

# Johns Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church

605 Geneva Highway/Post Office Box 311015

Enterprise, Alabama 36331-1015

[www.johnschapelamec.org](http://www.johnschapelamec.org) (334) 393-2661

Reverend Willie White, Jr., Pastor

*The Sermon by Pastor Willie White, Jr.*

*May 17, 2020*

## Special 131<sup>st</sup> Church Anniversary Message

### “THIS TOO SHALL PASS!”

Deuteronomy 28:1 = And it shall come to pass if thou shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth.

### PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW!

**My Christian brothers and sisters**, have you noticed that every community has a grocery store nearby? The job of the grocery store is very simple. It is supposed to provide life-giving food for those who live nearby, because without food people can't live. Food is an absolute necessity for the well being of a community because its people must eat to live. What good are grocery stores whose shelves are empty or whose food is stale? When you go shopping you want to know that what you need is there and that it's fresh. You don't go to a grocery store to get year-old bread and year-old meat. You want it to be fresh and you want to know that there's enough there so that regardless of how many other people shop, there's food for you. It's the job of the grocery store and those who work in it and own it to make sure that there is enough to service all the people looking for food.

Watch this now--What a grocery store is to the physical well being of a community, the church is supposed to be for its spiritual well being. For 131 years, God has provided Johns Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church with fresh spiritual food. The spiritual meat is fresh, the spiritual vegetables are fresh, our shelves are filled with JOY, PEACE & LOVE, God is good to Johns Chapel.

Here in our text this morning God is positioning the children of Israel, so that He can bless them real good. **THIS TOO SHALL PASS!**

Let us glean from verse number one, where we can unpack

**Point number 1. BELIEVE (Faith, hope, trust).**

One of Moses' greatest challenges was trying to get the children of Israel to believe, not only in God but in themselves. Believing includes action. When we decide to believe in God, we must also decide to follow His ways. What we do shows what we really believe.

**THIS TOO SHALL PASS!**

Let us look at verse number two.

**Point number 2: BALANCE (consistency, stability, firm).**

As the Israelites were preparing to enter the Promised Land, God set before them a choice. The choice was designed to bring balance in lives of God's children. We can't enjoy God with an unbalanced life. God wants the children of Israel to have self evaluation, watching their lives closely. If the children of Israel walk with God, God will stand with them. We have the same choice this morning--Walk with God or reject God.

**THIS TOO SHALL PASS!**

As I close this morning from the text Let's examine verse seven.

**Point number 3: BLESSING (benefit, result, benediction).** The assurance of victory did not mean that the Israelites would not have to strap on their armor and go to battle. It did not assure them of effortless victory. For 131 years of serving our community Johns Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church had some hills to climb and some valleys to travel through. Nevertheless, our members walked closely with God because they knew God would always give them the victory.

God has provided fresh spiritual food for our community and God has stacked our shelves with spiritual gifts for our community. What good is a church where the shelves are empty and the food is stale? What good is a ministry where, when people come for meat, there is none? Or when they come for bread, it's molded? Or when they come for vegetables, they are no longer firm? I am so thankful for members who will declare,

**"THIS TOO SHALL PASS!"**

I LOVE BEING YOUR PASTOR!  
PASTOR WHITE

*Johns Chapel*  
*African Methodist Episcopal Church*  
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**Please check texts, e-mails and website for updates [johnschapelamec.org](http://johnschapelamec.org)**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS –SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2020**



--Pastor White reminds everyone of our upcoming **131<sup>st</sup> Church Anniversary Celebration** on today. **Celebrating 131 Years of service to the community. Let us rededicate ourselves to fellowship, evangelism, discipleship, stewardship, and worship! Not the same building, but the same **CHURCH!** In honor of this great milestone, members are asked to pay \$100 above your regular tithes and offerings. Thank you in advance**

--Governor Ivey has given approval to reopen some businesses and restaurants, as well as churches.

**However, we will continue our current system until the AME Church issues guidance, which the Pastor will** pass along to us. In the meantime, please continue to pray, and heed all public directives regarding the **Coronavirus Pandemic. STAY SAFE – STAY HOME** as much as possible Stay abreast of the latest directives. [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov> [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)

--Pastor White presents: **“SERMON DASH”**. You may receive a hard copy or a CD/DVD of sermons via text, phone call, e-mail or word of mouth, etc., and we will get the sermon to you.

**OPPORTUNITIES TO WORSHIP & SERVE – Check e-mails and text messages for more info.**

--**TODAY** --Noon - **CHURCH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**. Pastor White's message will be shown live on FaceBook. Enjoy other messages and services at church website: [johnschapelamec.org](http://johnschapelamec.org)

--**MONDAY & WEDNESDAY – Weekly Feeding Program--Carry-out Meals for Children ages 1-18 here at JC. 11:00 a.m. until 12 Noon.** Sponsored by Enterprise City Schools and Coffee County Family Service Center. For more info, please contact LauReen McDaniel or Pastor White.

--EACH WEDNESDAY – JC Bible Study via conference call - 7:00 p.m. **Dial-in # 605-313-5111 Access code 737936**

--EACH SUNDAY – Church School Lesson Summary 9:45-10:10 via conference call. **Dial-in # 605-313-5111 Access code 737936**

--**JC MEMBERS ARE OBEYING THE LAW AND RESPONDING TO THE CENSUS.** -- Pastor White is asking Class Leaders to please check on all class members to see how they are doing and also inquire if they have completed the Census. If not, please emphasize the importance, and let them know help is available. **Volunteers:** LauReen McDaniel 334-470-1816; Franklin Simmons 334-494-2377; & Marge Simmons 334-477-1962.

The following households have reported that they are ACCOUNTED FOR in the 2020 Census, as required by law and because they are good citizens:

--Pastor and Mrs. White & Family

--LauReen McDaniel Family

--Dianne Durdin & Michael

Elcock Family

--Constance Jones

--Carlos & Lynette Robinson

--Mack & LaToya Chambers & Family

--Ricky Britt & Family

--Bobby & Evadna Moment

--Marion Griffin

--Geraldine Booth

--Dr. Russell & Mrs. Helen Nichols

--Ira "Pat" Brown

--Johnnie Sanders & Family

--Vernetta DeRamus

--Dr. Stafford & Mrs. Bessie Thompson

--Ann & Nikki Mills Family

--Richard & Shelia Robinson & Family

--Betty Simmons & Vivian Johnson & Family

--Ruthie Warren & Joe Warren Jr. Family

--Franklin & Marge Simmons

--Sam & Hilda Blake

--Jimmy & Lois Boykins

--Gay Nell Miley

--Shun Wilson

**24 Households reporting! OUTSTANDING!** If you have completed the Census and your name is not listed above, please let Sister Marge know. If you haven't completed the census, please do so today. Check out the website at [www.census2020.gov](http://www.census2020.gov) and encourage others to respond. .

### **PRAYER LIST Week of May 10-16, 2020**

--Sister Eleanor Bailey

-- Jennifer Bigham – Brain surgery on tomorrow, May 11 in Mobile

-- Debra D. Brown -Address: 74 Davis Street, Charles Town, WV 25414-

--Sister Geraldine Booth

--Sister Brenda Crawford

--Caiden M. Gary, Grandson of Sis C. Jones

--Sister Annie Pearl Frazier

--Sister Ruby Grayer

--**Sister Dorothy Holmes – Home from rehab.**

--Sister Kim Jackson—Sister of Bro. Golden

--Sister Mable Mays

--Sister Ann McGaughey

--Dr. Russell Nichols—Continuing to progress

--Sister Minnie Powell, Mother of Sis. White

--Sister Rosetta White & Brother Willie White, Sr.

— Parents of Pastor White

--Sister Johnnie Sanders

--Brother Larry Wilson—Husband of Sis. Shun Wilson

--Sister Eloise Williams

**\*New entries in bold print**

**Remember to pray for and check on our shut-in members.**



### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

May 17 Nathan Sebastian

May 18 Sarita Brown Rhodes-Vivour

May 18

May 23, 2019 Landric Aziah Chambers

Nathan Baxter

No Anniversaries on Record this week



*Johns Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church*  
*Founded in 1889*

*Historical Highlights – 131<sup>st</sup> Church Anniversary*  
*May 17, 2020 – During COVID-19 Pandemic*

Enterprise was a forest and farm area with a total population of less than 400. Three of those farms were owned by Blacks: the Fleming, Grant, and Johns families.

The first church organized in the area was New Zion AME Church, which is located in present day Coppinville Community off Highway 84. Meetings were held on the Grant property from 1883-1889. In 1889, a Quarterly Conference held at New Zion granted permission to some members of New Zion to withdraw for the purpose of forming a new A.M.E. congregation nearer to their residence on what was then and is now Geneva Road (Highway). Members of the Johns Family were in the group authorized to organize a new church. The Johns family invited those members that left to meet on their property. Jason "Jake" Johns gave two acres for the new congregation, which began the creation of

**Johns Chapel**  
**African Methodist Episcopal Church**

All AME churches in those early years were in the Alabama Annual Conference. Johns Chapel was accepted by the conference in 1889 and made part of the circuit. The first pastor was Rev. W.L. Lewis; and Rev. S. Griffin, and the Rev. Hillard succeeded him. The South Alabama Annual Conference was organized at Johns Chapel in 1914 with Rev. W. M. Pyles as Pastor and Rt. Reverend J.H. Jones as Bishop.

The first building was destroyed by fire. The second building was destroyed by a storm. The third building lasted through four pastors. The members expressed their desire for a brick building. Construction of a brick building began in 1922 and the final cornerstone was laid in 1928. Many modern upgrades from several pastors were added to Johns Chapel between 1920-1982. Reverend Roy Peters came to Johns Chapel in 1978. In 1982, the church building was completely destroyed by fire. Reverend Peters had a vision of the church building being large enough to serve the people of Enterprise and the Wiregrass Area. One of the many things the members wanted for Johns Chapel was a basement. However, members were told that Johns Chapel sits right on top of a lake that passes under the highway.

The sanctuary's seating capacity was estimated to be 500, with a full fellowship hall and kitchen, office space, classrooms, a library, Sunday School rooms, conference room, a small chapel, and multi-purpose rooms on the two floors of the building. Due to Rev. Peter's failing health, he retired after having a stroke while working on the church. He never preached in the sanctuary he designed. However, his funeral was held in the church sanctuary in 1987 as a tribute to him. Of greater note than the improvements and renovations of the physical building and grounds, pastors have led the members to higher heights spiritually and numerically.

After Bishop James L. Davis was appointed to the 9<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District (State of Alabama) in 2008, he reorganized the conferences, and Johns Chapel is now assigned to the Southeast Alabama Conference, Ozark Troy District. The Reverend Cleophas A. Guice, Sr., Presiding Elder

(assigned September 20, 2014). Presiding Elder Guice also served as pastor of Johns Chapel from 1992-1997 and led the church in a Jubilee Season with many advances in the congregation, both spiritual and temporal. Our current Presiding Elder is Reverend Johnny Rutledge, and our current Presiding Prelate is Bishop Harry L. Seawright, who was appointed to the 9<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District in 2016 at the General Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The church family strongly feels that God has smiled on Johns Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church down through the years. Over 30 pastors have served at Johns Chapel, with Reverend J. F. McCloud serving the longest tenure of 12 years. The current pastor, The Reverend Willie White, Jr., was appointed November 3, 2018 and oversees some 30 ministries in the church. Pastor White is focused on bringing the members of the Body of Christ together and then leading them to greater heights. He is consistently positive and leads by the example of Christ. He has a constant smile an encouraging word, and wants to keep the Church vibrant, fun and effective. He has a particular love for youth and is a Spiritually charismatic leader who has a goal of leading Johns Chapel to be all that God intends her to be. He takes advantage of all available methods to win souls to Christ, e.g., traditional evangelism methods such as personal contact, class leader system, etc., as well as social media, texts, and e-mails. At this writing, 18 months since his appointment, the church has grown by leaps and bounds in Spirituality and Unity, as well as Numerically in new members and guests. Since his arrival, the church has purchased a 24-passenger bus, completed extensive ceiling repair in the sanctuary, initiated several new and productive ministries, established on-line giving opportunities, as well as many other accomplishments in the name of the Lord.

Through the years, Church Anniversary Celebrations have focused on the art of Storytelling, singing, bonding of generations, and sharing our history with our children, ensuring that it is passed down to future generations. At this writing, many of those celebration venues & events cannot be experienced due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, a virus that has caused unprecedented worldwide disruption, illness, and over 300,000 deaths (source: GOOGLE). Due to restrictive mandates to slow the spread of the virus, the congregation has not gathered in the sanctuary for worship since Sunday, March 15, 2020. During those two months, Pastor White has incorporated alternative methods of worship and fellowship via conference calls, parking lot worship, etc., in order to keep the congregation focused on God our Father, Christ our Redeemer, The Holy Spirit our Comforter, and Mankind our Family. His sermons have focused on reminding the congregation to pray without ceasing and "remain faithful in a dark place," while looking forward to God's deliverance in His time. For the 131<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Service in cars in the Church parking lot, Pastor White's sermon title and text were:

**"THIS TOO SHALL PASS" - Deuteronomy 28:1**

And it shall come to pass if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth.

The members look forward to many more years of serving God as a Congregation at this blessed location that has been consecrated and dedicated to God.

**To God be the Glory!**

## **PASTORS OF JOHNS CHAPEL AME CHURCH**

Three Pastors Who Served Prior to church entering the South Alabama Conference:

Reverend W. L. Lewis (First Pastor)

Reverend S. Griffin

Reverend Hillard

1914 - W. M. Pyles (Host - South Alabama Conference was organized at Johns Chapel)

1914-1916 J.S. King

1916-1917 T.J. Steward

1917-1921 H.T. Coleman

1921-1924 A. A. Davis

1924-1927 W. H. Hightower

1927-1930 W. D. Hargrove

1930-1931 M. C. Miles

1931-1932 R. W. Hilson

1932-1934 M. G. Dickerson

1934-1936 J. C. Jarrett

1936 W. B. Mosley

1938 R.L. Upshaw

1940-1946 M. C. Crosky

1946-1948 H. T. Coleman

1948-1949 N. J. Hunt

1949-1954 E. H. Patterson

1954 H. T. Coleman

1954-1956 S. D. Parker

1956-1966	E. V. Burkett
1966-1978	J. F. McCloud
1978-1986	R. E. Peters
1987-1988	R. G. Balthrope
1988-1990	G. W. Curry
1990-1992	Walter Sumlin
1992-1997	C. A Guice
1997-2003	T. W. Parker
2003-2005	Carl McDaniel
2005-2009	Tony C. Scott
2009-2014	Vernon McLeod
2014	Andrew T. Holtz, Jr. (Interim)
2014-2018	Trevor E. Woolridge
2018- Present	Willie White, Jr.

*Compiled from previous documents and updated as of May 17, 2020 by Marge Simmons, Christian Education Director*