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JANUARY
2025

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1 THESS 5:16-18

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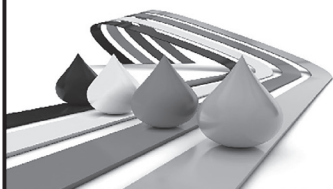
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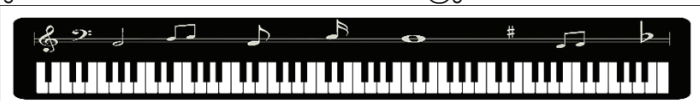
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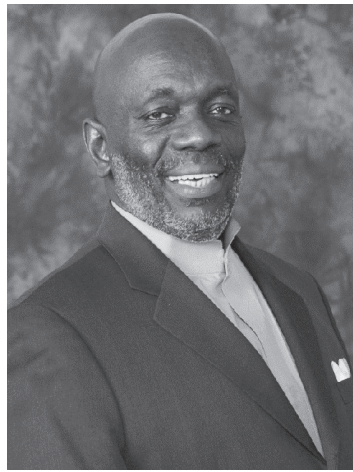
Black Musicians Association of Tarrant County

The Black Musicians Association of Tarrant County membership include access to workshops, hymn sessions, vocal and instrumental training, and a kaleidoscope of musical events. The BMATC invites you, ministers of music, vocalist, choir directors, and instrumentalists to join us in this season of growth. Interested? Contact us at bmatc2012@gmail.com.



"The LEADER'S EDGE" by drmichaelbell

A few years ago, I was invited by a pastor of a congregation in another city to conduct a leadership workshop. I accepted and when I arrived on the church campus I was immediately led to the fellowship hall where that church's leadership team was gathered. As I taught about planning, formulating ministry mission statements and the like, I sensed that something was off kilter. The tension in the room was so thick you could cut it with a knife and much of the ire was aimed at the pastor. It wasn't until after the session with those leaders that the pastor told me that none of the church's ministries were meeting... at all.



have you, it should mirror what God is calling your congregation to in this season.

You heard me right. I was invited to oversee leadership training at a church where nothing had been planned. No discernible plans for the youth ministry or the women's ministry or the men's ministry or any ministry. No vision had been articulated. Nothing. Not long thereafter, the congregation voted that pastor out.

My point in telling this story is to underscore the fact that the role of effective church leadership can't be overstated or undervalued. It's not just about setting the right direction; it's about ensuring that your leadership team is equipped, resources are in place and the strategy is comprehensible. Someone has rightly said that "Failing to plan is planning to fail." And planning can't be an optional extra. Planning helps your church stay faithful and focused.

It's the beginning of a new year and I'm sure that by now you and your leadership team have already completed and communicated where your congregation, ministry or committee is headed. Here's a brief checklist of matters you should have already addressed.

Does your church have a church-wide theme? I'm not talking about a catchy phrase or a tagline for the year; a churchwide theme is a guiding principle that ties together the collective vision and mission for your local faith community. It unifies your church's ministries or auxiliaries under a common banner, ensuring that activities and messages align with the overarching vision for the year. Whether your theme is focused on evangelism, spiritual growth, community outreach, congregational unity, prayer or what

A well-thought-out theme answers the question, "What are we about this year, and how does that affect our collective life together?"

The 2025 churchwide theme for the congregation I serve is "Giving God Something To Work With." This theme will be the common thread that ties everything together from preaching and teaching to outreach initiatives and small group encounters.

Has your church leadership clarified and restated your church's mission? As you plan, always keep your church's mission statement at the forefront. What are you trying to accomplish this year, and how will your team move toward that goal? Your annual plan should identify specific objectives, measurable outcomes and workable strategies for reaching those goals.

Are your church leaders held accountable? It's not enough to simply set goals; leadership must also be held accountable for the goals that are set. What are your church worship attendance goals for 2025? What about ministry-participation goals? An accountability system helps ensure that the church stays on track with its mission and vision throughout the year.

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" and is a contributor to the book "Justice Looks Like."

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Speak Life Thought

with Dr. Yolanda G. Butler

A Start Over Life

"The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you." (Genesis 12:1)

Starting over is not always easy. It can be stressful and uncomfortable because it may take you to an unfamiliar place. This often is where some get stuck because of fear of the unknown. So rather than move forward, they don't move at all or go in an entirely different direction than what the Father has directed.

Whenever the Father gives a direction, we must walk out that path by faith and not by our reasoning. Reasoning and feelings are hindrances to faith. *"We walk by faith and not by sight"* (2 Cor 5:7). The Father has said in His Word that He orders our steps and establishes our way (Psalm 37:23). There is no failure in the plans that He has set out for our lives (Jeremiah 29:11). The Father will not always give the full details of the plans. When He says move, faith says "Let's go!" Abram obeyed God and prepared his family to move in an entirely different direction than normal.

This faith action prompted the Father to give him clearer details of where to go with a promise.

We misinterpret this passage too often when we abruptly leave a ministry, a job, the family, etc. on the premise of, *"God said it's time for me to go."* When the Father gave Abram the command to "go" He also told him where to "go"! I have heard more people than I can count on both hands and feet say, *"All I know is I have to go. I don't know where yet but I have to go."* So, they "go" without direction. The Sovereign Father is a God of order and peace and not confusion (1 Cor. 14:13). If you read the scripture, the bible says that *"Abram had departed as the Lord had spoken to him"* (Gen. 12:4). The Bible does not give us all the details of what the Lord "spoke" to Abram but it is clear that he was given direction where to "go" because he settled in the land of Canaan (Gen 13:12).

In this new year, there may be some aspects of your life in which you just want to hit the "start over" button. I admonish you to seek the counsel of the Father through His Word and allow Holy Spirit to lead you to your "start over" life. If you lack wisdom, ask the Father—He



will freely grant it to the obedient heart (James 1:5). If you need answers, ask the Father—He reveals hidden secrets to the faithful heart (Jeremiah 33:3). Be careful to not make a major "go" decision based on your feelings for it will not end well. Trust the Father to take the lead and show you the path to "go" (Prov. 3:4-5) in His timing.

So dear hearts, be determined to embrace your "start over" with clarity of purpose and simplicity of understanding before you "GO"!

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

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Minister Dr. Mark Cunningham of New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church Named to Inaugural Fort Worth Inc. 40 Under 40 for 2025

Fort Worth, TX - New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church proudly announces that Minister Dr. Mark Cunningham, Pastor in Training and Associate Professor at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, has been selected as a member of Fort Worth Inc.'s inaugural 40 Under 40 class for 2025.

The 40 Under 40 awards program recognizes exceptional individuals in Greater Fort Worth who have achieved significant professional and community accomplishments before the age of 40. Dr. Cunningham's selection is a testament to his outstanding contributions to both science and faith-based community outreach.

The honorees will be celebrated at the Fort Worth Inc. 40 Under 40 Banquet on February 13, 2025, at The Fort Worth Club, 12th Floor, located at 306 W 7th St, Fort Worth, TX 76102.

Dr. Cunningham, a native of the Atlanta metropolitan area and a



graduate of Morehouse College, earned his Ph.D. in Physiology and Functional Genomics from the University of Florida College of Medicine in 2014. He has since built an impressive academic career, holding positions at the University of Mississippi Medical Center before joining the University of North Texas Health Science Center as a tenure-track Assistant Professor.

Dr. Cunningham's research focuses on cerebrovascular dysfunction, cardiovascular disease (CVD), and hypertension in women during pregnancy and postpartum, as well as their long-term impact on off-

spring. His work has been recognized through over 42 published articles, numerous conference presentations, and the prestigious American Heart Association Early Career Award.

Beyond his scientific achievements, Dr. Cunningham is deeply committed to mentoring, community service, and his role at New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church.

"We are proud of Dr. Cunningham and the work that he does at both the church and university," said Pastor Kyev Tatum. "Mark is one of those rare talents who is mature beyond his years and knows how to make things better for everyone involved."

Dr. Cunningham's leadership and dedication exemplify the values of New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church and the Fort Worth community at large.

For more information about the 40 Under 40 awards, please visit Fort Worth Inc.



Beth Eden Baptist Church welcomes their New Pastor

Fort Worth, TX - The historic Beth Eden Baptist Church of Fort Worth, TX is pleased to announce the election of Dr. James Lewis Boatner as its new Senior Pastor.

A native of Ouachita Parish, Dr. Boatner brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to spiritual growth and community service. He and his wife, Destiny Beyond Boatner, are excited to join the Beth Eden family and contribute to the rich legacy of the church.

Dr. Boatner will assume his new role on January 13, 2025 & preach his inaugural sermon January 26, 2025 at 1030A worship.

Beth Eden Baptist Church is a historic congregation with a long history of spiritual leadership and community impact. The late Rev. Dr. B. R. Daniels, Sr. pastored Beth Eden for 50+ years. The church is committed to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and serving the needs of the community.

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Kwanzaa: What It Really Is And How & Why It's Celebrated



African Americans celebrate Kwanzaa every year, around Christmas time, you may hear some Black folks talking about celebrating Kwanzaa. Many of them jokingly because they don't know the history or roots behind the holiday. Here's how it all came about and why celebrating it could be more important than ever.

Maulana Karenga created Kwanzaa in 1966, as the first specifically African-American holiday. According to Karenga, the name Kwanzaa derives from the Swahili phrase matunda ya kwanza, meaning "first fruits of the harvest". The choice of Swahili, an East African language, reflects its status as a symbol of Pan-Africanism, especially in the 1960s, although most of the Atlantic slave trade that brought African people to America originated in West Africa.

Kwanzaa is a celebration that has its roots in the black nationalist movement of the 1960s and was established as a means to help African Americans reconnect with their African cultural and historical heritage by uniting in meditation and study of African traditions and Nguzo Saba, the "seven principles of African Heritage" which Karenga said "is a communitarian African philosophy". Karenga believed and stated that "you must have a cultural revolution before the violent revolution. The cultural revolution gives identity, purpose and direction."

Kwanzaa was not created to give people an alternative to their own religion or religious holiday. Many

African Americans who celebrate Kwanzaa do so in addition to observing Christmas.

Kwanzaa spans over seven days with each day focusing on a specific principle in the Black community. A Kwanzaa ceremony may include drumming and musical selections, libations, a reading of the African Pledge and a discussion of the African principle of the day or a chapter in African history and a feast known as the "karamu."

Each day also consists of a candle-lighting ritual. You have what is called a kinara (candle holder) and seven candles (one black candle, three green candles and three red candles). The black candle is lit first then used to light each of the other candles on the day that is celebrated, going back and forth with lighting the red and green.

The seven principles of Kwanzaa are as follows:

- 1. Umoja (Unity):** To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
- 2. Kujichagulia (Self-Determination):** To define and name ourselves, as well as to create and speak for ourselves.
- 3. Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility):** To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together.
- 4. Ujamaa (Cooperative Econom-**

ics): To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.

5. Nia (Purpose): To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

6. Kuumba (Creativity): To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

7. Imani (Faith): To believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Besides the candles and the candle holder, other Kwanzaa celebratory symbols include a mat (Mkeka) on which other symbols are placed: a Kinara (candle holder), Mishumaa Saba (seven candles) mazao (crops), Muhindi (corn), a Kikombe cha Umoja (unity cup) for commemorating and giving shukrani (thanks) to African Ancestors, and Zawadi (gifts). Supplemental representations include a Nguzo Saba poster, the black, red, and green bendera (flag), and African books and artworks - all to represent values and concepts reflective of African culture and contribution to community building and reinforcement. With corn being the primary symbol for both decoration and celebratory dining.

The greeting for each day of Kwanzaa is Habari Gani? which is Swahili for "What's the news?" or "How are you?"



Around the Community with Pastor Sharon Ford-Turner



Pic1) Annual Village Creek Wellness and Rehabilitation Center Christmas Gift Bag Give-A-Way to Residents. Volunteers with Pastor Sharon Ford-Turner were Christopher and Pershawn Hill, Trinity and Mason Ford; Pic 2) Birthday Celebration for 1 year old Nove B. Long at Pump It Up in Arlington, Tx. with her Family Pastor Sharon Ford-Turner is her Great Grandmother.



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Acts 1:8

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 Fort Worth, TX 76105

SERVICE TIMES
 SUNDAY SERVICE.....9:00 AM
 WEDN. NIGHT PRAYER...6:00 PM - 6:30 PM
 INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDY
 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

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 5200 David Strickland Rd. Ft Worth, TX. 76119
 817-330-3774
 eddukejjustice@sbcglobal.net

Sunday School.....9AM
 Worship Service.....10:00AM
 Wednesday Prayer.....6:30PM
 Bible Study (Wed).....7:00PM

GENESIS UNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
 4505 Foad St. Fort Worth, TX 76119
 817.536.2936
 Email: genesisunitybc01@att.net

WORSHIP & STUDY SERVICES
 Sunday School.....9:00 AM
 Morning Worship....10:30 AM
 Bible Study (Sun)....5:00 PM
 Youth Classes.....Saturday

DR. RICHARD L. MONTGOMERY, Pastor

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 SUNDAY SERVICE10:30 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

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 www.chimneyrockministries.net
 1916 Everman Parkway
 Fort Worth, TX 76140
 (817) 720-6771

**Rev. Gilbert Tezeno,
 Senior Pastor**

Weekly Services
 Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
 (Participation also available via Zoom)
 Sunday Morning Services.....11:00 a.m.
 Communion Service.....Monthly
 Bible Study (Wednesday via Conference Call).....7:00 p.m.

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H.E. RICHARDSON, Pastor

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 SUNDAY SERVICE TIME.....10:00AM
 WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY.....5:45PM

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 SUNDAY SERVICE.....10:30am

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Evanglist Sharon Mason-Turner, Overseer
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 Email:siford@academicplanet.com

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 10:00 am.....Worship Service
 7:00 p.m.....Bible Study
 EVERY 2nd Sunday at 10:30 am
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 Bible Study - Tuesday @ 6:00pm
 3252 Oak Timber, Forest Hill, TX 76119

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 Helping Hand Food Distribution Ministries
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 4301 Miller Ave Ft Worth TX 76119
 817.534.8285.....Church
 817.534.8246.....Children Center

Children's & Sunday Morning Worship
 10:00am

Pastor Nicholaus Chove

Greater Eleazer Baptist Church
 5025 Sunshine Drive
 Fort Worth TX, 76105
 817 536-9237

**Rev. Lawrence Barrett &
 Lady. Rebecca Barrett**

Sunday School9:30am
 Morning Worship.....10:45am
 Wednesday Night Bible Study....7:00pm

Leslie Court Baptist Church
 1412 E Cantey St | Ft Worth, TX 76104
 817-535-7800
 Email: LCBC@lesliecourt.org

Sunday School 9:00 am
 Morning Worship 11:00 am

**Pastor Robintino Stewart Sr.
 and
 First Lady Elizabeth**

Precious Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church
 4916 Ramey Avenue Ft. Worth, TX 76105
 817.413.8771 Email: cornbapt02@aol.com

-- Service Times --
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP 10:30 AM
WEDNESDAY PRAYER MEETING & BIBLE STUDY @ 7:00 PM

Mark S. Fitz, Pastor

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

Dr. W.L.D. Campbell, Pastor

Sunday School - Sunday 9:00am
 Morning Worship - Sunday 10:05am
 Prayer Meeting - Wednesday 7:00pm

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Hab. 2:1-4 Matt. 28:18-20

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 Ft. Worth, TX 76134
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Sunday School.....9:30am
 Sunday Morning Worship.....10:45am
 Wednesday Bible Study (at the church).....12:00pm
 Wednesday Prayer Meeting.....6:30pm

Sunday Service Live Streamed at www.espb.com and Facebook | Temperature checked for In-Person Attendees
"Masks highly recommended, but not required"

Greater First Missionary Baptist Church
 421 S Ayers Avenue,
 Fort Worth, Texas 76103
Rev. J. L. Hunt Jr., Pastor

Sunday School 9:30 A.M.
 Morning Worship Service 11:00 A.M.
 Wednesday Prayer Service & Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

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 817.457.4362 mfbchurch@netzero.com
 Website: meadowbrookfirstbaptist.com

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45AM
MORNING WORSHIP 11:00AM
WEDN BIBLE STUDY 7:00PM

DR. C. L. PERKINS.
 PASTOR

SAMARIA Baptist Church
 4000 E. Berry St.
 Fort Worth, TX 76105
 Phone: 817-536-6421

PASTOR WILLIAM MCKINLEY JACKSON

Sunday School.....9:30 am
 Sunday Morning Worship.....10:30 am
 Wednesday Prayer.....6:00 pm
 Wednesday Bible Study.....7:00 pm

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 www.thezionbaptistchurch.org

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.....7:30 p.m.
 EVERY WEDNESDAY - YOUTH MEETINGS.....7:30 p.m.
 2ND & 3RD WEDNESDAY - SMALL GROUPS.....7:30 p.m.
 3RD SATURDAYS - EVANGELISM.....10:30 a.m.

ELM GROVE Missionary Baptist CHURCH
 1344 E. Harvey Ave. Ft. Worth, TX 76104
 817-923-5431 www.elmgrovembc.org

Reverend T.J. Patterson, Jr., Pastor
 Sunday School.....9:45am
 Worship Service.....11:00am
 Wednesday Service.....7:30pm

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:12

Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist Church
 3920 E. Rosedale Ft Worth, TX 76105
 817.534.0774
Reginald Andrews, Pastor/Teacher

Sunday Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
 Sunday Worship10:30 a.m.
 Wednesday Bible Study.....7:15 p.m.

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker."

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 www.newbreedchristian.com

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Worship Services
 SUNDAYS MORNING.....10:00 AM
 WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE.....7:00 pm

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Zion Rest Missionary Baptist Church
 3733 Ave J Fort Worth, TX 76105
 817-534-8327
PASTOR RUFUS HUCKABY

Worship and Study Services

9:30am Sunday School
 11:00am Morning Worship
 Wednesday 7:00pm Prayer Meeting
 7:30pm Bible Study, Mission
 Youth Bible Study

WE LIVE IN VERY INTERESTING AND FUNNY TIMES

1. We live in times where we see many humans, but not humanity.
 2. We live in times where the rich has more rooms than children and the poor has more children than rooms.
 3. We live in times where smart phones bring you closer to those who are far away, but distance you from those who are closer.
 4. We live in times where we open Facebook, more than The Holy Bible.
 5. We live in times where a single mother can look after 10 children, but 10 children can't look after a single mother;
 6. We live in times where the rich walk miles to digest food, while the poor walk miles to search for food;
 7. We live in times where women are paid to be naked, while others have no clothes to cover their nakedness.
 8. We live in times where our contact lists are huge, but our relationships are poor.
 9. We live in times where our possessions are more, but our appreciation is less;
 10. We live in times where we know how to earn a good living, but somehow forget how to live a good life;
 11. We live in times where many know the price of everything, but not the value of anything.
- Indeed, we live in a strange world.

How to dispose of your Christmas trees

CITY NEWS - Christmas trees come in all shapes and sizes these days. What it is made of also determines where to dispose of it, when the time comes.



Rethink Waste: The City of Fort Worth encourages all residents to reuse holiday décor, like Christmas trees, whenever possible. Put them in storage and save them for another year. If you need a change, first consider donating your current tree and decorations for others to use. If you choose to dispose of it, make sure to do it properly.

Live trees: Live Christmas trees can be placed curbside for pickup as part of regular, weekly yard waste collection. Real Christmas trees are biodegradable and will be converted into mulch. This includes live flocked trees, live garland and live boughs. As with other live trees in your yard, trees must be less than eight feet long; cut into two, smaller pieces, if necessary.

Before placing live trees in your yard waste pile, remember:

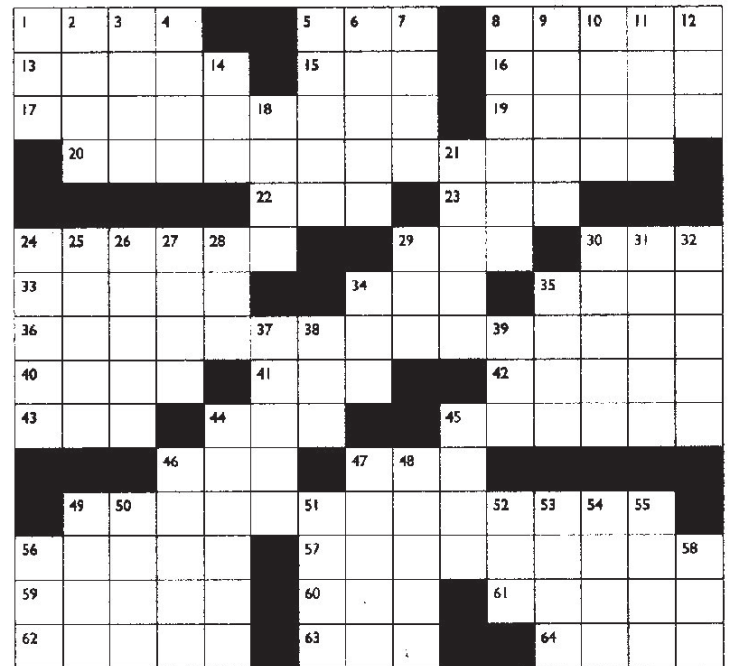
- * Do not bag your live trees, live garland or other yard waste.
- * Remove all decorations, lights, nails and other items from the tree or garland.
- * Remove the tree from its tree stand.

Artificial trees: Fake or artificial trees should be placed in the brown garbage cart. This includes artificial wreaths, garland and boughs. Lights, tinsel and other decorations should also be placed in the brown garbage cart for disposal.

Other disposal options: The City has four Drop-Off Station locations where residents can bring live and artificial Christmas trees, old or broken decorations and excess garbage, recycling, yard waste or bulk waste. The Drop-Off Stations are open 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Monday-Friday, and 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday. They will be closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

BIBLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Topic: ACTS 18



ACROSS

- 1 Napoleon's retreat
- 5 Base runners, usually
- 8 Alas companion
- 13 Telegraph wizard
- 15 The common mkt.
- 16 Showing ignorance
- 17 One of Apollos' teachers (Acts 18:26)
- 19 Actor Edward James _____
- 20 Paul's assurance (Acts 18:9; 4 wds.)
- 22 Abraham's wife, for short
- 23 NRC predecessor
- 24 A refugee from Italy (Acts 18:2)
- 29 Stray
- 30 Baby seal
- 33 Beyond, prefix
- 34 Alliance including U.S., Cuba, Haiti, and others
- 35 Dinner (Lat.)
- 36 Companions of Paul (Acts 18:5; 3 wds.)
- 40 Ireland
- 41 Far out, to eighties kids
- 42 Moses' dad
- 43 Vietnamese holiday
- 44 Withdrawn
- 45 Where Apollos excelled (Acts 18:28)
- 46 One _____ time (2 wds.)
- 47 _____ and feather

- 49 Paul's encouragement (Acts 18:9; 4 wds.)
- 56 Benefactor
- 57 What one couple did for Apollos (Acts 18:26)
- 59 Sign of life
- 60 Norma _____: Field vehicle
- 61 Avarice
- 62 More clever
- 63 Where there was no room for Joseph and Mary
- 64 Being (abbr.)

DOWN

- 1 Caesar or Charlemagne (abbr.)
- 2 The one who spoke to Paul in Acts 18:9-10
- 3 Verve
- 4 Org.
- 5 Peach dessert
- 6 A kind of fisherman
- 7 College sports org.
- 8 Fan
- 9 Flower famous in Lombard, Ill.
- 10 Hosea's child Lo-_____, from the Heb. for "not my people" (Hos. 1:9)
- 11 Klutz
- 12 Florida's islands: abbr.
- 14 Environmental, prefix
- 18 "_____ Girl"
- 21 Persian
- 24 Possession
- 25 One twentieth of a ream

- 26 Illuminated from behind or above
- 27 Where Reza Pahlavi once ruled
- 28 _____ Vegas
- 29 Wolf down
- 30 Christian "rock" group
- 31 Remove someone's fez
- 32 "_____ that thou owest" (Matt. 18:28, KJV)
- 34 Bizarre
- 35 Rooster feature
- 37 Enlightened Buddhist
- 38 No vote
- 39 In finance, Fanny or Ginny's last name
- 44 Pack rat
- 45 Bore through (arch.)
- 46 Win by _____ (2 wds.)
- 47 Perot or Bush
- 48 Ski resort
- 49 Dismal
- 50 "... he knew _____ the baptism of John" (Acts 18:25, NIV)
- 51 Half of a thiamine-deficiency disease
- 52 Fall behind
- 53 The Emerald Isle
- 54 Dirs. from Hebron to Jerusalem and from Ephesus to Thyatira
- 55 Golf needs
- 56 Dept. of Public Wks.
- 58 JFK's predecessor

10 Signs of a Controlling Pastor

I recently read a post titled, "10 Signs of a Controlling Pastor." I found it very interesting, mainly because I hear people talking about it all of the time. Especially when they feel they, themselves have more to offer, but are denied



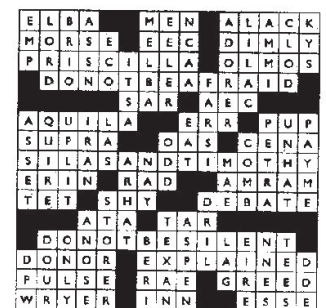
any consideration. Before you label your Pastor or any other as controlling, consider these perspectives.

- 1. The pastor is not vulnerable—or ever wrong.** He guards his space, keeps his distance from his congregation, and never says, "I was wrong" or "I'm sorry." Even when it seems he might have been wrong, he deflects blame to others.
- 2. The pastor has no accountability to anyone.** I'm not convinced that the New Testament demands a plurality of elders in every case, but I am convinced that we're never to lead on our own. Controlling pastors lead without input from others.
- 3. Staff turnover (particularly of good staff) is high.** Those who depart may not always be honest about their struggle with the pastor, but few staff members stay very long. If you give them an honest exit interview, their complaints about the pastor are remarkably similar.
- 4. The unspoken (and sometimes spoken) message is, "Comply or leave."** Members who don't get fully on board with the pastor's agenda are encouraged/invited/asked/pushed to move on to another church. Even simple questions are unwelcomed.

- 5. Every decision requires the pastor's stamp of approval.** No matter the significance of the decision, no one can make that decision without the pastor's involvement. The proverbial "buck" really does stop with him—in every case.
- 6. Faithful, mature, growing, discerning believers don't stay long at the church.** They recognize that they're likely not welcomed or needed, so they usually quietly move on. They want to be in a church that allows them to maximize their giftedness.
- 7. Seldom, if ever, does the pastor invite others to preach.** Sometimes that's because the pulpit is his primary means to influence—even discipline—others; at other times, it's because he doesn't want to share the limelight. He might see others who preach well as a threat.
- 8. If the church has a "leadership team," the team members are usually "yes" men and women.** Hence, the "leadership team" neither leads nor truly functions as a team. Their sole role is to affirm whatever the pastor wants.
- 9. The pastor does not disciple others, call out "the called," or send faithful members to the nations.** All of these pastoral responsibilities require a sacrificial outward focus—which a controlling a pastor does not have.
- 10. The congregation has given up hope that things will get better.** Eventually, even the most faithful members decide, "Nothing's going to change as long as _____ is our pastor." The members endure rather than enjoy church.

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Supt. James Turner
 Memorial Ministries

Sharon Ford-Turner, 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

9amSunday School
 10am.....Worship Service

Nursing Homes Ministry
 Love in Action:

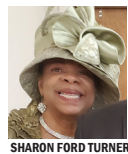
11:30 am 1st Sunday ...Village Creek
 Nursing Homes Ministry following
 Pandemic guidelines.

10:00 Am 3rd Sunday...Coral Rehabilitation
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 for Mother's at both Locations

Tuesday 9:00am Prayer & Bible Study
 Conference Call Service

Mon-Sat. 6:00 am Intercessory Prayer



SHARON FORD TURNER

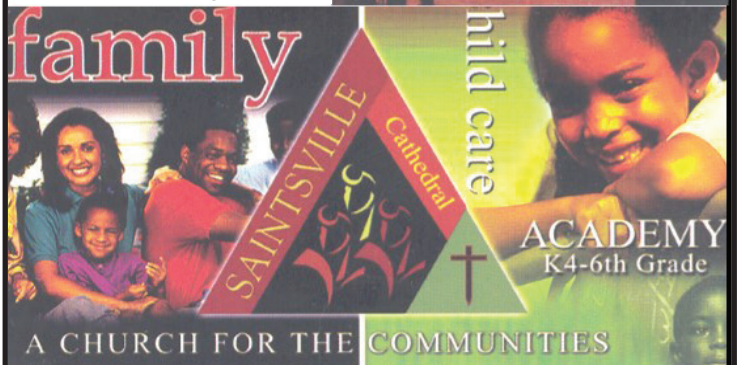
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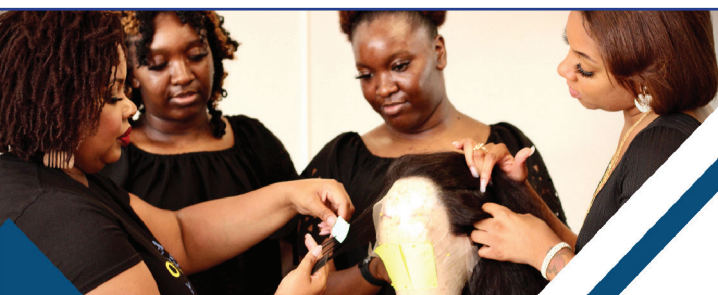
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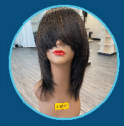
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