

# The Pilgrim Messenger

January-February, 2015

Volume IX, Issue 4

## PILGRIM BAPTIST CHURCH

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### MINISTERIAL TEAM

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*Senior Pastor*  
Rev. Sharon L. Olson  
*Assistant Pastor*  
  
Minister Ernest Evans  
Minister Carmen Jordan  
Minister Willie Reed  
Minister Carl L. Towns

*"A Church inspired by the Word and Empowered by the Holy Spirit."*  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

### WEEKLY WORSHIP

**Tuesday:**  
9:30 am - Bible Study  
**Wednesday:**  
12:00 Noon - Bible Study  
6:00 pm - Prayer Service  
6:30 pm - Adult Bible Study  
6:30 pm - Youth Bible Study  
**Sunday:**  
9:00 am - Sunday School  
10:30 am - Worship Service  
**Children's Church 10:30 am**  
**Chapel of the Crosses**

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# HAPPY 2015: A Visionary Year of Empowerment!

Greetings to all on behalf of the gracious members of Pilgrim Baptist Church! God is awesome and worthy to be praised! In spite of trials and tribulations, God has blessed us bountifully to see a new year of vision, excitement, joy, and expectation. Rather than making a new year's resolution, I encourage you to make a full commitment to surrender to God! Then, your visions, goals, and objectives will be sustained by God's will, providence, and provisions.

To the readers of our newsletter, thank you for sending constant and encouraging words to our editor and supportive staff for their excellent leadership and production!

"The Pilgrim Messenger" is entering its tenth year of publication, which parallels my tenure as Senior Pastor.

Please keep Pilgrim in your prayers as we embark on exciting and challenging goals for 2015. God has been speaking to our assistant pastor, Rev. Sharon Olson, and me about empowering our members and our surrounding community.

We envision and plan to expand our nursery to support the growing number of babies and toddlers; grow our Children & Youth Ministry (CYM); start a ministry called "Celebrate Recovery" to deliver and empower members/citizens who have been addicted to sex, drugs, alcohol, and/or crime; start a ministry called "My Brother's Keeper" to minister to the needs of men and boys; expand our multimedia and internet ministry; and start a new "Intercessory Prayer" ministry.

For all of these goals, we need faithful volunteers and community partnerships. If you are a member of Pilgrim and not committed to a ministry, please consider serving in one of these areas or others. To our readers, please pray that God will send us willing workers and other resources to glorify God through empower-

ing others. I am excited about the mentoring program evolving at our adopted school, Lathrop Elementary. Thanks to our members and friends of Pilgrim for providing coats, gloves, underwear, socks, hats, and Christmas toys for Lathrop students.

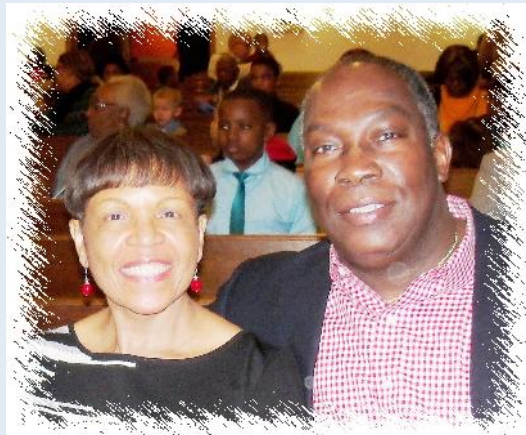
Pilgrim is a loving, giving church; and

God is blessing us with more ministries to serve a greater population of people. In order to grow our church, we resolve to meet needs so that God is glorified, and we seize the opportunity to share Christ. After all, Jesus is the greatest gift given by God to humankind. Let us give ourselves away in word and deed so that others will know the unconditional love of God.

Finally, I want to thank the congregation and friends of Pilgrim for your steadfast support of Lady Marilyn and me! We are blessed to be undergirded by such a "great cloud of witnesses!" Your prayers, gifts, and acts of encouragement are like spiritual winds beneath us: lifting us to higher vistas! May your 2015 be blessed and fruitful!

**John 14:27**

*Pastor Kenneth R. Board*



### PILGRIM'S VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Pilgrim Baptist Church is the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation through the belief in the Ministry of Jesus Christ and the empowerment of excellence in all people through Christian education and community activism.

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See archived newsletters on  
our Web site at

[www.pilgrimbaptist.org](http://www.pilgrimbaptist.org)

**ANNUAL "DANIEL FAST"**

This 2015 version will be from January 4th - 10th, or whatever the Lord puts on your heart to do. Pastor Board plans a 21-day fast. For more information, pick up a flyer at Pilgrim or call the church office!

**SPECIAL EVENTS & INFORMATION****Sunday Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m. / Communion each First Sunday**

**The Nursery is open each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.**

**JANUARY, 2015**

Mon - Jan 19 Church Closed for MLK Day Observance  
Sun - Jan 25 Pilgrim Leaders' Installation during 10:30 a.m. Worship

**FEBRUARY, 2015**

Sun - Feb 08 Trial Sermon by Marvin Ballard at 4:00 p.m.  
Wed - Feb 18 Ash Wednesday  
Sun - Feb 22 Pilgrim Ushers Annual Day Celebration at 4:00 p.m.

**CELEBRATING THE NEW YEAR!**

Pilgrim members and friends rang in the 2015 new year with a traditional "Watch Night" service of prayer, praise, testimonies, and worship from 10:00 p.m. to Midnight on December 31. Guest speaker was Rev. Joe Mitchell of New Hope Baptist Church of DeKalb, IL. After the service, worshipers celebrated with a fellowship potluck!

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

(All are birthdays unless marked otherwise.)

**JANUARY, 2015**

01 Kelli Jackson  
02 Duane & Debra Simpson  
**Wedding Anniversary**  
05 Deacon Samuel Gaynor  
07 Timothy Rogers  
08 Ann Gilbert  
09 Vicki Richard  
12 Dr. Vinest Steele  
13 Debra Curry  
15 Leslie Purifoy  
16 Sharon Thurmond  
19 Kathleen Jamerson  
22 Diedre Harvey  
29 Shermain Williams

**FEBRUARY, 2015**

01 Sonia Johnson  
04 Noah Wheaton  
07 Emma L. Gipson  
07 Helena Mandujano  
09 Monica Reed  
10 Candace Edgeston  
10 Keisha Whitaker  
11 Mia Rigsby  
12 Bertha Rigsby  
14 Phenique Lake  
15 Deacon Erick Hall  
17 Michael Blackmon  
17 Rebecca Towns  
18 Jacqueline Walker  
19 Demetrius Buchanan, Sr.  
24 Staci Wright  
27 Bethanne Holifield  
28 Ray Cooper  
28 Evon Sams  
28 Roosevelt Sims

If we do not have your family's special dates for future publications, please e-mail them to Helen Ware at [h.f.ware@comcast.net](mailto:h.f.ware@comcast.net)

**BIRTHDAY PARTY!**

A birthday celebration was held for Mrs. Marilyn Board after worship service on Sunday, November 30, prepared by Pastor's Care Ministry. Many shared in the food, fellowship, and fun and offered congratulations and well wishes to Lady Marilyn. Above, she is enjoying photos being shown by Sharon Thurmond.

**CYM Ministry Visits Shut-Ins**

Photo  
Provided

A number of Pilgrim children were accompanied by CYM (Children & Youth Ministry) leaders as they visited members in local healthcare facilities to sing Christmas carols. CYM Ministry leaders shown at left are (L to R) Mrs. Mia Rigsby, Deacon Eugene Rigsby, Mrs. Albara Morris, Deacon Christopher Morris, and Mrs. Virginia Wynn.

Seated is Mrs. Elnora Newton, a healthcare resident and Pilgrim member, who thoroughly enjoyed the visitors and the songs.

The CYM Ministry encompasses Pilgrim's Nursery, Children's Church, and Wednesday Youth Bible Study.



For the past five years or more, Pilgrim's Women's Ministry has been under the faithful leadership of Mrs. Albertha "Bert" Towns, and she has now passed this leadership baton to Mrs. Shelia Buchanan for year 2015. Pilgrim women are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings at 10:00 a.m. each third Saturday.



## Pilgrim Women Celebrated each other at Annual Brunch and "Secret Sister" Program

The Women's Second Annual Brunch and "Secret-Sister" Program on Saturday, November 22, 2014 was a great success. It opened with scriptures and prayer by, respectively, Mrs. Tomiko Ballard, Ministry Vice President for 2015, and Mrs. Angeline Whitelaw, Ministry Chaplain. With all women gathered in a circle, Rev. Sharon Olson closed with prayer for the Women's Ministry and the 2015 "Secret Sisters."



This annual event is meant to bring women closer in love and sisterhood as we continue with Pilgrim's ministry focus into 2015. Mrs. Patricia Fricks provided an impressive history and purpose of the Women's Ministry. Food was great and plentiful!

Sharon Thurmond (right) was entertaining with "ice breakers" to help women get to know each other. On a serious note, she admonished all Pilgrim members to take time to greet and get to really know each other instead of rushing off after services or meetings - - that is, we should take time to show love! Sister Matti led the "reveal" session as 2014 "Secret Sisters" identified themselves. There were shouts of surprise, hugs, tears of joy, and lots of laughter as new relationships were made and others strengthened! Those who chose to participate in 2015 drew names for a new "Secret Sister."

## "My Brother's Keeper: A Ministry of Hope"

By Shelia Buchanan

**"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?  
And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" — Genesis 4:9, KJV**

**"Yes I am,"** proclaim the men of Pilgrim! "My Brother's Keeper," a new ministry here at Pilgrim Baptist Church, is modeled after President Obama's program of the same name and is the dream of Michael Jones (at left) who is currently a Pilgrim Deacon-in-Training. He said God gave him a vision but that initially he didn't listen. He finally asked himself, *"How many kids have you had a chance to save and did nothing?"* That's when he finally stopped talking about it and started doing something about it. The "it" is saving all young men and boys, especially those of color, from a life of unemployment...a life of crime...a life of hopelessness! Brother Jones is passionate about this program. The lives of these young men are ending at an alarming rate, and



he doesn't believe that God intended it to be this way. My Brother's Keeper will try to change their direction in life. He said, *"There are enough of us to do it. We just need to step up--every man, father, foster father, uncle, grandfather--to save our kids."*

My Brother's Keeper has already had two successful meetings spent finalizing administrative matters for the program, including development of a Web page, and the opportunity to fellowship with and mentor a host of young men and boys who attended the two meetings. They hope to reach more in the future, especially teens. The ministry meets every two weeks from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. (*dates to be announced*), and all of Pilgrim's men and women are asked to help promote this vision. *"Bring the young men and boys to the meetings,"* urges Brother Jones. *"Tell someone outside of the church about this program and invite them. It's about reaching out to the young people."*

*Pilgrim Ministry Focus, 2014-15: "Meeting Needs, Sharing Christ" (Acts 2:42-47)*

# Pilgrim's Christmas Celebration

***Presentations: "The Real Meaning of Christmas" and More!***

**Sunday, December 14, 2014 - 4:00 p.m.**

Maybe not yet on Broadway, but the Pilgrim Special Programs Ministry produced another hit show!

Their staging of *"The Real Meaning of Christmas"* portrayed the meaning loud and clear — to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!

This afternoon program had something for everyone! Amara Simpson gave a warm welcome after prayer and scripture. Bethanne Holifield introduced Evelyn Wilkerson as Mistress of Ceremony, and she kept everything on track in a spiritual and entertaining way.



In the first half of the program, Frances Blalock performed an inspirational and moving recitation entitled *"The Fullness of Time."*

Just in case attendees were not in the spirit of things, Amere and Amore Simpson (*L to R, center photo*) made sure they were with a special Christmas "rap!"

Guest artists added flavor to the performances with their variety of talents and messages, all to God's glory! A Hip-Hop presentation by Cory Curry of "New Life" preceded the staging and production of the play.



Other guest artists were "Chosen" (Christian Rap), "God's Will" (Mime Ministry), and Taiga Blake-Washington, Praise Dancer. Cast members of the theatrical production were too numerous to mention here, but there were four scenes: Party, Shopping, Dinner, and Church scenes, with the latter telling of the *"Real Meaning of Christmas,"* the birth of Jesus. Pilgrim's Mass Choir sang awesome and inspiring Christmas Carols and old-time Gospel under the direction of Ray Buchanan, Director of Music.

Pastor Board's first comment after the program was "WOW", which he said he borrowed from Mrs. Board! He congratulated and thanked all of the participants, with special thanks to the faithful, tireless, and creative members of the **Special Programs Ministry**, led by Staci Wright! Other ministry members include Matti Chappel, Diedre Harvey, Bethanne Holifield, and Mia Rigsby. After the benediction, a fellowship reception followed!



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**Rev. Dr. Kenneth R. Board, Senior Pastor**

