, and invest in entrepreneurship programs that uplift our people

Dr. Kimber has yet to respond to the criticism leveled by Roland Martin and others.

### In the Community with Pastor Sharon Ford-Turner



Pic 1) Juneteenth Celebration at I. M. Terrell Academy Stem Freedom Vibes with Speaker Andrew Young with Roy Charles Brooks, County Commissioner Rodrick Miles, Thelma Watson, Trinity and Mason Ford Pic 2) At Juneteenth Soul of Sycamore Parade with Judge Maryellen Hicks, Trinity and Mason Ford.



Sunday Services Sunday School.... 9:30 A.M. Morning Worship Service....11:00 A.M.

Wednesday Services Wednesday Prayer Service & Bible Study 7:00 P.M.





Dr. Boise Kimber, the newly installed Presdecline in sales and foot traffic inside its

boycott.

and the future."

ident of the NBCUSA, stated in the official partnership announcement that the NBCU-SA "has been clear about our expectations and Target senior leaders have responded in a very positive way."

# **CHURCH DIRECTORY**



### CHURCHIN'

JUNETEENTH JESUS JAMMING WITH JOY AT NEW MOUNT **ROSE! Orange Summer 2025** Shines Bright with Baptisms, Blessings, and Big Dreams.



NEW MOUNT ROSE, TX - Orange Summer 2025 is ablaze with purpose and passion at New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church, as we transformed Juneteenth Week into one of the most Spirit-filled, soul-saving celebrations in the country!

Wearing orange as a bold symbol of unity and awareness, we stood together to confront the heartbreaking rise of gun suicides and homicides in our community. The statistics are sobering-Tarrant County sees more lives lost to suicide than to homicide. But here at New Mount Rose, we're responding with faith, family, and fire, fully committed to a summer of "Baptisms Not Burials."

We are choosing life, love, and liberty in Jesus' name!

The week kicked off on Father's Day with our joyful FatherFest, officially launching Juneteenth Magnified VBS 2025! Our sanctuary became the New Mount Rose Garden, where EVERYTHING was magnified—especially the presence and power of God. Children laughed, families fellowshipped, and the Spirit moved mightily.

Over five powerful days, more than 500 people came through our doors to worship, grow, and rejoice in the freedom that only Christ can give. Eleven souls gave their lives to Jesus, but it was on Thursday, June 19, 2025-JUNETEENTH itself-that history was made

For the first time in our church's history, baptisms took place on Juneteenth

Two beautiful souls went down in the water and rose up in new life on Freedom Day-a holy and historic moment that will echo through the generations.

We've made it known far and wide:

We are baptizing more of our children than burying them this summer. Hallelujah!

But the week didn't stop with worship-it continued with celebration and cinema!

On Friday night, we had the joy of celebrating the birthday of legendary Hollywood actress Candy Clark with an unforgettable dinner at Uncle Julio's. The food was delicious, the fellowship full of laughter, and the love in the room was undeniable

Then on Saturday, June 21, we partnered with Tarrant County College South Campus, the Fort Worth Film Commission, and the Fort Worth Film Collaborative to present a heartfelt Candy Clark Birthday Tribute and "American Graffiti" Film Screening. Candy's presence lit up the room with joy and creativity-she is more than a film icon; she is family here in "Candy City, USA."

We're also proud to share that New Mount Rose is now officially a film-friendly campus-a sacred space where creativity, culture, and Christ-centered community thrive together.

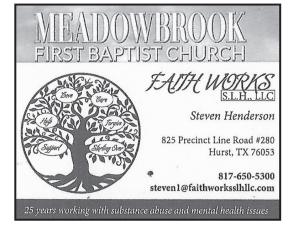
As the Word reminds us in Zechariah 4:10: "Do not despise these small beginnings ... " What began with a simple prayer, a splash of orange, and a heart for healing has now become a movement-a bold, God-led chapter in the story of our church and city.

Orange Summer is alive. Juneteenth Jesus has a home. And God reigns over it all.

When we follow Jesus-not just on Juneteenth, but every single day-we walk in the only freedom that truly lasts: freedom in Christ

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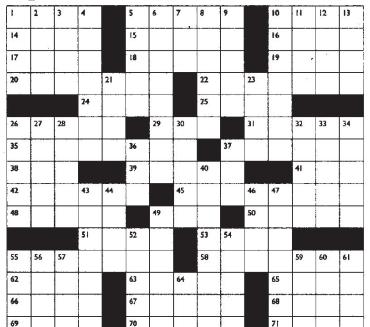
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## **BIBLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE Topic: ALL GOD'S CREATURES**

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#### ACROSS

I Cold sea mammal (Gen. 9:12) 5 Heartthrob: 2 wds 10 First creatures God made (Gen. 1:20) 14 Pharaoh's dream animals (Gen. 41:2-3, KJV) 15 Samson's censure for burning foxes (judg. 15:3-5) 16 "Bring a pair of every animal the boat" (Gen. 6:19) 17 Solomon's biographer (2 Chron. 9:29) 18 Hebrew frog plaguer (Exod. 8:5) 19 Variant of czar 20 Craftiest creature (Gen. 3:1)

22 Symbolic horned horse

(Num. 24:8, Kjv)

24 One flying mammal (Lev. 11:19) 25 20th Hebrew letter

26 Greek marketplace 29 German preposition

31 Never-satisfied sucker (Prov. 30:15)

35 Horse harnessers (Prov. 26:3)

37 Settle snugly (Isa. 34:15) 38 Account's "hottom line"

39 Customary practice 41 O.T. minor prophetic bk.

42 King David's labor leader (2 Sam. 20:24)

45 Horned, hoofed animal (Deut. 14:5)



48 Sympathetic efferent nerve activity limit: acron. 49 Canadian Cattlemen's Associa tion 50 Dividing offerings: abbr. (2 Chron. 31:14) 51 Hebrew priests' town

(I Chron. 6:60) 53 Long journey 55 Burrowers (Lev. 11:4-5) 58 Number of lines of printed material 62 Single stinging insect 63 Royal murder, for short (2 Kings 12:20) 65 Fibrous plant

66 Falsified (Gen. 18:15) 67 Worm-produced fibers (Ezek. 16:9) 68 Dead (Luke 23:54) 69 Mother who delivered in a sta-

bie (Luke 2:5-7) 70 Declarer 71 First and necessary; abbr

### DOWN

I Boot runners 2 Platonic ideas

3 Man: pref. 4 Can "a \_\_\_\_ take away his

spots?" (ler. | 3:23) 5 Syrian river (2 Kings 5:12)

6 Cryers like a sheep 7 Peter cut one off (John 18:10) 8 Love affairs



9 Tawny leather color

12 Led astrologers to Christ

21 Mount of cursing 23 Patmos or Samos (Rev. 1:9, кју)

26 Endearing term for fathers: Gr

28 Anointing by pouring \_\_\_\_ the head: 2 words (2 Kings 9:6, Kjv)

30 Deceived by goatskin-clad son

34 jael's husband (judg. 5:24)

36 European-Mediterranean: mil.

37 Trap for 10-across (Matt. 4:18) 40 Resembling a tiny, winged insect (Matt. 23:24)

46 Animals' first home (Gen. 2:8)

49 Anointing spice (Exod. 30:24)

10 Polecat pelts

\_far as

(Matt. 2:1-2)

(Exod. 19:13)

(Gen. 27:21)

33 Applauded

32 Culture's characte

43 \_\_\_\_ Ann 44 Away from the wind

52 Copper and zinc alloy

54 Light washing (Lev. 6:28)

56 King Rehoboam's son

(I Chron. 3:10, кју)

57 Antlered animal (Ps. 42:1)

59 Conspirator against Abime

60 Inheritance, for short (Luke

61 Plant support (Jon. 4:7)

55 Aromatic resin (Gen. 43:11)

(lob 40:18)

(Judg. 9:28)

16:12)

47 Pleasing

13 Male sheep n

27 Slope

SUNDAY SCHOOL



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Evang. Sharon Ford-Turner, Pastor

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Love in Action:

11:30 am 1st Sunday ....Village Creek

Nursing Homes Ministry following

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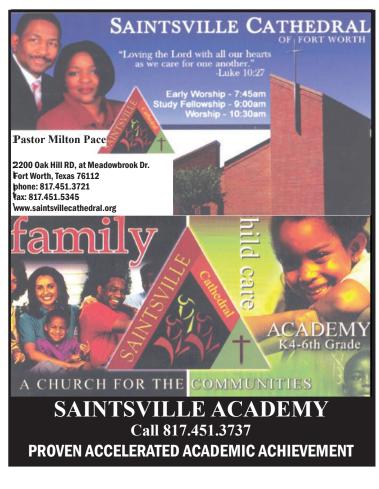
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