

LENT

*Fast
Pray
Give*



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THE ECHO

SAINT REBECCA P. B. CHURCH
123 YEARS STRONG

From the Pastor's Desk

It's A Season

"This year, Lent begins on Wednesday, March 5. The first day of Lent is called Ash Wednesday. Lent's 40 days represents the 40 days that Jesus spent fasting and praying in the desert before starting his public ministry. Fasting during Lent represents the fasting Jesus did while in the desert.

"Abstinence is a form of penance. Penance expresses sorrow and contrition for our wrongdoing, indicates our intention to turn away from sin and turn back to God,"

Springtime brings the festive celebration that is Easter, but before it in the Christian calendar comes the season of Lent, marking the 40 days (excluding Sundays) between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Lent's dates might change from year to year, but its purpose remains the same as a time of repentance and fasting. You've likely heard of fasting from sweets, alcohol, soda, social media, or the like for the season (options of what to give up for Lent are endless!), but don't confuse these actions with New Year's resolutions. For Christians Lent emphasizes an awareness of sin that separates them from God, and giving up, or taking on, something sacrificial reminds them of their "utter dependence upon God by finding in Him a source of sustenance beyond food." The length also echoes the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert as recounted in the New Testament of the Bible.

No matter how Christians mark Lent, its heaviness makes the celebration of Jesus's resurrection on Easter all the more glorious.

To help you meditate on this time and the meaning behind it, here are some quotes from Catholic popes and writers and other Christian thought leaders."

- ◆ "God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy."
- ◆ "Nothing great is ever achieved without much enduring."
- ◆ "Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may go to heaven."
- ◆ "Unless there is Good Friday in your life, there can be no Easter Sunday."
- ◆ "Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves... What is it that stands between us and God? Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit"
- ◆ "Prayer strikes the winning blow; service is simply picking up the pieces."
- ◆ "Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's hesitation."
- ◆ "Have patience with all things, but first of all with yourself."

Let this be your prayer for Lent: God, may my sacrifice of today (state your Lenten sacrifice) remind me of my dependence on You for all the blessings I enjoy. Amen."

A Dedicated Scholar

LaDarren McClendon is definitely a trailblazer and an example setter. This amazing young man completed high school ahead of time and has now made a conscious, deliberate, and prayerful decision about his college future. His parents said, “we are very proud to announce that after several college acceptances and 5 scholarship offers (3 academic and 2 for football) LaDarren has decided to follow his passion for football. On 2/5, he signed and committed to attend Tennessee Valley Prep Sports Academy. He will be pursuing a Business degree. LaDarren, we are so proud and impressed with the hard work you put in through the years and especially in high school”.



LaDarren understands that hard work and dedication yield good results and choices. You are encouraged to continue your aim for excellence and success. Let your light shine so that others who see will want to be like you.

Your family and Saint Rebecca are so very proud of you. May God bless you as you continue your academic and sports journey!

Love,

Mom Dad, Lance and Grandma Jean

She is Soaring

Brooklynn Parker is doing her thing. First and foremost, she is leaning in to her faith and what she knows God will do and what He is to her. The Bank of Frankenwing in Hazel Green did a follow-up piece on Brooklynn that was showcased on Facebook. It focused on Scholarship Spotlight-Where are they now. They said “hello to Brooklynn Parker, a former member of the Hazel Green Student Advisory Board and one of our scholarship recipients from last year!”

Brooklynn is now a student at the University of South Alabama where she is majoring in Nursing. Brooklynn shared, “College life has been both exciting and challenging. I joined a nursing club where we do a lot of community service and listen to guest nurse speakers. One of my favorite experiences was learning how to suture!”

The Bank of Frankenwing said “we’re so proud of Brooklynn’s dedication to her studies and her passion for helping others. Keep up the amazing work, Brooklynn!” That goes double from your family and your church family Brooklynn. We love you and support your educational pursuits.

Continue to follow your dreams knowing that there is nothing that can prevent your success as long as your mind and heart are stayed on God. You will make a first-rate nurse because you have a love for people and a desire to help others. May God continue to bless you.



A Desire to Serve

Skylar Simone McDonald came forth on the first Sunday in February to accept Christ as her personal Savior. Skylar has been at Saint Rebecca all of her life. She has been a participant in some youth activities and other church ventures. God pricked her heart and she came for membership and a candidate for baptism.

Skylar was baptized on Sunday, February 23, 2025 following morning worship. She



was blessed to have family and friends join her on such a monumental occasion. Following baptism, she was given the Right Hand of Fellowship by Dr. Clark and was joined by her mother and grandmother. She was presented with a Certificate of Baptism by Deacon B. J. Latham.

Congratulations Skylar on the best decision of your life. Saint Rebecca welcomes you and is here to help mold your spiritual growth. Continue to get involved in the ministries of the church. Remember that your voice counts and your opinions matter. The church is grateful to have you.



Another Soldier for Christ

Cameron Elise Thompson heard and answered the call to make Christ a part of her life on the fourth

Sunday in January. She professed her faith in God and her desire to be covered by Him. She told Pastor her desire and he prayed a prayer with her and she became a candidate for baptism.

Cameron was baptized on the second Sunday in February following worship. She was blessed to have her dad, Deacon Brad Thompson assist Pastor in the baptismal pool. Prior to being baptized, Cameron asked Pastor to put his hat on before going in the pool, and he obliged. She had her grandmother and uncle from out of town witness this special moment.

Following baptism, she was given the Right Hand of Fellowship by Pastor. Her Certificate of Baptism was presented to her by her dad. Cameron, you are a welcomed asset to Saint Rebecca. You are already a part of various youth ministries and activities. You are encouraged to continue working for the Lord and help to further the Kingdom. We love and support you.



God Adds Daily

Kailey Grace Thompson stepped out on faith on the second Sunday in February. Following worship, she confessed her hope in Christ as her Savior along with her desire to be baptized. Pastor prayed with her and she became a candidate for baptism.



Kailey was baptized on the second in February following morning worship. She was privileged to have her dad, Deacon Buford Thompson, Jr. go in the water with her to assist Pastor Clark with her baptism. Kailey had several friends from school along with family members that came to support her in this life changing event.

Following baptism, she was given the right hand of fellowship and presented a Certificate of Baptism by her father. He explained that now her decisions in life will become more challenging. She will have to lean on her faith in God to help her do the right things when other choices surround her. Congratulations Kailey on becoming a full-fledged member of this Body of Christ. The church is here for you in every way.



A Little Angel

Jesus loves the little children, and He is surely in love with this little one. Gianna Jayne Garner was born on February 9, 2025 and weighed 6lbs 14 oz, 22 inches long. This little angel was born to D.J. Garner and Georgia Peto. Gianna is so blessed to have as a grandmother, Sister Veronica (Nita) Toney. Veronica now has 5 grandchildren. Gianna will be spoiled and well taken care of by her two big brothers, DeMaurez (2) and Dexter Garner. The love doesn't stop there, she'll be doted on by a host of aunts, uncles and cousins.



D.J and Georgia have an enormous job ahead and with God's help the job just became easier. You are charged with raising her in the knowledge and fear of God. She is your little miracle. Congratulations are also extended to grandma "Nita."

Thought for the Month

"Hope is important; it can make the present moment more bearable. If you have hope that tomorrow will be better, you can get through the difficult moments of today." "Hope is one thing that can help us get through the darkest times." "Hope is understanding that nothing's permanent, not even the troubles that scar you."

Hope, according to Merriam-Webster, means to cherish a desire with anticipation. As Christians, we anticipate eternal life with Jesus, knowing we'll one day be with Him. No matter what tomorrow brings, we have hope that lasts in Jesus. Being confident in the love of God fuels this hope in us.

For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. "At the beginning of Psalm 62, David says, 'I shall not be greatly shaken' (v. 2).

Black History Celebrated

The church's Annual Black History Program was held on the fourth Sunday in February. Commissioner Violet Edwards was the guest speaker and Jemison High School Gospel Choir provided the song service. It was an eye-opening worship. The choir sang an array of different song genres and all of them were very appropriate for the occasion. They were exceptionally good and it was apparent they enjoyed singing songs of inspiration and worship.



Commissioner Edwards brought an encouraging Black History message. She said that she is a public servant with a testimony and she's still proud to be black and proud. We should learn from trauma and reject fear. Someone experienced fear for us to be here today. Conquering fear is a continuous process. He wants us to live by faith.

The worship ended with a video of the history of Parker Shoeshine. The story was shown on local news station as a tribute to black business owners and their success. Mr. Jack Parker's son, Patrick provided reflections of his dad's business when he was a child. Kudos to the Black History Committee on a job well done. Your hard work in organizing the celebration doesn't go unnoticed. Thanks from the church for all you do.



A Heritage to be Remembered

Silver Jewel #508, PHA hosted a Black History heritage tea celebrating five icons of Black History in honor of our five Heroines of the Order. We honored and recognized five ladies who represented the characteristics in their life and service to mankind just as the heroines of Order of Eastern Star. These were five local icons within the Madison County area. These five ladies have played a significant role in our history through their own individual accomplishments. Just as the five heroines of Order of Eastern Star did when called upon to help their people.

We recognized ladies that have broken barriers and became firsts. They were former Madison County Judge M. Lynn Sherrod, the first black woman municipal judge in North Alabama elected judge in Madison County, Commissioner Violet Edwards, the first black woman elected Madison County Commissioner, Representative Laura Hall, the first black woman elected Representative for House District 19, Councilwoman Michelle Watkins the first black woman elected to the Huntsville City



Pictured: Councilwoman Michelle Watkins, Dr. Patricia Sims, Honorable M. Lynn Sherrod, Dr. C. Jermaine Turner, Phyllene Washington for Representative Laura Hall and Commissioner Violet Edwards.

Council and Dr. Patricia Sims, President of an HBCU, securing the first and only in the nation NASA Cooperative Agreement that support student research. These ladies have paved the way not only for African Americans but all women to strive for greatness and never give up on their dreams. The ladies were presented with gift bags and plaques acknowledging their accomplishments. The guest speaker was Dr. C. Jermaine Turner, Pastor of Pine Grove M.B. Church. Tribute selections were provided by sisters of Silver Jewel and the St. Rebecca Praise Team. We were joined by other chapters of District 15 along with our Grand District Deputy Michelle King and our brothers of Red Cross Lodge #35. Refreshments were served.

Happy Birthday

A birthday is another blessing from God. The church wishes each of you celebrating this month a blessed day.

DeAnthony Hereford 1st
Breshannda Johnson 1st
Donald Lowery, Jr. 3rd
Melissa Lowery 3rd
Chadrick Hereford 5th
Cineedrea Kimbrough 5th
Viola Payne 6th
Lamont Garner 7th
Kelsi Booker 9th
Vince L. Garner, II 10th
Zachary Garner 10th
Tomika Davis 11th
Jonathan Garner 11th
Melissa Charley 12th
Tia Hampton 12th
Barbara Johnson 12th
Belinda Garner 15th
Othello Cross 18th
Hattie Clark 19th
Patrick Hereford 19th
Sandra Nelson 19th
Sanford Sledge 19th
Alma Dozier 19th
Timothy Dozier 21st
Yumond Edwards, Sr. 21st
Thaddeus Graham 24th
Chasmine Parker 24th
Mother Corine Parker 25th
Jere' Eaton 26th
Malia Stewart 29th
Charles Garner 31st

Happy Anniversary

Zachary & Ashley Garner 7th
Brad & Courtney Thompson 16th

Christian Humor

- The pastor went to the dentist for a set of false teeth. The first Sunday after getting his teeth, he preached for only eight minutes. The second Sunday, he preached only ten minutes. But the following Sunday, he preached nonstop for nearly three hours... until the congregation realized he couldn't quit, and finally helped him sit down. Concerned for his health, they asked, "Are you Okay? What happened?" The pastor explained, "Well, the first Sunday with my new teeth, my gums were so sore I couldn't preach longer than eight minutes. The second Sunday, I felt I could go a little longer to ten minutes. But today I mistakenly put my wife's teeth in, and discovered I couldn't shut up".
- A bus full of ugly people had a head on collision with a truck. When they died, God granted all of them one wish. The first person said, "I want to be gorgeous." God snapped his fingers and it happened. The second person said the same thing and God did the same thing. This went on and on throughout the group. God noticed the last man in line was laughing hysterically. By the time God got to the last ten people, the last man was laughing and rolling on the ground. When the man's turn came, he laughed and said, "I wish they were all ugly again."
- A rather stingy man died and went to heaven. He was met at the front gate by St. Peter, who led him on a house tour down the golden streets. They passed mansion after beautiful mansion until they came to the end of the street and stopped in front of a tiny shack without gold paving in front. "And here is where you will be living sir." Peter announced. "Me live here? The stingy man yelled. "How come?" Peter replied, "I did the best I could with the money you sent us.
- One Sunday morning the pastor advised his congregation, "Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. In preparation for my message, I want you to read Mark 17." The following Sunday the reverend asked for a show of hands from those who had read Mark 17. Every hand went up. Pastor Bob smiled and announced, "Well, Mark has only 16 chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying.
- Says one humorist, "Life is unfair. I lost my car keys at the ball game and never found them. I lost my sunglasses at the beach and never found them. I lost my socks in the washing machine and never found them. I lost three pounds on a diet—I found them and five more."

Notice

- ◆ Members still have time to make a donation for the Mallard Creek Pink Tea Scholarship fundraiser in the amount of your waist size. Mark your calendars for March 16, 2025, for the Annual Mallard Creek Pink Tea. New Zion Steadfast P.B. Church and Pastor Joshua Crutcher will be the host church. Service will be held at St. Rebecca at 2:00 pm.
- ◆ The Brothers of the Mallard Creek Association churches are invited to attend a combined brotherhood fellowship breakfast on March 15, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. The host church is Taylor's Chapel P. B. located at 3100 Stringfield Road.
- ◆ Easter speeches are now available for all children interested in reciting a speech on Easter Sunday. Please see Sister Kay Miller. Also, save the date and join us for our Easter Weekend Jamboree starting on Good Friday, April 18th. There are a number of activities planned.
- ◆ Applications for Kids Kingdom Summer Camp for ages 5-13 will be available starting April 6, 2025
- ◆ Members are asked to start bringing nice, usable items for the upcoming Spring Food Pantry's Come and Get It Day.
- ◆ Spring break for most of our students will be March 10-14. Students are encouraged to enjoy your break.
- ◆ Continue to keep the sick and bereaved in prayer.
- ◆ If you have not been visiting the church's website, or clicking like or share on our Facebook page, make it a point to do so. Don't just visit, share with others.

Recipe Corner

Cheesy Broccoli Rice Casserole

This dish is pure comfort—cheesy, creamy, and loaded with tender broccoli! Perfect as a side or a main dish.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cooked rice
- 2 cups broccoli florets (fresh or frozen)
- 1 can (10.5 oz) cream of chicken (or cream of mushroom) soup
- 1 cup milk
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 cup crushed Ritz crackers (optional, for topping)
- 2 tbs melted butter (if using crackers)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a 9x13" baking dish.

If using fresh broccoli, steam until tender. If frozen, thaw and drain.

In a large bowl, mix soup, milk, 1 cup of cheese, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper.

Stir in cooked rice and broccoli until combined.

Transfer to the baking dish and top with remaining cheese.

If using, mix crushed crackers with melted butter and sprinkle on top.

Bake for 25-30 minutes until bubbly and golden. Serve warm.



Did You Know

- ◆ Did you know that March is Women's History Month?
- ◆ Did you know that you can stay informed on church events as well as prayer requests for members and family of members? If you are not receiving messages and want to do so, please provide your information to Jessie.
- ◆ Did you know that the church's quarterly conference is not the same without you? If possible, plan to attend the next meeting.

PUZZLE FUN

G Z D C G K G Q E E D W A M S G X D G M
P E D E M L Z V T E M S F U O Q Q P N J
A P T X P M Z A C S H P O D O S W N T I
W H R G B J R O Q W P R N A V Z S Y S E
N Y U L T B M L E K U R U Y V W A O A X
F R W G E P F D B D V S U L G V H Z L O
G U D L R G N I R P S G N I M O O L B B
N S E E X E N E Y X Y Y S G E F C P X S
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B A Q P Y Z R R J G V H B V V U E L Q D
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R T O E G J W P Q S K G B N J H D T L A
D X N S Y L O X U O E W W G E E D E A M
X V F E L E L R S A S J E T R D E N R F
G H W I L D F I R E D A Y I U K M K I Y
M E T A M O R P H O S I S M U I L C V N
F O R T L A U D E R D A L E O L H P E B

WORD LIST

ASH WEDNESDAY

BLOOMING SPRING

BLOSSOM

BUDDING

CELEBRATE

CONFESSION

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

DECOMPRESS

FASTING

FAT TUESDAY

FLOWERS

FORT LAUDERDALE

FRONDESENCE

LENT

MARDI GRAS

METAMORPHOSIS

METAMORPHOSI

PULLULATE

REJUVENATE

VERDUROUS

VIRAL EQUINOX

WILDFIRE DAY

ZEPHYRUS