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CHURCHIN'

"The LEADER'S EDGE" by drmichaelbell

Culture and the church go hand in glove. Every church, yours and mine, has a good or bad culture. Think of church "culture" this way: Mission is what you do. Vision is what you see. But church culture is how your church's atmosphere, vibe, or climate is experienced by members, staff, and guests.

Now, what is too often overlooked in many discussions and deliberations about church culture is that leaders are the architect. And recognizing an unhealthy culture is critical to addressing church leadership issues. Ignoring ongoing behaviors that affect the health and morale of the team or church will result in objectionable consequences.

An essential part of shaping a healthy culture is being aware of the signs of toxic and healthy cultures. So how do you know if your church culture is toxic or dysfunctional?

1. Church leadership, including the pastor, has an "It isn't me" attitude. Recently, the Dallas Mavericks blew a 27-point lead over the Los Angeles Lakers. According to ESPN Stats & Information research, prior to the Mav's meltdown NBA teams were 138-0 after leading by that much this season. After the game, when coach Jason Kidd was asked why he used only one timeout in the second and third quarters as the lead was slipping away, instead of stepping up and saying something like, "I should have done a better job coaching," he said, "I'm not playing. I'm watching, just like you guys."

What an awful response! Kidd is being paid over \$8 million annually and he's "just watching...like you guys." Here's my point. If there are problems within your church, who takes responsibility to fix them? If no one is willing to take responsibility, that's a clear sign of toxicity. The problems that exist will not only continue, but they will get worse if no one takes the initiative to change what's happening.

2. Absentee leaders. I'm one of those pastors who has a toilsome schedule. I, personally, love the grind *but* I make a concerted effort to be in the office whenever I can.



How often do you see the Senior Pastor or the leader of the ministry you participate in? If the leaders are absent all the time, it's impossible to set the tone for a great church climate.

3. No new ideas. Not everyone is creative, but a sense of dexterity and problem solving should lead to new ideas and continued improvement. If your ministry or team simply does things "the way they've always done them," your church culture will become stagnant.

4. Scuttlebutt. A familiar synonym for *scuttlebutt* is *gossip*. Gossip can be one of the most toxic aspects of a church's culture. The Apostle Paul, that wayfaring tentmaker with the label "Tarsus" on his bags, wrote to the Ephesians believers. in chapter 4, verse 29, "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear." It's crucial that church leaders shut gossip down whenever it occurs.

5. No collabo. I recently saw an old video of Jay-Z and Alicia Keys performing "Empire State of Mind." It was a collabo, not a solo. Too many church leaders chose to fly solo. They refuse to seek input from other leaders, including the pastor, and that will ultimately stunt the growth of your church.

*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 a new book, "Finding God in Hard Places."



The Greenway Church Virtual Services & Worship

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Speak Life Thought with First Lady & Co-Pastor Yolanda G. Butler

A Life of Prayer for the Saints

"So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding" (Colossian 1:9 NLT).

The sign of a true apostle is one who lives a lifestyle of prayer and intercession. Intercession means to stand on behalf of another. Paul publicly pens the sentiment of his heart to the Colossian Church by letting them know he was praying for them continually. He was very specific in his request to the Father that would result in spiritual freedom and maturity. His prayer-life example reminds us not only of the importance of prayer for all but especially for the saints.

How encouraging it is to hear someone say, "I have not stopped praying for you." Have you ever made a commitment to someone to pray for them? The Father expects us to live up to such a promise. This means we must pray from a place of love daily, consistently, and fervently. Prayer is always a good deed, and we are called to especially pray for the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).

Paul was intentional concerning his prayer for the Church. He prayed that the believers would be awakened to the Father's will in their lives. I encounter many who lack direction, focus, and vision. This is an opportunity to pray that the Father invades their plans, no matter how scattered they are, to line up with His purpose that always prevails (Proverbs 19:21). Afterall, He knows the plans that He thinks towards us, plans of peace, and not of evil, to give an expected end (Jeremiah 29:11).

Paul also prayed that the believers would be endowed with spiritual wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to apply knowledge in everyday living. We live in a day and time in which information is so easily accessible whether online, in-person, or by experience. Knowledge is good but the wisdom to apply it is essential. This goes for us as believers who are called to walk a Christian lifestyle of holiness. The indwelling power of the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to do this.

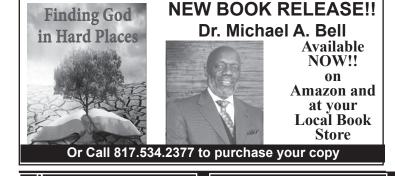
Paul prayed that the believers would be endowed with spiritual understanding. This is a virtue every individual needs in their lives for it involves insight, comprehension, discernment (good judgment), good decision-making ability, and common sense. The evidence of a transformed life is demonstrated through walking in the Father's will (His Word) in wisdom and understanding. This kind of walk is defined as one that honors and pleases the Father. This should



be the central theme of our lives as Christians and that is to live a life that pleases God first (Gal. 2:20) As you live this kind of life, you habitually produce good fruit. Jesus said the Father is glorified when you exhibit good fruit (John 15:8). You will grow through this process into a deeper relationship with Him.

Finally, he prayed that the believers would find strength in the Father's strength. What a blessing to know that as believers we do not have to live life in our strength but in the strength of the One that produces power, endurance, and patience, all encompassed in joy. Even more why we should, dear hearts, be determined to pray for all saints.

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 at www.firstladybutlerministries.com.



From Morningside to music's biggest awards ceremony: Kirk Franklin adds 3 more GRAMMYs to his collection

SAIN, AURENC

Kirk Franklin, (second from left), poses with members of New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church at a Texas Rangers' game where the performer threw the first pitch and was honored with a legacy day. (Courtesy | New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church)

When he was just 11 years old, Kirk Franklin became the choirmaster at New Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church in Fort Worth's Morningside neighborhood.

The appointment was highly unusual, but it was clear even then that Franklin had something special.

"It was a sight to see. He commanded the attention of the crowd and the respect of the choir," Kyev Tatum, the current senior pastor of New Mount Rose, said.

From there, Franklin went on to perform around the world and became one of the biggest names in gospel music. Since 1996, the musician has won 16 GRAMMYs and been nominated 30 times. On Feb. 5, he took another three home.

Franklin, alongside the group Maverick City Music, won awards for Best Gospel Performance/ Song, Best Contemporary Christian Performance/Song, and Best Gospel Album. Maverick City Music also won the award for Best Contemporary Christian Album.

"It's amazing," Mervil Johnson, the church's minister of music, said. "He has a universal appeal ...The thing that we find most impressive about him is that he still stays connected to the community. And he is such an inspiration for our young people."

Franklin was raised by his aunt, who was friends with Tatum's mom. The two boys didn't attend the same church growing up, but they both participated in a group called "The Blessed Ones" that met at the Butler Place public housing projects.

"They kept us in church morning, noon and night so we could try to stay out of trouble," Tatum recalled. "We have to share his legacy so that these kids at Morningside and others who don't believe they're anything or have anything realize that they can do well if they focus and give God proper credit."

New Mount Rose has been proud of Franklin's success throughout his career, but Tatum said the new awards are especially meaningful to the congregation after a rough few years.

The church responded to the pandemic by holding food drives, helping people get vaccines and facilitating other community outreach projects.

In 2021 when an ice storm hit the state, Mount Rose's chapel flooded. The church was able to renovate and reopen the sanctuary, and renamed it the "Kirk Franklin Chapel" in the GRAMMY winner's honor.

"I always knew he was going to be a phenomenal musician," Johnson said. "Some of the ladies that are in the choir today still talk to me about their association with Kirk and how they thought he was going to be great, too. I mean, these ladies are in their 80s, but they knew him when he was just 11."

Tatum hopes that Fort Worth will be inspired by Franklin's story, and will believe in the message that hangs above the church's entrance: "The Greatest People in the World Enter These Doors."





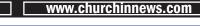


Turners Chapel COGIC of TX 16th Annual Women's Black History Love Fellowship Event @ The Dock Bookshop in Ft.Worth, Tx.



Pic 1) 6 Pioneer Women Honored: Maryellen Hicks, Sylvia Wilson-Elgin Thomas, Deborah Gregory, Grace Briscoe & Pauline Walker; Pic 2) Presentation to Dondra Craddock and Donna Craddock (not shown) Dock Bookshop Owners.





CHURCHIN'

Love is a Choice by Dudley Anderson / Faithwriters

Greater love has no one than this than to lay down one's life for his friends. John 15:13

John was confronted by the greatest decision of his life. He had recently changed the focus of his career but, unfortunately, his new business was failing. His income had all but dried up. He was depressed and despaired. John was married with 2 young children and though his wife was doing what she could to keep the family afloat, their finances were thread bear. John and Pam drifted apart and they fought almost every day. John thought that if he could only walk away and start over, he would be happy. He used to love his wife when things were good but now ... John faced a choice: to love or leave.

Jesus had just eaten a hearty meal for Passover and taken a walk up the Mount of Olives with his friends to pray. It was late. The eastern horizon was shifting to gentle mauve hew. Jesus knew that in a short while, he would be arrested, convicted and sentenced to death by crucifixion. His friends had fallen asleep against the trees. He loved these guys and Jesus knew that Father loved the whole world. After all, he had said these words in his teaching: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," and this love would be demonstrated by the event which was about to take place. He could



them back to town to go to bed. Jesus faced a choice: to love or leave.

Love is a choice. The butterflies and sparkles may have faded. The one you chose to say, "I do," to, may not boast the same physique they had when you walked down the aisle. He or she may irritate you more than a thorn in the flesh. Your life circumstances may have ties and trials at every turn, you may desire to simply walk away. You face a choice today: to love or leave. Only by the grace of the One who loved you and gave his life for your life can you make that choice. So, above the lure to take the easy way out, I say you today, choose love.

God-tracking is a choice to love.



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421 S Ayers Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas 76103 Rev. J. L. Hunt Jr., Pastor Sunday Services Sunday School.....9:30 A.M Morning Worship Service....11:00 A.M. Wednesday Services

Wedn<mark>esday Prayer</mark> Se<mark>rvice & Bi</mark>ble Study , 7:00 P.M.





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Mother Ida Barrett, First Lady
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"If you go with us, we will do you good!"





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Chaplain Richmond "Rich" Stoglin elevated to Priest

Chaplain Richmond "Rich" Stoglin, helped bring the new Tuskegee Airmen Texas Veterans Home Tarrant County to Fort Worth,



is now a Priest. In fact, he is the first black Priest in the Fort Worth Diocese of the Anglican Church of North America, after his ordination last month.

The Fort Worth Diocese of the church extends as far west as El Paso. as far north as Burkburnett. as far east as Monroe, La., and as far south as Austin.

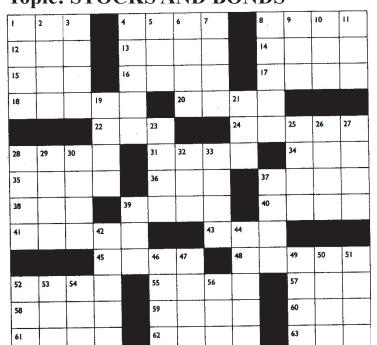
Chaplain Stoglin, who has a distinguished military service career, was a great friend of the last has

been an incredible leader in that community.

He has just added another "first." This month Chaplain Stoglin was notified by the University of Wisconsin at River Falls that he will receive the school's Lifetime Achievement Award, the first Black person so honored.

Congratulations.

BIBLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE Topic: STOCKS AND BONDS



ACROSS

| Binding rule 4 Brother of Havilah (I Chron. 1:9) 8 Waiter's tool 12 "Whatever is has been long " (Eccl. 3:15) 13 Plain in Syria (Amos 1:5) 14 Zoom 15 Temple gate (2 Kings 11:6, KJV) 16 Use as support 17 Insects in colonies

18 Home of prophet Amos

31 Convert of Peter (1 Pet. 5:13)

35 Worked in winepress

37 Son of Levite Abinadab

38 King Hezekiah's mother

45 Amalekite King Saul captured

48 King's forest manager (Neh. 2:8)

(2 Sam. 6:3)

(2 Kings 18:2)

40 Tenant payment

(I Sam. 15:8)

(Amos 1:1)

20 Surprise attack

22 Which one

24 Approaches

28 Spare

34 Hat

36 Deplore

39 Heap

41 Emblen

43 Blockade

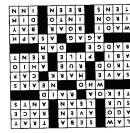
57 Cove 58 Foundary material 59 To the form of 60 Befogged 61 _____, twenties, thirties, etc. 62 "Realize how kind the Lord has ____ to you" (I Pet. 2:2) 63 Tavern DOWN

52 Sometimes-dry brook

55 Wild pig

I Trailing 2 Fever (Lev. 26:16, KJV) 3 Labor 4 Eber's father (Gen. 10:24, KIV) 5 Between day and night 6 Tolerate 7 Widow recognizing infant lesus as Messiah (Luke 2:36) 8 Exchange 9 Dashed 10 "An ____ of God" (calamity) | As you say 19 Was indebted 21 Pen and 23 King Ahab's father (1 Kings (6:28) 25 Dull hurt 26 For 40 days and nights (Gen. 7:4) 27 Area 28 Pierce











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BLACK HISTORY IS AMERICAN HS

THOMAS A. DORSEY (1899-1993) The Father of Gospel MUSIC

Born into a preacher's family in rural Georgia, Thomas Dorsey began playing the family organ at age six. At eight he started writing his own music, and by 13, was playing piano in Atlanta, accompanying some of the famous jazz artists of the day. In

OPPORTUNITY



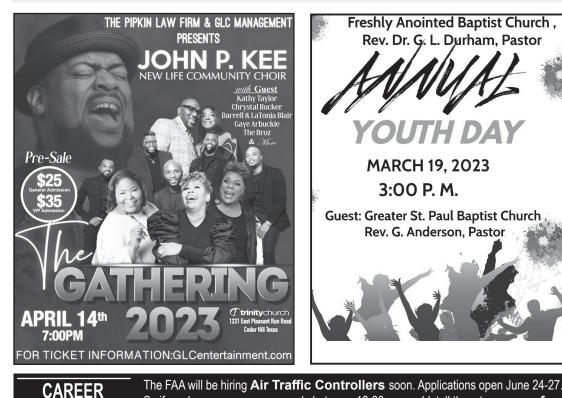
1916, Dorsey moved to Chicago to study at the Chicago School of Composition and Arranging. Although his beginnings were in the jazz and blues tradition, he was also influenced by music he heard through his religious affiliations. His first attempts to combine the two styles, which he called the "gospel song," were met with resistance, however, because of their heavy

a 1980 interview. "But they just didn't understand." By 1931, Dorsey had formed one of the nation's first gospel choirs at Chicago's Pilgrim Baptist Church. Upon the death of his wife and baby the following year, Dorsey wrote the famous, Precious Lord, Take My Hand. Soon afterward, he discovered the young singer Mahalia Jackson, and was her accompanist throughout the 1930s and 1940s. He traveled widely

blues influence. "Several times I have been thrown out

of some of the best churches," Dorsey remembered in

throughout his life, teaching workshops and leading choruses, while composing over 800 gospel pieces. Reflecting back, Dorsey said, "Gospel is good music sent down from the Lord to save the people...There is no such thing as black music, white music, red or blue music...It's what everybody needs." For his many contributions, Thomas Dorsey has been called the Father of Gospel Music.



So if you know some young people between 18-30 years old, tell them to go www.faa. gov/be-atc. Salary ranges between \$103-\$164k. Paid training and school.



