

VOLUME 18

EMPOWERING DISCIPLES MAGAZINE

# QUARANTINE EDITION

NEW PSALMIST BAPTIST CHURCH

OUR BUILDING MAY BE  
CLOSED BUT WE ARE  
STILL CONNECTED

*Creating New Memories*  
IN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

*Mental Health*  
AMIDST COVID-19

*Prayer* DURING THE PANDEMIC

THE PANDEMIC AND QUARANTINE:  
*What My Church* MEANS TO ME



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# from the **BISHOP'S PEN**

By: Bishop Walter S. Thomas, Sr., Pastor

God has shown us that He is indeed God. We have been out for months and yet God has shown us that our help really comes from the Lord. This has been a trying time for all of us and yet God has been faithful to each of us. Many persons have asked about our return to the building for our worship services and I have said along with our leadership that our decision is based on the directives we receive from persons who understand the virus. This virus has led to a global pandemic. Nearly the entire world is facing and fighting its spread. We know the virus can make persons extremely ill and it can cause death; the problem is we do not know in advance who will become sick or die. Therefore, we try to make sure that no one is put in jeopardy. Now we can not live in a bubble. We do have to go out for various reasons and we do have to engage the world, but we do know that every precaution needs to be taken. We have been stockpiling the things we will need when we open the doors for worship but until the transmission rates in our community are lower we will not open for Sunday morning worship in the building. We will continue to gather as a family online in worship.



I am so grateful to God that this shock to life is happening in a century when we have so many technical tools to help us navigate these waters. God has given us the resources to have church, to study the word, to meet and greet, to fellowship and gather, and to do it all from wherever we are at the moment. This realization has led me to work on being and staying focused on the positive things that are happening all around me. I celebrate the little things and I am grateful to God for them. I encourage you to bring in each day with the sense of God's love and grace and in your life. Dwell on things positive and see God work on your behalf. I must admit, I draw strength from this practice and it carries me through the day. God has fixed it that if we dwell in the positive and on the positive, the positive will accompany us. I must admit, I have learned so much through this experience and I pray you have too. Look at all we have done through these months and know, God is with us and surely God is working through us.

God Bless,  
*Bishop Walter S. Thomas Sr., Pastor*



# from the EDITOR

By: Joi Thomas, Editor



It's summertime. 2020 is flying by. I have to admit this is the most challenging year I have ever experienced. Right now we are living through a world-wide pandemic, unable to go about life as we are used to. Everything has changed! Many have been working from home for months. Our children haven't been in a classroom since March and still don't know if they will be back in the fall. Many vacations and family events have been cancelled. Zoom meetings have replaced in person meetings. Conferences, bible studies, classes, you name it, has all been transferred to a virtual setting. Even Sunday morning worship happens online. We have had to adjust quick, and pivot in mid-air.

This has been a challenging season for everyone. I am so glad that in the midst of it all, our church has worked tirelessly to keep us connected. This edition of the magazine is devoted to showing how New Psalmist has thrived during the pandemic, and all the church has done to make life better for others. We also have articles to help you out while we are still social distancing from family and friends.

While we create a new normal during this time, let us not forget everyone who has lost loved ones, and has had to grieve from a distance. We must also keep those in prayer that are fighting this virus.

I know there may be a lot of anxiety right now, but this is the time when we lean on our faith and prayer. Our nation has been reeling with social unrest even during this trying time. However, we cannot lose faith. At the end of the day, God has a plan.

Enjoy this edition of Empowering Disciples!

Joi Thomas



## NEW PSALMIST BAPTIST CHURCH

6020 Marian Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21215  
(410) 945-3000  
[www.newpsalmist.org](http://www.newpsalmist.org)

## PUBLISHER

Bishop Walter S. Thomas, Sr., Pastor

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Joi Thomas

## WRITERS

Teresa Hall  
Elliott Jenkins  
Mildred E. Johnson  
Chrysta Moore  
Emma Sellers  
Theresa Smith  
Gwendolyn Streeter  
Jabari Walker  
Gayle Watkins

## PHOTOGRAPHERS

Razaria Best  
Jerome Coates  
Chip Dizard  
Jamaal McKenzie  
Jasmine Simms  
Greg Stansbury  
Daryl Taylor  
Quadre Veney

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Church Online  
[www.thechurchonline.com](http://www.thechurchonline.com)

## PRINTING

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# I AM AN *Essential* EMPLOYEE

## LORETTA BLAKE



I am an Accounting Assistant II with Baltimore City Government. I process the City of Baltimore employees as well as first time employees, Fire and Police, and personnel actions concerning their paychecks. We all want to be paid on time. At the moment we are working remotely two days a week and in the office 3 days a week. As a member of New Psalmist, I learned, through Pastor's Bible Study classes and 9:30 am services, and fellowship with other Christians from different churches, to lean on Jesus for all things. In Bishop's last bible class, he said Jesus gave us two things, and we focus on the one big thing, the Holy Spirit. The missed thing was peace. I can't thank Bishop enough for reminding me of "peace". That alone has kept

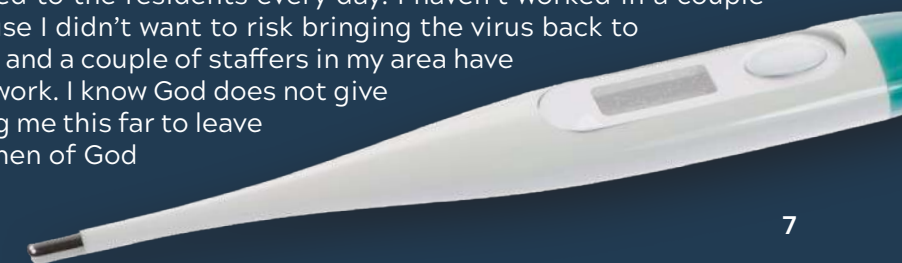
me sane and worry free. Everyday talking to first line city workers, Fire and Police, I repeat what Bishop says, peace be still. I start smiling at the workers worry free. I am covered by the blood of Jesus. I am wearing the masks, gloves and using the sanitizing sprays, but I know who has me in the palm of hand, Jesus. I thank Bishop for being the follower of God. I'm here and ready to serve to be a blessing for others. Thank you Bishop Thomas.

## BARBARA JOHNSON MILBURN



My job as receptionist at Augsburg Village is evolving so quickly during the pandemic that it is quickly becoming almost physically impossible for me to still do so. Augsburg is a long term care facility consisting of nursing home, assisted living and independent living. Besides now having to be watch guard and monitor comings and goings of all visitors and residents (in the beginning they could still go out; now they are ALL on lock down), also added to my plate is delivery of all incoming packages, grocery drop offs, and Baltimore Sun Paper deliveries. With more than 144 independent units and residents who now cannot move about freely as they had been used to, their regular activities have now become my regular daily duties. Staff is now required to

have the COVID-19 test if they are to remain on staff and our temperatures are tested daily. It is because of my faith that I have been able to do this. The residents call me the walking bible because all I wear are Christian tee shirts and of my own doing most of them have statements about faith. I chuckle when I think of the Faith over Fear small group class I completed last year and I said God knew. One of my co-workers came to me and said how can your faith still be so strong with all that is going on. My response was that God had never failed me yet and no matter what it looked like HE was still in control. I overheard one of the residents sharing with a friend on the phone that the receptionist wore t-shirts every day that were religious and that they encouraged his heart. This same resident was one of my biggest volunteers, always available to help me with my never ending load of packages and groceries needing to be distributed to the residents every day. I haven't worked in a couple of weeks because my son had surgery and because I didn't want to risk bringing the virus back to him. There are several cases in the nursing home and a couple of staffers in my area have been reported. Please pray for me as I return to work. I know God does not give me a spirit of fear and I also know He did not bring me this far to leave me but it helps just knowing I have men and women of God touching and agreeing with me.





## ROBIN BRAYBOY



My name is Robin Brayboy and I have been a Child of God since 1999. I began the entrepreneurial journey that God gifted me in 2005 with the trade name of Kids Empower Child Care and Learning Center-- A family childcare home, a sole proprietorship with a maximum capacity of eight children. After some years in operation, many soiled diapers, innumerable spills, many satisfied families, and at the prompting of the children and parents we served, that long trade

name lovingly transformed into simply, Miss Robin's Daycare, the name that's enduring to this day! I say, "we," because family daycare is truly a family affair and the children who knock on the door everyday really do become family. I've often said at family meet and greets with children, that, "We haven't become rich and famous, but we've always had a roof over our heads, and food on the table." God has always taken care of my family's needs and He has privileged me the awesome opportunity of working at home! Needless to say I have had to conquer many hurdles to maintain a home-based business for 15 years. There have been times that patience was a mandate in reassuring reluctant to trust grandparents who could find no liking to a daycare provider for "their grandchild," but at the same time not-at all willing to give up their leisurely retirement to babysit. And then there have been the folks who wanted pristine care at a fraction of the price. Then, the co-parents who never know who was supposed to pick-up until 6:30 pm on that Friday evening of the predicted snow blizzard. It's been a ride! We've played Doctor, lawyer, and Priest, and the Lord be praised, I would take nothing for my journey.

Though, I lived in the city when I first began the daycare, in 2011, my family and I moved to Cockeysville, Md and I accepted a position outside of the home as

a Director for a School-aged program in a very rural neighborhood in Northeastern Baltimore County. It was during the Obama Administration and I became the supervisor of some not too happy white teachers at a time of a rekindling of blatant racism in our country. I can remember walking in on conversations where there was no mistaking who the "She" was in, ... looked like a monkey. And so, I hung my sign back out and Miss Robin's Daycare began catering to a YUPPY clientele who liked the idea of a "homey" atmosphere and were willing to pay well for this.... And the business flourished.! My younger children were able to complete their High School careers at one of the top High schools in the country in 2017. I pulled out all the stops for a large family graduation celebration and then my youngest child, became very ill, requiring an eight week hospitalization. I was unable to work and this unemployment circumstance called for our family to downsize our living in 2019 and we actually lived in an apartment for seven months until the Lord blessed us with our current home in the Highlandtown Art District. In the interim, I worked as a Classroom Assistant in a public school, where I was ostracized because I was reported to "think that I was in charge." (I can hear Pastor say, "It's hard to be big when little's got ya") So needless to say, I was not asked to come back this school term, and so once again, I'm hanging out my sign, going through the proper inspections, obtaining permits, and advertising for Miss Robin's Daycare--doing what I know to make a living for my family.



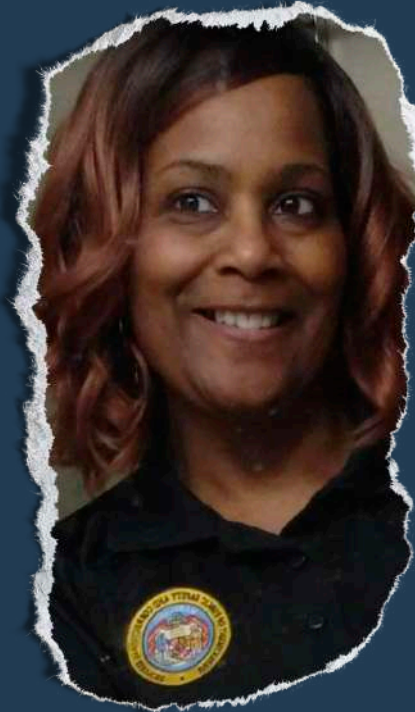
I guess I should also add that in all this transition and crisis that my marriage of four years has now suffered and my husband I are now living separately.

So, NOW A GLOBAL PANDEMIC HITS! Gov. Hogan orders all daycares closed and everyone who I'm now providing services for either is furloughed.... Except, one of my clients is REGISTERED NURSE--which put my children and I on the second line. Do I work? Or do I fold? Not a big decision--I'm now a single mom with no

income and a brand new house, with two children still at home. Then! Bishop Thomas says at Prayer Service that we are no longer on the Front Line, We are now Behind God's Line! We are protected!

So, you ask, where is God in this story -He Is the story! I haven't just become an Essential Worker. Judging by the amount of times I've re-hung my sign, I'd say that Miss Robin's Daycare is right in the center of God's will!

## LONA DENSON-CARTER



I am amongst many of our members that are Correctional Officers at Dorsey Run Correctional Facility, in Jessup, Maryland. We are working daily and yet fear the outbreak of sickness and even deaths we witness amongst our inmates and staff. We have had two officers, one officer's wife, and 4 inmates to die in the past month (May 2020).

It has been only by the grace of God that we have been able to come through those gates each day. For me it has been the Sunday Morning programs where you have been bringing the Word of God, I watch on YouTube, that has been my strength.

Pastor continue to do what you have always done, be a rock in my life and in my families lives. As we continue to work in what the young people call "the trenches". Thank you and the New Psalmist Baptist Church family for all the prayers.

## LASHANI WILLIAMS

This is LaShani Williams and I work for University of Maryland Faculty Physicians Inc. I have been working since the pandemic some days are good and some days are what if. I am grateful and thank God that I am still working. Please continue to pray for my family and I. I am the one to run errands, cook meals, go grocery shopping and make face mask. My mother is 74 and has underline conditions, so again I thank God for allowing me to be able to take care of my mother and do anything that she needs.







One takeaway from this public health crisis is TIME. Time in quarantine has allowed thoughts to not just penetrate the mind but to process, dissect, and clear out the mind, making room to create new memories. Time is about planning, organizing, making decisions, changing routines, and fresh perspectives on life. These are the bright sides of the COVID-19 pandemic and the catalyst for our survival stories.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. Romans 8:18 (ESV)



A senior citizen (83) shared with me that living in the COVID-19 quarantine has given her hope as she reflected on her parent's parents who survived the 1918 Spanish Flu, which was an unusually deadly influenza pandemic caused by the H1N1 Influenza A virus. Lasting more than 12 months from spring 1918 to early summer 1919, it infected 500 million people – about a third of the world's population at the time. It was one of the deadliest pandemics in human history. The person's father was three years old back then and her mother was just born in 1918.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS TO CREATE NEW MEMORIES:

- 1 Dress in that special, high-end, designer and **BOUGIE BEST OUTFIT**, and take a stroll around your neighborhood singing God's praises.
- 2 Clean and rearrange the items in your **CHINA CABINET**.
- 3 Take out the least-used **KITCHEN APPLIANCE** to prepare a food, beverage or dessert.



- 4 Browse **OLD PHOTOS** and other **KEEPSAKES** that bring happy memories top of mind.
- 5 Clear out the **JUNK DRAWER** in your home.
- 6 Collect and combine all **CELL BATTERIES** in order by type.

**FAMILIES** spend more time at home – together – than they likely ever have. While the COVID-19 pandemic and related stay-at-home orders create opportunities for more quality time, they also present challenges such as the stress that goes with social distancing and being cooped up together.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR FAMILIES TO CREATE NEW MEMORIES:

- 1 Rearrange all **ROOMS** in the home to refresh the environment.
- 2 Re-pot the **INDOOR PLANTS**.
- 3 Record a **FUNNY FAMILY VIDEO**.
- 4 Have dedicated **TABLE-TALK** days for each family member.
- 5 Build a **LIVING ROOM FORT** with blankets and string.



**COUPLES** share the story of going from zero to one hundred in one day. These are superheroes with and without children. Homeschooling is the now the "in" thing to do.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR COUPLES TO CREATE NEW MEMORIES:

- 1 Learn **SOMETHING NEW** about one another.
- 2 Research **LEGALZOOM.COM** and start a business.
- 3 Give one another a **MANICURE** and **PEDICURE**.
- 4 Create **DATE NIGHTS** without leaving home.
- 5 Schedule **TIME FOR YOURSELF** and give each other breaks.

**SINGLES** are the amazing superheroes with and without children that are home alone but not necessarily lonely. Quarantine survival is the name of the game.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR SINGLES TO CREATE NEW MEMORIES:

- 1 Create a positive **SOCIAL MEDIA** presence on a specific topic you care about.
- 2 **FLY KITES** and **BIRDWATCH**.
- 3 Prioritize **SELF-CARE**.
- 4 Learn a **NEW LANGUAGE**.
- 5 Upgrade **COOKING SKILLS**.





# Pandemic Effect on the SLEEP CYCLE

By Emma Sellers

Sleep patterns for many have been disrupted due to the unprecedented coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that has distressed our nation. This virus has mentally affected and altered sleep for those of us who simply desire to just fall and stay asleep throughout the night. Although, there are five stages of sleep, I will talk briefly about the two main stages which are NON-REM (non-rapid eye movement) dreamless sleep and REM sleep (Rapid Eye Movement) deep sleep where dreams take place. NON-REM sleep is mostly experienced by those who suffer from sleep deprivation. In essence, this is our body going through a sleep crisis. As we duly adhere to the state's stay at home orders, our sub-conscious minds are constantly thinking about this pandemic. While listening to the news, in our daily conversations and while browsing the web for new statistics and daily briefings, the danger of COVID-19 and the death toll are constantly put on display. While we attempt a much needed nightly rest, our sub-conscious minds wanders and subsequently, we may experience difficulty falling asleep. We find ourselves in the NON-REM sleep stage. Examples that dictates you are in NON-REM sleep are the following: One may wake up throughout the night, and not able to fall back to sleep; tossing and turning

all night long. Others may be awakened by headaches, and body aches, as our sub-conscious minds wanders throughout the night. Tension and anxiety builds up. This rise of emotional feelings accumulates causing panic attacks which keeps a person from getting a good night's sleep. Surely, these are signs that the body is going through a sleep crisis, and mainly experiencing NON-REM sleep.

What we want to eventually experience is called REM sleep. This stage of sleep restores health, and promotes body healing, and helps to reduce stress. For example, if a person has had surgery, or is suffering from an illness, REM sleep is the stage where natural healing takes place within the body. We must learn to re-center ourselves and get back on schedule to experience less stress.

## 9 Tips For Better Sleep

In order to keep negative news, conversations, and thoughts from affecting our nightly ritual of falling asleep, stay positive and follow the tips below right before going to bed except #9.

If your sleep pattern has gotten off track and you are seeking avenues to stay on schedule, follow the tips noted above to finally get back on a regular sleeping

1. Pray

Breaking News

3. Do not watch the late news

5. Meditation

6. Drink warm comforting, relaxing tea such as - Chamomile

8. Exercise (low impact)

2. Practice Yoga

4. Write a gratitude journal as a reminder to be grateful

7. Snuggle with a soft pillow during your sleep

9. Stay busy during the day, vigorous exercise, gardening, etc. it may promote better sleep

schedule. Although, this pandemic may have caused havoc on peaceful rest, remember God has promised us rest for the weary.

*When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.*

PROVERBS 3:24

REFERENCE: <http://www.end-your-sleep-deprivation.com/stages-of-sleep.html>.



# Thriving Spiritually DURING COVID-19 ON THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS OF THE HOLY CITY OF ZION

By Teresa Hall

The COVID-19 virus quickly spread across the world in an unprecedented way. No one could have predicted the way this virus has changed our way of life. One of the biggest changes is the inability to worship corporately, in person, with our church family. Our pastor, Bishop Walter Scott Thomas, Sr. informed us on Thursday March 12th that "New Psalmist has decided not to hold public services this weekend. We will worship and broadcast our services exclusively online." We transitioned our normal Sunday services to online via Facebook, our website, and YouTube. After two weeks, COVID-19 became more intense. As a result of this pandemic, the Governor issued an executive order which in part stated that large gatherings were not permitted. Therefore, church buildings all over Maryland had to adhere to the social distancing guidelines and could not hold services in their building.

Our first Sunday exclusively online was March 15, 2020, which was slated for Bishop's 45th Pastoral Anniversary celebration. For the first time ever, Bishop Thomas preached in an empty sanctuary. The sermon "I Didn't see it Coming" (Psalm 91) gave everyone the strength needed to see this season through.

Since that Sunday, all of our ministry efforts have moved online. It has been three months since we have worshipped together in the building, but ministry is still happening. Even though we are apart, we are apart together and making connections even in this pandemic.

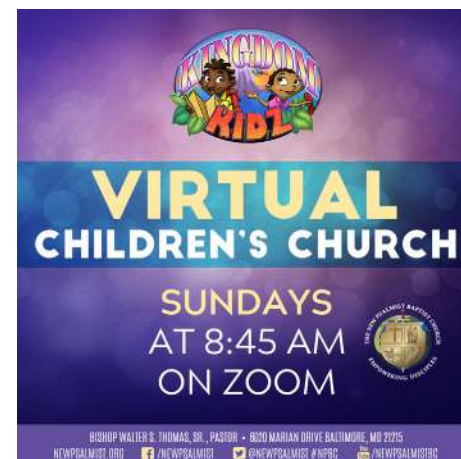
**TO SHOW THE WORLD GOD'S GLORY, THE NEW PSALMIST BAPTIST CHURCH OFFERS THE FOLLOWING WAYS TO CALM YOUR SPIRIT THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:**



**TUESDAY PRAYER CALL** at 7:00 p.m. for 20 to 30 minutes with Bishop Thomas. A word of hope and encouragement and inspiration.



**SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES** at 7:15 am, 9:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. The service shows the creativity God has given us to worship virtually. We look forward to online worship every week.



The Kingdom Kidz Ministry has been blessed and empowered by Dr. Diane Roberts, Ministry Liaison to begin weekly **VIRTUAL CHILDREN'S CHURCH** via Zoom. Worship includes prayer, praise, Scripture and a Bible story. Thought provoking comprehension questions are provided at the end of each presentation in order to access our Kingdom Kidz listening and comprehension skills.



Thursday Nights are for **BIBLE STUDY** presented by our Pastor, Bishop Thomas. Each Thursday we gather online for about an hour to learn the word of God together virtually.



Throughout the pandemic the church has consistently held its **FOOD PANTRY ON THE GO** to provide food for those in need. Recently, the church has partnered with Total Health Care to provide free COVID-19 testing. New Psalmist Baptist Church shares and makes life better for others. Many volunteers participate to make this endeavor successful.



**VIRTUAL COMMUNION** service is held once a month. Members prepare their elements at home (apple juice, water, cranberry, etc. and bread or crackers), and partake as if we were in the building.



On **GOOD FRIDAY** we hosted a virtual 7 Last Words service with 7 preachers preaching the last words of Jesus from the cross. Later that day we replayed a Good Friday service from 2014: The Homegoing Celebration of Jesus Christ. Many persons were excited to see this creative presentation. For the first time ever, we celebrated Easter virtually as well.

\*In appreciation for the sacrifice our health care workers making during this pandemic, New Psalmist partnered with other churches in the area and were able to **PROVIDE EASTER DINNER FOR ICU NURSES AND HEALTHCARE WORKERS.**

What was to come has come to fruition on the campus of The Holy City of Zion. It's our new **CONNECTION CENTER.**

In closing, as we continue our social isolation, we learn more and more about our Heavenly Father. We work collaboratively to keep the faith, walk in truth, and to stand firm on the promises of God. Although we are not physically in the church, we ARE the church individually and collectively. We were taught many years ago to establish our Kingdoms in our homes, schools, communities, and churches. We are now reaping the benefits of what was spoken many years ago. We are steadfast, unmovable and abounding in labor for the Lord, urgently in responding to the COVID-19 crisis.



# “WE ARE THE CHURCH”

## *Staying Connected During Crisis*

By Theresa M. Smith

If you are not familiar with the Member Services Ministry (MSM), they are the friendly faces behind the welcome desk in the front main lobby of the church. Under the leadership of their president, Sister Valarie Hooper, they serve as a liaison of information between the pulpit, congregation, staff, and other ministry leaders to bring love, joy and aid outside of the worship experience within the body of Christ.

Our pastor, Bishop Walter Scott Sr. often reminds us that “We Are the Church” inside and outside our building of worship.

Not allowing the state’s “shelter in place” order to hinder them from staying connected during the Covid19 pandemic, these saints of God have found a more intimate way to support each other and the current state of affairs surrounding this crisis via telephone “Prayer Calls”.

Initiated by fellow member, Brother Michael Howie, he expressed a deep concern for the spiritual well-being of its members. He states “This is a difficult time that also presents an opportunity to grow closer to our savior Jesus Christ, a time when prayer and fellowship are critical. I believed that a prayer call would allow us to fellowship, keep each other encouraged and support the mission work of the church”. It didn’t take much convincing on his part to get the other ministry members to participate (non- ministry members were also welcome).

Committed to encouraging each other toward victory during a time of isolation from their church and personal family members and friends, they meet on the prayer call 3-4 times per week. With prayer and thanksgiving

participants use the time to pray and intercede on behalf of the sick, those mourning the loss of a loved one, and those needing comfort in dealing with the effects of being alone and/or isolated during the pandemic.

The call is also used for scripture readings, songs, poetry readings and discussion topics such as fear, forgiveness, meditation and how to use exercising to reduce stress.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16 NIV

**WAS BROTHER HOWIE’S SUGGESTION EFFECTIVE?  
BELOW ARE SOME COMMENTS FROM THE  
PARTICIPANTS IN THE PRAYER CALLS.**

### **SISTER AMONICA A. (TEAM LEADER)**

“I find it fulfilling to connect with fellow members via conference calls for daily prayer. It provides for me an outlet to be comforted, focus on things that really matter and find out how everyone else is doing during their stay at home experience.”

### **SISTER DOROTHY G. (PRAYER WARRIOR)**

“It is with love and faith that I celebrate and share the love of God during these times of prayer”

**SISTER KELLETHA J.** “The prayer calls with the MSM has been a blessing to me. The scripture readings and prayers help brighten and put encouragement in my days during this pandemic season”.

**SISTER VALARIE W.** “I look forward to hearing from members and friends; it has formed a closer bond among us. We have concern for person’s that may not even be in our circle. I pray that once we are able to be together again, the bond will not be broken”.

**SISTER MARY T.** “I find that daily prayer meetings give me an opportunity to learn more about my fellow members. I have learned more of the Bible scriptures and my confidence in praying and encouraging one another to pray has been built up”.

**SISTER REGINA C.** “This pandemic keeps me connected spiritually with the MSM. It has been an outlet to keep me from thinking about the problems facing me. We have become more than a ministry, we are family”.

I find that it’s amazing what God can do and how much grace He extends toward us in the mist of unfavorable circumstances. Even I with my fractured foot found comfort from being a part of this powerful prayer call

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God”. 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4 NIV





# MENTAL HEALTH

## AMIDST COVID-19

By Jabari Walker

***“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7***

The current pandemic is like nothing we’ve ever experienced. In person religious services are banned, kids are home all day, many of us are also in the house all day (some in tight spaces), our favorite hangout spots or social activities closed or canceled, limited travel options, and learning that we ourselves or people that we know are out of work and/or victims of COVID-19. It is enough to make even the people of God go crazy. As humans it is natural to feel stress, anxiety, and grief during such a sudden crisis. Anxiety is fear characterized by behavioral disturbances, often elevated by stress. Mental wellness is as important as physical wellness. Below are a few suggested ways in which to cope during the COVID-19 crisis. Many of the points are taken from the CDC.gov website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life- coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>)

## WAYS TO COPE:

**TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF**, your friends, and your family. As Bishop Thomas proclaimed in his May 17, 2020 message- “you know you have grown when you put aside your own concerns for the concerns of others.” Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

**TAKE BREAKS** from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media.

**CONCENTRATE ON EATING HEALTHY**, well-balanced meals, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol.

**EXERCISE REGULARLY.** This can include outdoor walks. Even without a gym, there are numerous workout routines available online for free.

**MAKE TIME TO UNWIND.** Try to do some other activities you enjoy, such as fun hobbies

**CONNECT WITH OTHERS.** When things get rough, call and talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

**GET OUTSIDE!** This is arguably the perfect time of year in Maryland to enjoy the weather

and your natural surroundings. God made the Earth for his inhabitants to enjoy. Spending time in nature can help relieve stress, boost feelings of happiness and wellbeing. Time in nature can help with your personal relationships because natural beauty results in more pro-social behaviors, like generosity and empathy. In addition, time outside results in a sense of belonging to the wider world that is vital for mental health. Take advantage of living near parks or even in walkable neighborhoods.

**MEDITATION:** For beginners, keep in mind this is a skill that is cultivated and strengthened over time. Keep these simple steps in mind: Set aside at least 10 minutes, designate a quiet space, keep your back/posture straight, try counting your breaths (if you can’t relax into meditation), let thoughts drift by rather than try to stop them, be consistent with your commitment to meditation.

From a spiritual perspective, meditate on the Word. Scripture verses that can either be listened to, or verbalized, can clear disturbances in the mind so you can relax. Once you start to relax, you can focus on what really matters- your time communing with God.

**Bishop Thomas continues to give us many encouraging words on how to deal with these tumultuous times. If you need additional spiritual encouragement, tune in to the weekly bible study, participate in Tuesday prayer calls, and check out the New Psalmist YouTube channel to view past messages. If you feel your symptoms are serious, consider seeing a mental health professional. Either way, remind yourself at all times that the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, WILL take care of you.**

*Info included from [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org) (American Heart Association): <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/spend-time-in-nature-to-reduce-stress-and-anxiety>.*



# The Pandemic and Quarantine: What My Church Means to Me

By Gwendolyn D. Streeter

*The world has changed and we are making history. Who knew that the entire world would experience the kind of devastation that would turn our lives upside down and change life as we knew it forever?*

Never in my wildest imagination could I have ever dreamed we would face a deadly pandemic that would leave us quarantined in our homes. Some of us alone, some with family and some with friends.

No church service, movie theaters, sporting events, concerts, plays, malls, restaurants, nail salons or travel to look forward to. Once the quarantine was announced, honestly speaking, I had no problem with any of the closings mandated by our Governor. I accepted the fact that we would either stay home and stay healthy or risk sickness or possibly death.

When I begin to realize the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, I began to feel a sense of fear.

However, I quickly realized, fear would only cause me to be absolutely miserable, especially since I was quarantining alone. So, I knew I had two choices, either let fear control my emotions or give it to God and trust Him fully and completely. I chose to trust God, pray and walk by faith—knowing that His love, grace and mercy would see me through.

Thankfully, I enjoy connecting with family, friends and church via social media, so I knew my ability to connect online would also give me some sense of peace and comfort.

Worship has always been an important part of my life. For the past forty years, I've made it a practice to begin every morning with my own personal devotion and prayer. However, given our new reality, I knew I'd need a little more to help me adjust to my new norm.

Fortunately, technology and our blessed, visionary leader, Bishop Walter S Thomas, Sr. kept us connected. We never missed a beat. We received emails from the church, automated calls from Bishop Thomas, ministry meetings continued via zoom or conference calls, Tuesday night Prayer Call, Thursday night Bible Study, three Sunday services and our monthly Communion continued—it was business as usual. Our virtual church is a blessing and I looked forward to the weekly connection with my church family and friends. It was a reminder to me of how God will always make a way.

Bishop Thomas always tells us, "New Psalmist is a church where connections are made" and that has been consistently demonstrated

**“Bishop Thomas always tells us, “New Psalmist is a church where connections are made” and that has been consistently demonstrated during this quarantine.”**

during this quarantine. Our Pastor encourages us to live the vision and mission of New Psalmist Baptist Church every day and in every way, just as he does.

I am more grateful now, than ever for Bishop Thomas, the church leadership (all those that kept us connected) and my church family. I stayed plugged-in and felt connected, comforted and at peace as we navigate this pandemic together. I thank God for his grace and my earthy connections. I am quarantined alone but, I am not lonely.

**Psalm 16:1 Keep me safe, my God. For in you I take refuge.**

*New International Version. [Colorado Springs]: Biblica, 2011. BibleGateway.com. May 2011*





## Prayer During the Pandemic

By Gwendolyn D. Streeter

**INSPIRED BY A SERMON PREACHED  
BY BISHOP WALTER S. THOMAS, SR.**

**Scripture - Philippians 4:4-7**

**Sermon: Now is Not the Time**

### PRAYER DURING THE PANDEMIC

I am Praying in power and  
in confidence.

I am anxious for nothing.

Now is not the time, I don't have the  
luxury of giving up. Now is the time  
to rejoice in the Lord.

I am making a defiant declaration  
that **NO** matter what I face, I will  
rejoice in the Lord always.

I am the evidence of what God will do.  
No matter what is going on in my life,  
I will praise God.

I trust God. I am not alone.

I am walking in wonder  
and expectation.

Christ is with me always and He will  
see me through.

In Jesus Name, Amen

# BANANA BREAD Recipe

**HELLO, NEW PSALMIST FAMILY! THIS IS A RECIPE THAT'S SURE TO PLEASE!  
SMOTHER WITH PLAIN OLE' LOVE, PLENTY OF JAM/OR BUTTER & ENJOY!**

- 1 stick of unsalted butter (room temperature)
- 1 cup of brown sugar (tightly packed)
- 1 tsp of cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp of nutmeg
- 1 tsp of vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup of buttermilk
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- 1 tsp of baking powder
- 1 tsp of salt
- 4-5 mashed overripe bananas
- 3 tbsp of strawberry jam or any fruity jam or jelly
- 2 large eggs (room temperature)
- 2 1/2 cups of all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Preheat the oven to 325° F. Lightly grease a 9"x 5" loaf pan. In a large bowl, mix butter, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, baking powder, and salt and stir until well blended.

Combine mashed bananas, jam, buttermilk, and eggs with mixture and stir again until smooth.

Add flour and walnuts; beat until blended. Pour the batter into greased pan, using spoon to guide leftover batter into pan. Smooth top with spoon. Allow mixture to rest for five minutes.

Bake bread for 45 minutes; remove bread and lay a thin sheet of aluminum foil over pan to discourage over browning.

Bake for another 20 minutes or until toothpick comes out of center of loaf entirely clean or with a few moist crumbs.

Remove from oven and allow bread to sit in pan for ten minutes. Afterwards, release bread from the pan and place on rack to cool completely.



# JUSTICE FOR ALL

BY TERESA HALL

***Micah 6:8 (NKJV) says “He has shown you, O man what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God.” Voices all over the United States of America and all over our world are protesting and crying out No justice! No Peace, “Black Lives Matter” and “I Can’t Breathe” resulting from police brutality and racial injustice.***

As the Church continues to remain closed during the COVID-19 crisis, it is now faced with embracing families with strategies for surviving and thriving during peaceful protest against police brutality and racial injustice. To address the issues and begin the conversation for action, our Pastor, Bishop Thomas, called for a virtual townhall meeting on race and injustice. The panel included Professor Eddie Glaude, Wes Moore- Author/CEO of Robinhood Foundation, Heather McGhee-Attorney and Co Chair of Color of Change, Senator Ben Cardin, Rev. Ojeda Hall and Minister Ryan Turner from the Social Action Leadership team ministry. All agreed that we must persevere and stay the course if we are going to receive the justice we so desperately need as a nation.

The goals of the townhall meeting were to help the community understand justice from a theological perspective; why this justice is so critical and the steps we need to take next. Bishop Thomas facilitated a dynamic and engaging conversation with input from the panel of activists who were familiar with specific answers to the questions posed. Professor Eddie Glaude believes justice is rooted in standing in the right relationship with one another and that justice and love go hand in hand.

Heather McGhee, in agreement with Bishop Thomas, believes “there is a cost for racism.” From lack of universal health care to an unorganized union for Black Lives being devalued during the COVID pandemic, Heather says “It’s time for all races to

**“ALL AGREED THAT WE MUST PERSEVERE AND STAY THE COURSE IF WE ARE GOING TO RECEIVE THE JUSTICE WE SO DESPERATELY NEED AS A NATION.”**

**“CONSEQUENTLY, BISHOP SAYS, ‘THIS IS A CRY FOR JUSTICE. THERE CAN BE NO PEACE IF JUSTICE IS NOT THERE.’”**

repent during this uprising and sustained history in our life.” Consequently, Bishop says, “This is a cry for justice. There can be no peace if justice is not there.” Our connections and conversations to others and to God will help us steps in moving forward for this new movement as well as other movements our country aspires to embrace for change.

When we think about the state of education, we are always seeking to provide an equitable education for our students. Aaron Maybin shared his thoughts with deep emotion to express that our youth don’t understand. He made it clear we come down on our children for doing poorly in schools, without taking into consideration that our children are doing poorly in schools because they lack the proper resources. Aaron said “We have been apathetic to our youth for a long time, instead of validating their pain.”

The Town Hall for Justice was a defining moment for the people of God. Bishop Thomas made it clear that we are in a particular moment in our history, but asked, what makes this moment so different? Heather

explained authentically that the movement works! We were all prompted to be vulnerable during the corona virus, realizing how interconnected we were. The corona virus has helped us see clearly the inequalities we have been dealing with for so long. Heather says this is “Our Superpower! Our Solidarity! We cannot let it go! We must continue to lean in to it, and remember it is global”

In closing, it is our hope that the people of God have gained a better understanding of how God desires us to seek justice. We declare and decree justice for all, with peaceful protest. We are motivated and excited to join other brothers and sisters in the fight for justice and the dismantling of racism.



# THE NEW PSALMIST BAPTIST CHURCH READERS BOOK LIST & MOVIES TO WATCH LIST

## MOVIES

**SPIDER-MAN:**

INTO THE SPIDER -VERSE  
(2018) CARTOON

**FROZEN II**

**AVENGERS:  
INFINITY WAR**

**SPY KIDS**

**BREAKTHROUGH  
THE INCREDIBLES 2**

**FACING  
THE GIANTS**

**OVERCOMER**

**SOLO: A STAR  
WARS  
STORY**

**DOLITTLE**

**SELF-MADE**

The Madame C.J. Walker  
Story (Netflix)

*Becoming*

THE  
MICHELLE  
OBAMA  
DOCUMENTARY

**WAR ROOM**

**THE  
BANKER**  
(APPLE TV)

**BLACK PANTHER**

**BREAKTHROUGH**

COME SUNDAY  
(NETFLIX)

During this stay at home order there is a great amount of time that we have now that will allow us to pick up a really good book or to watch a very engaging movie. There is so much to pick from. Well, the Empowering Disciples Magazine wanted to compile a list for the New Psalmist family of books that you all can read and some good movies that you can watch. Here is the list that we have compiled for you all....

## BOOKS

**BIBLE ABC  
MY MEMORY  
VERSE BOOK**

Linett Kiplagat  
(Children's)

**A FLOWER  
NAMED  
TULIP ANNE  
MITCHELL**

JoAnne Camm  
(Children's)

**SERVE  
Yourself  
to  
Greatness**

Reginald Gant

**ENCOURAGING  
MOMENTS**

Dr. Alandrus Spencer

**PREPARE 4  
TAKE-OFF**

Antoine Garrett (New Psalmist Member)

**Little  
People Praise  
God Too**

Lynn Calvin  
(Children's)

**F.O.C.U.S.  
5 Principles  
of SUCCESS**

THE IMPERFECT FIT  
Samantha G. Jackson  
(Children's)

**The Art of Leadership**

Leroy Mckenzie Jr.  
(New Psalmist Member)

**AGAINST  
COMPANY  
POLICY**

Hattye C. Knight

**Husband 101**

Andrea J. Wilson

**A Joyful  
MOMENT**

Finding Joy in Life's Tough Places

By Joi Thomas

**THE STORY GRANDDADDY TOLD ME**

Joi Ford (Children's)

**FAITH, HOPE  
AND PATRIOTISM**

Minnie Carter (New Psalmist Member)

**LEADERSHIP  
WITH A SERVANTS HEART**

Pastor Kevin Wayne Johnson

**MY LAST BAGGAGE CALL  
ABOARD  
AIRFORCE ONE**

Grann W. Powell Sgt. First Class Retired

**FROM CREATIVITY  
TO CREATING INCOME**

Fran Allen (New Psalmist Member)

hanging on by a

*Thread*

By Bishop Walter S. Thomas, Sr.

**DESIGN  
YOUR  
BODY**

Caiah Brock

**Jesus Where  
Are You?**

Teresa Hall (New Psalmist Member)

**Psalms of  
the Daughter**

Lynn Pinder

**STORM-PROOF**

Pastor Steven Turner

**BOLD &  
CRAZY  
Faith**

Deacon Daryn Ramsey  
(New Psalmist Member)

**the  
Forbidden  
Journal**

Troy Jones

**FLOWERS  
In her  
GARDEN**

Hurley Morgan





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