

The Scroll

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

TRINA JOHNSON

WE ARE BACK! What a blessing it is to return this newsletter to the membership! Our last publication was June 2020 and it was a mere four months into the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time, we did not know how much it would affect our lives. We were huddled with stay-at-home orders for well over a year. We lost loved ones to it and our economy still hasn't fully recovered. BUT GOD!

This time of testing reminds me of James 1:2-4 where James wrote, "Dear brothers and sisters when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing." NLT I know, for me, I often felt frustrated, isolated, restless, listless and in need of connection (beyond Khary & Joshua) but I gradually came to appreciate the time of nesting with my guys. For it was during our time at home that I drew closer to them as a wife and mother. The time at home also allowed me to see God move through ministry work. Our Women of Excellence Sunday School class was able to extend its participation beyond our New Testament membership. Women from Christ Temple Los Angeles as well as those in Wisconsin, Georgia, Santa Barbara and beyond would join us weekly as we met via Zoom. God's

Gospel continued and what a blessing it was. Our church was even able to begin its LiveStream ministry across Facebook and it continues today with Wednesday night Bible Study and Sunday Worship Service. God remains on the throne and even through adversity His work persists! AMEN!



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THE PASTOR'S CORNER

Sermon & Bible Study series - Hope Has A Name

We are experiencing increased Darkness and Despair here in the United States. We are seeing a dire threat to democracy; our democracy is in turmoil with the rise of authoritarianism at the expense of freedom (significantly impacting minorities).

Darkness and Despair are happening right now as we face our homeless crisis in Los Angeles-humans living- sleeping on the streets, in beat-up mobile homes and trailers, young men and women kidnapped (exploited, trafficked). Darkness and Despair when some of the missing don't get the same response and searching because of their skin color.

Corruption in high places, like our Supreme Court, where Justices are being bribed and bought; Adult bullies in the name of a Political Party; Adult bullies that show up at their children's sporting events, "showing out," passing their actions down to their children who model it making a judgment call and carrying out hatred on others who they don't know including their circumstances. The responses can be deadly for the victims.

Because we live in a time of Darkness and Despair, many are skeptical, frustrated, discouraged, and worried. Our response to these occurrences is the birth of **Hopelessness**.

Hopelessness is defined as "an emotion characterized by a lack of hope, optimism, and passion."

Those who feel hopeless may not expect future improvement or success.

Hopelessness is a powerful emotion (feeling) that often contributes to a dark or low mood and may adversely affect how one perceives oneself, others, personal circumstances, and even the world. Further, Hopelessness can significantly influence human behavior, as it can reflect an individual's negative view of the future.

On the other hand, experts define hope as "an optimistic state of mind based on an expectation (belief) of positive outcomes concerning events and circumstances in one's life or the world at large." Renowned psychologist and researcher Charles Snyder says, "...**Hope** is a positive cognitive state based on a sense of successful goal-directed determination and planning to meet these goals." He says, "People often speak about hope strengthening their resolve (determination) and accompanying them even in their darkest hour, guiding them through seemingly desperate circumstances." Snyder communicates, "**Hope** helps us remain committed to our goals and

motivation to take action towards achieving them. **Hope** gives people a reason to continue fighting and believing that their current circumstances will improve, despite the unpredictable nature of human existence."

Good Therapy | Hopelessness

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/hopelessness>

Hope Has A Name!

In the book of Isaiah containing the prophecies attributed to the prophet Isaiah, we find, "Nevertheless, that time of **darkness** and **despair** will not **go on forever...**" (Isaiah 9:1a). The Apostle Peter declares in 1 Peter 1:3, "All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by His great mercy that we have been born again because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation ("lively hope" KJV).."

As we introduce "**Hope Has A Name**" in Biblical terms, hope:

It has a future, that's right, a future reality that is certain to come to pass.

Hope has a focus, not on feelings but rather on reality for which we wait. It is that reality for which we wait for that gives us (Believers, Christians) the determination to keep on keeping (living/moving forward) on, knowing that our current circumstances (uncharted, unfamiliar) will improve, and we will come up! Darkness and Despair will not go on forever.

To be continued...



Pastor Robert Hendricks

If you are struggling today and need help right now:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-8255

National Alliance on Mental Health/NAMI

1-800-950-6264

Scripture Index:

- Isaiah 9:1a
- 1 Peter 1:3



MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT: THE USHER BOARD

The Usher Board at New Testament Church consists of seven phenomenal women who are dedicated to serving the Lord. These committed women greet you with a smile upon your arrival into the sanctuary. Our Ushers come in the sanctuary mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually prepared. They do this not as a duty, but as a privilege to connect with God. God is more interested in the commitment from the heart of these ladies rather than the amount of time spent doing it. Before the church services begin, the assigned ushers for that Sunday start with a prayer.

One of the ushers' responsibilities is to minimize distractions during the sermon. They stand ready to assist anyone in the congregation the best way they can. Whether it's finding a seat, providing Kleenex or a fan to keep them cool, the ladies maintain order during the service and clean up the sanctuary immediately after the service.

One scripture that describes an usher is Psalm 84:10. It reads "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness".

Humbly submitted by Sis. Denita Morse

Usher Board Ministry Leader



IN ALL THINGS GIVE THANKS

Have you found yourself wallowing in the valley of "what I don't have?" God supplies all of our needs so in this season of your life, when you find it difficult to stretch your finances, or your loved ones have disappointed you time and time again, before you complain, do the following:

1. Breathe - take a moment to inhale and exhale deeply;
2. Journal - write down all the things you are grateful for;
3. Help - find a way to volunteer or help someone else; it will make your situation feel lighter.

NEW TESTAMENT COMMUNITY GARDEN

Hello Church Family,

New Testament is delighted to share some exciting news that is sure to add a touch of green serenity outside of the church.

With the vision from Pastor Hendricks, a new garden has been built to serve our church members and the community,

located on the westside of the church parking lot.

After months of meticulous planning and hard work, New Testament is thrilled to see this vision come to life. The garden is small with a few vegetable plants like collard greens, kale, and bell peppers. Our goal is to continue to build on it and add more

plants, but we cannot do it without your help. By donating to the garden fund, we can buy garden supplies (included more planters), vegetable plants, and garden soil.

We appreciate whatever you can give. You can also add a plant to the garden if you like to by contacting Mark Plummer at (310) 874-8515.

SUBMITTED BY BRO. MARK PLUMMER

**A TOUCH OF GREEN
SERENITY OUTSIDE OF
CHURCH...**



UPCOMING EVENTS

12/25/23 Christmas Day

01/01/24 New Years Day

01/13/24 Grantwriting Workshop

01/15/24 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February Black History Month

Our **MISSION** is to **MODEL:**

MINISTRY, OBEDIENCE, DISCIPLESHIP, EVANGELISM, LOVE