

# VERMONT AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER



VERMONT AVENUE  
— BAPTIST CHURCH —  
— est. 1866 —

1630 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**WOMEN'S DAY**  
Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> @ 10AM

**ANNUAL MISSIONARY DAY**  
Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>

**GOLDEN AGE DAY**  
Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>

**WOMEN'S DAY BAKE SALE**  
Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>  
Immediately Following Service

## LET'S STAY CONNECTED

### IN PERSON

*Worship Service*  
Sundays @ 10:45AM  
Communion on 2nd Sunday

For more opportunities to  
serve, programs, and worship  
services, check Our Social  
Media, Take One Box, or  
Website

### VIRTUAL

*Sunday School*  
Sundays at 8:30 AM  
ZOOM Meeting ID: 659 757 9095  
Passcode: Vermont

### *Social Media*

YouTube/ TikTok - @VABC1630  
FaceBook/X - @VABC1630  
Instagram - @VABCD1630  
Website - [www.VABC.church](http://www.VABC.church)

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Beginning with our June 2026 edition, this space will feature a monthly message from our pastor—offering encouragement, spiritual reflection, church updates, and words to guide and inspire our congregation throughout the year.



As we launch this newsletter, we look forward to sharing these messages as part of our continued commitment to faith, fellowship, and community.

## HEALTH AWARENESS

Mental Health Awareness Month is observed each May to promote mental wellness, reduce stigma, and encourage access to support and care. Established in 1949 by Mental Health America, this annual observance highlights the importance of emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

The 2026 theme, “More Good Days, Together,” encourages individuals and communities to support one another while recognizing that mental wellness looks different for everyone. Mental health affects every aspect of life, including relationships, work, sleep, and daily functioning. Through education, advocacy, and open conversation, Mental Health Awareness Month reminds us that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

### **The blessing of a Mother's love...**

God blessed me with a wonderful mother  
Full of love and wisdom,  
Who filled my life with precious memories  
I cherish while creating new ones.  
I want you to know I love you, mum,  
For being the mother you are  
And for sowing the seeds of godliness  
That shaped me for eternity.

Happy Mother's Day!

© By M. S. Lowndes

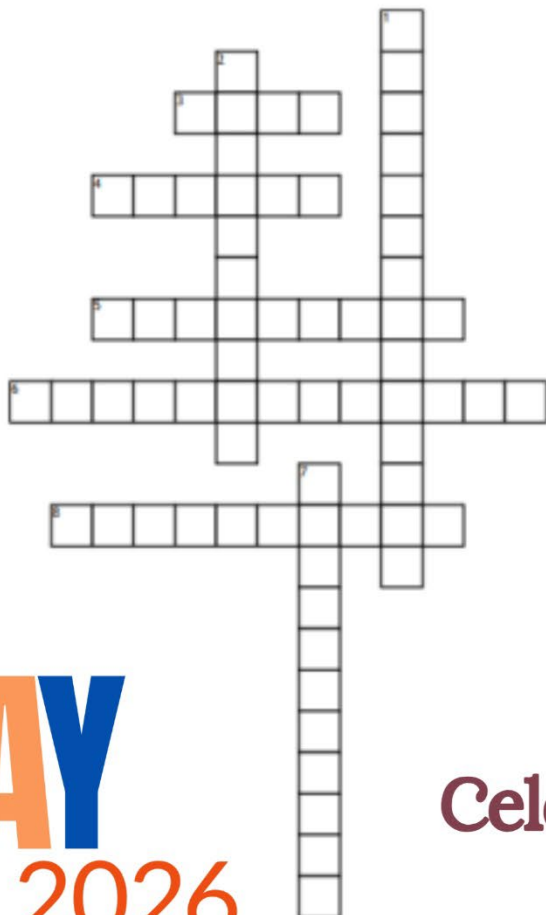
Scripture: Galatians 6:9

Ways to participate include checking in on loved ones, practicing self-care, wearing green to show support, attending awareness events, and using available resources such as the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

Special observances this month include National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day on May 7 and Mental Health Awareness Week, May 11–17.

*Please visit the Health Awareness Display on the first floor for additional information, resources, and ways to support mental wellness in our community.*

# Women's Month



**MAY**  
**2026**

## Celebrating Women

### Across

3. 1913 major suffrage parade, Black women were asked to march at the \_\_\_\_ of the parade
4. Harlem Renaissance women writers published many stories in the \_\_\_\_
5. Started as a chorus girl at the Cotton Club, ended being an advocate for civil rights?
6. First Black woman to earn a pilot's license?
8. Born enslaved, gained freedom in 1856, became an entrepreneur and philanthropist, and co-founded the first black church in Los Angeles?

### Down

1. Denied permission to sing in the Daughters of the American Revolution auditorium?
2. Organized and guided the Little Rock Nine
7. Who was the first African-American woman to become an ordained minister, a lawyer who helped found the first legal periodical about women's rights, and co-founded the National Organization of Women?

### Word Bank

Back

Crisis

Bessie Coleman

Marian Anderson

Pauli Murray

Biddy Mason

Lena Horne

Daisy Bates





### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As we introduce this newsletter, our Community Engagement section will serve as a place to highlight outreach efforts, fellowship opportunities, ministry partnerships, and ways our church family connects with the surrounding community.

Beginning in future editions, readers can look forward to updates on special events, volunteer opportunities, community programs, and moments where faith is put into action through service and fellowship.

### DID YOU KNOW?

VABC was founded in 1866 by seven freed slaves, including Rev. John Henry Brooks, the church's first pastor. Early worship services were held in the home of John and Amy Slaughter. A wooden structure was later replaced by a brick church, with its cornerstone laid in 1872. The current façade and steeple were added in later years. For more than 159 years, the church has been blessed to be led by seven pastors and two interim pastors.

**A Center for Civil Rights Leadership:** VABC has long been a center for civil rights advocacy and community action. In 1935, the church hosted NAACP meetings attended by Nannie Helen Burroughs. In 1938, more than 1,200 people gathered to hear John P. Davis speak on police brutality in Washington, D.C. During the early 1940s, A. Philip Randolph held organizing meetings at the church for the planned March on Washington. In 1942, Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. spoke at VABC in protest of discriminatory hiring practices by the Capital Transit Company.

In 1956, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke at the church on "The Challenge of a New Age," shortly after the desegregation of Montgomery's buses. He returned on February 7, 1968, following a protest against the Vietnam War. In 2010, President Barack Obama visited VABC with his family, speaking on hope, faith, and perseverance while honoring Dr. King's enduring legacy.



## MAY RECOMMENDED READING

**Theme: Faith, Kindness, Love, Peace, Growth, Purpose, Reflection, Renewal**

### YOUNG ADULTS BOOK LIST

- Featured Reads
  1. Live Fearless by Sadie Robertson Huff
  2. Own Your Everyday by Jordan Lee Dooley
  3. The Purpose Driven Life for Teens by Rick Warren
  4. Get Out of Your Head by Jennie Allen
- Real Talk & Life Growth
  1. You Are Enough by Grace Valentine
  2. This Changes Everything by Jaquelle Crowe
  3. Adored by Teen Devotional
  4. Made to Crave for Young Women by Lysa TerKeurst
- Mindfulness, Peace, & Purpose
  1. Be You Only Better by Nick Vujicic
  2. The Teen's Guide to World Domination by Josh Shipp
  3. Uninvited by Lysa TerKeurst
  4. Do Hard Things by Alex & Brett Harris

### ADULT BOOK LIST

- Spiritual Growth
1. The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren
  2. Fervent by Priscilla Shirer
  3. Battlefield of the Mind by Joyce Meyer
  4. The Power of a Praying Woman by Stormie Omartian
- Healing & Reflection
1. Uninvited by Lysa TerKeurst
  2. Forgiving What You Can't Forget by Lysa TerKeurst
  3. Jesus Calling by Sarah Young
  4. The Garden Within by Dr. Anita Phillips

### CHILDREN'S BOOK LIST

- Ages 3-6
1. Jesus Calling for Little Ones by Sarah Young
  2. God Gave Us You by Lisa T. Bergen
  3. The Beginner's Bible
  4. I Prayed for You by Jean Fischer
- Ages 6-9
1. What Is God Like? by Rachel H. Evans & Matthew P. Turner
  2. The Berenstain Bears Faithful Friends by Jan & Mike Berenstain
  3. God's Very Good Idea by Trillia Newbell
  4. The Little Pilgrim's Progress by Helen L. Taylor
- Ages 9-12
1. Indescribable by Louie Giglio
  2. The Action Bible
  3. The One Year Devotions for Kids by Children's Bible Hour Staff
  4. Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing by Sally Lloyd-Jones & Jago
- All Ages
1. Have You Filled a Bucket Today?: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids by Carol McCloud
  2. What Does It Mean to Be Kind? by Rana DiOrio
  3. The Invisible String by Patrice Karst
  4. Peaceful like a Panda by Kira Willey

### ADULT BOOK LIST CON'T

- Purpose & Life Journey
1. Atomic Habits by James Clear
  2. Crazy Love by Francis Chan
  3. The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
  4. Good Boundaries and Goodbyes by Lysa TerKeurst

### **Club / Organization / Ministry Highlight**

Beginning with our June 2026 edition, this section will shine a light on the ministries, organizations, auxiliaries, and fellowship groups that help strengthen the life and mission of our church.

Each month, we will feature a different ministry to share its purpose, history, activities, and opportunities for involvement. These highlights will celebrate the faithful service, dedication, and impact of the individuals and groups who help our church community grow in faith, fellowship, and outreach.

## PRAYER FOR OUR SICK AND SHUT-IN

***“God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.” — Psalm 46:1 NKJV***

Heavenly Father, we lift up all who are sick and shut-in before You. Thank You for being a refuge and source of strength in every season of life. We ask that You surround them with Your comforting presence and fill their hearts with peace and hope.

Lord, touch their bodies with healing, renew their strength day by day, and ease every pain and burden they may carry. For those who may feel lonely or discouraged, remind them that You are near and that they are deeply loved and remembered. Encourage their spirits, strengthen their faith, and let Your joy shine even in difficult moments.

Bless their families, caregivers, and all who provide support and compassion. May Your grace sustain them all and may Your presence bring comfort, rest, and renewed hope. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.

## BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Wishing all those celebrating birthdays in May a joyful and blessed birthday month. May God continue to guide your steps, strengthen your faith, and fill your days with peace, love, and abundant blessings. Happy Birthday and may God’s favor shine upon you throughout the year ahead!

**Let us pray.** Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of life and for each person celebrating a birthday this month. Bless them with good health, renewed strength, wisdom, and joy. Surround them with Your love and lead them in Your purpose each day. May this new year of life be filled with peace, favor, and countless blessings. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.

**MOTHER/FATHER – VACANT**  
*(For More Information Contact: Brother Shawn Ruffing)*



**Official Flower:** May’s primary birth flower is the Lily of the Valley. It symbolizes sweetness, humility, and the return of happiness.

**Official Colors:** The traditional color is Emerald Green, associated with the lush awakening of spring.

**Birthstone:** Emerald, symbolizing love, wisdom, and growth.

**Historical Name Origin:** According to the Roman poet Ovid, one of the theories behind the month's name is that it was dedicated to the maiores (Latin for “elders”), while the following month, June, was dedicated to the iuniores (“young people”).

## YOUNG ADULT CORNER

*“But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” — Amos 5:24 KJV*

To every young adult trying to find your way, remember this: your life has purpose even in difficult times. You are living in a world filled with pressure, uncertainty, rising costs, political division, online negativity, and questions about what the future will hold. Many young African American adults are carrying the weight of student debt, job insecurity, mental exhaustion, concerns about safety, discrimination, and the feeling that their voices are ignored.

But you come from a people who have survived, built, created, organized, worshiped, and kept moving forward even when the odds were against them. Your history is one of strength, brilliance, faith, resilience, and vision. Do not allow social media, public opinion, or society’s limitations to define your worth. You are more than algorithms, trends, followers, or labels. Your voice matters. Your dreams matter. Keep learning. Keep growing. Keep speaking truth. Keep protecting your peace. Keep caring for your community. Keep believing that you can build something better than what you inherited. And when you become tired, remember that God still walks with those who are trying to live with integrity, justice, compassion, and courage.

### OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

If you are interested, see the following for more information on how you can serve.

#### **A/V Ministry**

Trustee Solomon Sparrow

#### **Culinary Ministry**

Trustee Selena Anderson

#### **Missionary Ministry**

Minister Jeanette Clyburn

#### **Nurses Unit**

Deaconess Norma Jean Taylor

#### **Youth Empowerment Committee**

Sister Cynthia Milanez

**Let Us Pray.** Gracious God, we pray for young adults everywhere. Strengthen them when they feel discouraged and guide them when they feel lost. Remind them that they were created with value and purpose. Give them wisdom, courage, peace, and hope for the days ahead. Surround them with people who will encourage them, support them, and help them grow. Help this generation rise above fear, division, and despair, and become lights within their communities. And remind them every day that they do not walk alone. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

*Young Adults, we invite you to share your reflections, social commentary, words of encouragement, or faith-filled insights for possible publication in our newsletter. Email submissions to [cmsocialmedia@yabc.org](mailto:cmsocialmedia@yabc.org) or see any member of the Communications Ministry.*

## SENIOR'S CORNER

Getting older doesn't have to come with vision loss. May is #HealthyVisionMonth, a perfect time to learn more about protecting your #eyes and #vision health as you age. You can wear sunglasses, get regular eye exams, and so much more. Find out more about eye-healthy habits from the @National Institutes of Health (NIH): <https://www.nei.nih.gov/KeepYourEyesHealthy>. #Aging

1. Find an eye doctor you trust.
2. Ask how often you need a dilated eye exam.
3. Add more movement to your day.
4. Get your family talking about eye history.



5. Step up your healthy eating game.
6. Make a habit of wearing your sunglasses, even on cloudy days.
7. Stay on top of long-term health conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure.
8. If you smoke, make a plan to quit.

## VABC PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT WOMEN'S DAY LUNCHEON Saturday, April 25, 2026 12Noon

The Women's Day Luncheon at VABC was truly a spirit-filled and memorable celebration centered on praise, reflection, and sisterhood. Anchored in **Psalm 35:9**, *"Then my soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in His salvation,"* the atmosphere overflowed with joy and gratitude as women gathered to testify of God's goodness. One of the most touching moments of the luncheon was when attendees wrote on boards answering the prompts, "Right now I am praising God for..." and "This week God showed up for..." creating a beautiful visual testimony of faith, healing, and thanksgiving.

The group God's Favor lifted the room with melodious songs that inspired worship and heartfelt praise. The Women's Day Committee truly showed up and showed out, especially the Wright Family — Alanda, Fonda, and Kiana — whose outstanding



decorations and attention to every detail made the event elegant and welcoming. Deaconess Clyburn, now newly ordained Minister Clyburn, blessed the food with grace and warmth.

Guests were especially moved by the beautiful generational reflections presented by Sister Lynn Taylor Moore honoring her mother, Sister Tessie Taylor, Sister Yvette Dill, and the ever-spicy Sister Nikita C. Woodward, who reminded everyone that millennials may simply be misunderstood, but they still deeply

love and value their elders. The luncheon concluded powerfully with remarks from Women's Day Chairwoman, Deacon in Training Antoinette T. Ward, words of encouragement from Co-Chair Deaconess Theresa Cook alongside Sister Vickie Pipkin, and the benediction from Interim Pastor Rev. Michael C. Miller.

Pictured (from left to right): Teraesa Holland, Cynthia Wheeler, Domonique Cook, Felicia Johnson

Not Pictured:

Organ - Jerrod Cook, Director of God's Favor

Piano – Solomon Sparrow, Min of Music VABC

## ANSWERS

1. Marian Anderson
2. Daisy Bates
3. Back
4. Crisis
5. Lena Horne
6. Bessie Coleman
7. Pauli Murray
8. Biddy Mason

## COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

[CMSocialMedia@vabc.org](mailto:CMSocialMedia@vabc.org)

TEAM LEAD: Sister Lanita Sparrow

SOCIAL MEDIA: Trustee Sharonda Savoy

NEWSLETTER: Rev. Dr. Angela Fox Wheeler

BULLETIN BOARDS: Sister Debra Campbell

PHOTOGRAPHER: Trustee Solomon Sparrow

PROJECT MANAGER: Trustee Renata Miller

WEBSITE: Sister Stephanie Scott

LIASION: Trustee Alfred Martin