



Rev. Ronald L. Bowens
Pastor

FRIENDSHIP'S VOICE

FEBRUARY 2026

VOL. 13, ISSUE 2

“Exhalt the Savior, Equip the Saint, Evangelize the Sinner.”

Love

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FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- 1 - Children’s Ministry opening
- 7 - Creative Learning Ministry workshop
- 8 - Superbowl Sunday
- 10 - FBC FLC Soft Re-opening
- 12 - Free Skills Camp & Open Run
- 14 - Valentine’s Day
- 16 - President’s Day
- 28 - Senior’s Ministry Fellowship
- 28 - “Still I Rise” Workshop

THEME OF THE MONTH

Love

WRITTEN BY SIS. HYACINTH CHUNG



Love encompasses a range of strong and positive emotional and mental states, ranging from the most sublime virtue or good habit to the deepest interpersonal affection for the simplest of pleasures.

You can have positive love and negative love.

Positive Love: the virtue of representing human kindness, compassion, and affection; and

Negative Love: it's a vice representing human moral flaws, vanity, selfishness, and egotism.

Ancient Greek philosophers identified five forms of love:

Storge – Familial love

Philia – Friendly or platonic love

Eros – Romantic love

Xenia – Guest love

Agape – Divine love

Encompassed in these five love forms are also: unrequited love, empty love, companionate love, consummate love, infatuated love, self-love, and courtly love. The triangular theory of love suggests the feelings of intimacy, passion, and commitment. Love has additional religious or spiritual meaning. This diversity of uses and meanings, combined with the complexity of the feelings involved, makes love unusually difficult to consistently define, compared to other emotional states.

The love that God extends to us and expects us to share with others is Agape love. This is the covenant love of God for humans, as well as the human reciprocal love for God. This is a selfless love that is passionately committed to the well-being of others.



I Corinthians 13:1-8 tells us clearly what love is and how to extend love through God's eyes and his ways. Anything that we do, no matter how great or small, if love is not in it, it means nothing to God. No matter how many spiritual gifts we have and flaunt, without love, it means nothing to us. All the sacrifices we may make, without love, mean nothing. Love is long-suffering, it is kind, it does not envy, it does not show off, and it is not puffed up. Love is not egotistical, it's not easily provoked and thinks of no evil. It does not rejoice in wrongdoing but stands firm and rejoices in truth. In all things it bears up, believes, hopes, and endures. From Faith, Hope, and Love, the greatest is LOVE.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God has always expounded on Love. Leviticus 19:18, God told us to "love thy neighbor as thyself"; and Deuteronomy 6:5, "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might". Also, Jesus said the same words in Matthew 22:37. This is the Great and First Commandment.

The first step to practicing good Christian principles is to love, love, love, not only your family or friends but your neighbors, your enemies, those on the job that talk about you, those in your circle that like to sow seeds of discord, love them because Love covers a multitude of sins. (I Peter 4:8); and lastly, 1 John 4:8 says, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is Love.

Scripture of the Month

**The LORD hath appeared of old
unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved
thee with an everlasting love:
therefore with lovingkindness have
I drawn thee.**

JEREMIAH 31:3 (KJV)

HYMN OF THE MONTH

Love Lifted Me

WRITTEN BY JAMES ROWE

1. I was sink-ing deep in sin, Far from the peace-ful shore,
 2. All my heart to Him I give, Ev - er to Him I'll cling,
 3. Souls in dan-ger, look above, Je - sus com-plete-ly saves;

5 Ver - y deep-ly stained with-in, Sink-ing to rise no more;
 In His bless-ed pres - ence live, Ev - er His prais-es sing.
 He will lift you by His love Out of the an-gry waves.

9 But the Mas-ter of the sea Heard my de-spair-ing cry,
 Love so might-y and so true Mer - its my soul's best songs;
 He's the Mas-ter of the sea, Bil - lows His will o - bey;

13 From the wa-ters lift - ed me— Now safe am I.
 Faith-ful, lov-ing serv-ice, too, To Him be - longs.
 He your Sav-ior wants to be— Be saved to - day.

me, me,

17 e-ven me, e-ven me,
 Love lift - ed Love lift - ed When nothing

22 1. else could help, Love lift-ed me; 2. Love lift-ed me.

Pray for those on our "Sick and Shut-in" List

AS WELL AS THOSE GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE



Send them a card, give them a call, visit them. You never know how much it could mean to them.

Mr. William Annan

Sis. Charre Armstrong

Bro. Charles Bailey

Bro. Robert Beal

Bro. Willie Benton

Min. Karen Blacknell

Sis. Sheila Blackwell

Dea. Willie Blake

Bro. Don Bowens

Sis. Liz Bowens

Barbara Williams Brown

Sis. Denise Brown

Sis. Alice Burnes

Bro. Dwayne Bynum

Sherita Caldwell

Breann Caldwell

Dominique Caldwell

Nick Caldwell

The Carmack Family

Sis. Chastity Collier

Sis. Sarah Collins

Sis. Trisha Dawson

Sis. Carolyn Dukes

Bro. Joe Dukes

Sis. Andrea Green

Sis. Ruth Griggs

Sis. Barbara Hall

Sis. Dorothy Hines

Bro. Willie Irvin

Sis. Jennifer Jones

Bro. Patrick Jones

Sis. Quincie Joyner

Ms. Jessie McCall

Sis. Valerie McClendon

Sis. Josephine May

Bro. Will May

Sis. Diane Meeks

Miss. Kaitlyn Miles

Sis. Alice Murphy

Tressa Norwood

Ms. Patricia Ochogu

Bro. Charles Phinizy

The Poe Family

Sis. Carrie Rawls

Sis. Walleen Robinson

Sis. Linda Rogers

Sis. Cindy Rollins

Sis. Carrie Royals

Sis. Nilda C Sankitts

Sis. Jacqueline Scott

Sis. Tonya Sellers

Sis. Juanita Semedo

Mr. Claudius Stafford

Bro. Xavier Stephens

Sis. Mabel Thomas

The Wells Family

Bro. Clarence Wilkerson

Rev. Dwight Wilkerson

Sis. Shelby Wilkerson

Sis. Valerie Williams

Sis. Joan Wilson

Sis. Sadie Wilson

Bro. Victor Winston Jr.

Sis. Priscilla Wise

Sis. Dorothy Woods

Sis. Lola Wright

Prayer changes things.



Black History Month

100th Anniversary!

This year marks a powerful milestone—100 years since the United States first began formally celebrating Black history, a tradition that started with Carter G. Woodson’s establishment of Negro History Week in 1926 and has since grown into the nationally recognized Black History Month. What began as a call to acknowledge the achievements and contributions of Black Americans has become an enduring reminder that Black history is American history—rich with resilience, innovation, faith, and community. Yet, as we honor this centennial moment, we also recognize that many stories remain untold. In this edition of Friendship’s Voice, we will shine

a light on predominantly Black affluent and well-to-do cities whose legacies have been erased or overlooked throughout our nation’s history. By revisiting these thriving communities, we celebrate not only what was built but the spirit of excellence that sustained them. At the same time, we are proud to highlight members of our own congregation who are actively educating, serving, and impacting their communities today. Their work reflects the very foundation laid by those who came before us—demonstrating that Black history is not only something we remember each February, but something we continue to create every day through service, leadership, and unwavering faith.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

African American Towns in the United States

WRITTEN BY SIS. DIANE RUSSELL
AND SIS. JENNIFER JONES



As we celebrate Black History Month, it is important to recognize the remarkable history of towns established and governed by African Americans. Throughout the United States, there are more than 125 cities in over 25 states that were founded and led by African American communities.

Some of these towns have gained national attention through movies, such as the story of Rosewood in Florida, ongoing legal proceedings related to Tulsa in Oklahoma, or

commemorative plaques placed in Central Park in New York. These examples highlight just a few of the many self-governing African American towns across the country.

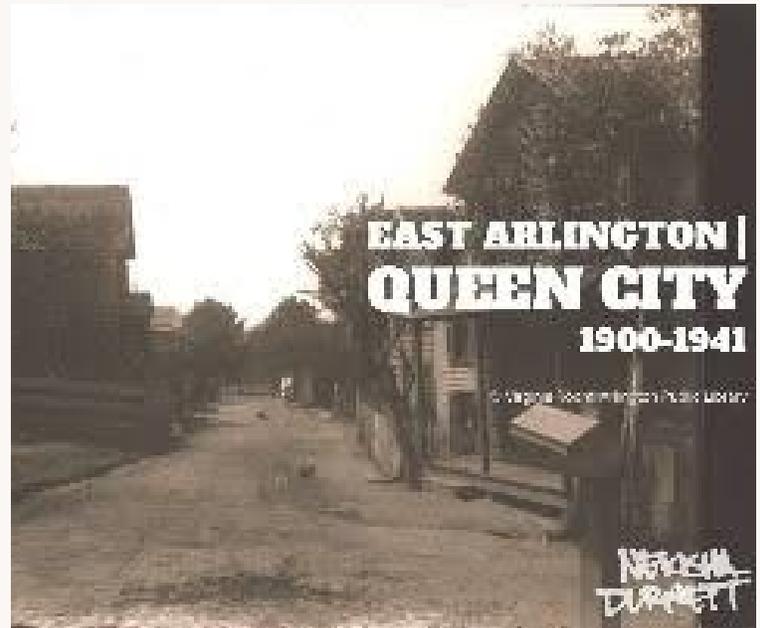
The formation of these cities can be traced to Africans who arrived in the Americas and engaged in trade with both Native Americans and European settlers. In addition, many towns were founded by freed slaves who sought to build communities of their own after gaining their freedom.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: AA TOWNS IN THE UNITED STATES



Robbins, Illinois stands as one of the earliest incorporated Black towns in the United States, founded in 1917. The establishment of Robbins was led by Thomas J. Kellar, who became the town's first mayor. Between 1917 and 1920, Robbins attracted a population of more than 6,000 residents. Many of these individuals came to the town to farm, hunt, and start their own businesses, seeking opportunities and self-determination.

The founding of Robbins was a direct response to the realities of segregation and the hostile environment faced by freed slaves following emancipation. The town provided a haven where African American families could thrive, govern themselves, and create economic opportunities free from external oppression. Notably, Robbins was also home to the first Black-owned airport, Robbins Airport, further highlighting the community's pioneering spirit and achievements.



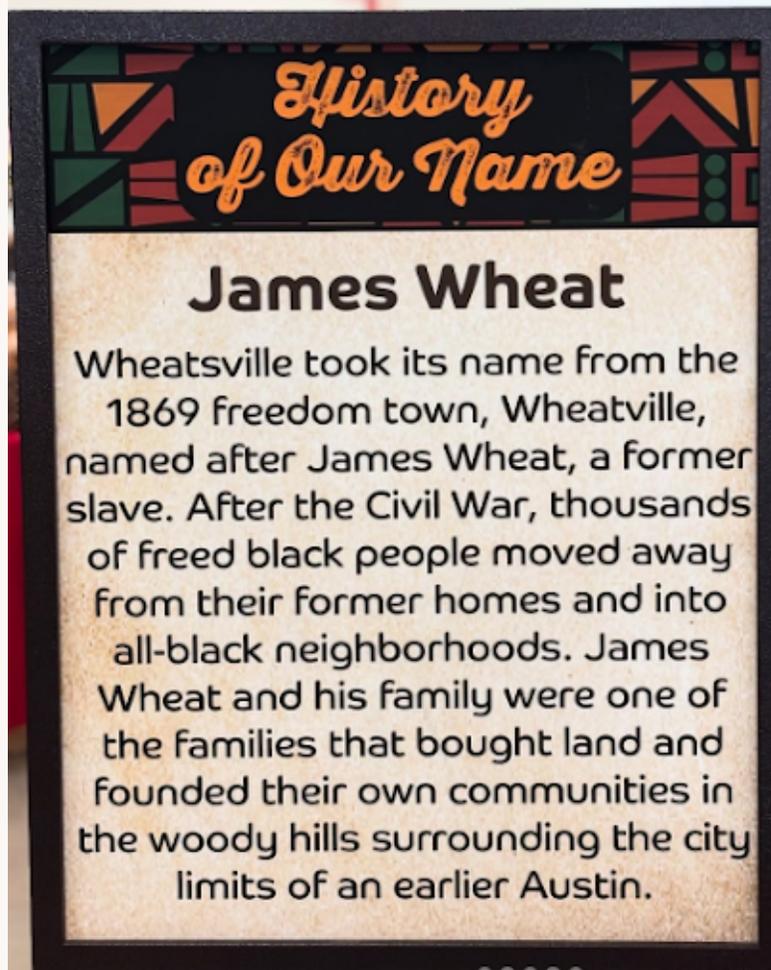
Queen City, Virginia developed into a close-knit and thriving community, where residents established businesses, built schools, and formed churches that served as the heart of daily life. The town fostered a strong sense of identity and self-reliance among its inhabitants, who worked together to maintain a vibrant and self-sufficient environment.

Despite its success and sense of community, Queen City faced a significant turning point around 1940. The government decided to acquire the land for the construction of the Pentagon, resulting in the displacement of families who had called the town home for decades. Homeowners were compensated at amounts below the actual value of their property, and many residents were given only a few weeks to secure new places to live, causing considerable upheaval and distress.

In response to the rapid demolition of the

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: AA TOWNS IN THE UNITED STATES

town, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt intervened by arranging for trailers to be built to provide temporary housing for the displaced residents. These trailers became a makeshift solution, and some families ended up living in them for over two years as they worked to rebuild their lives after the loss of their homes and community.



Wheatville, Texas was founded by James Wheat, a freed slave who sought to create a space for African Americans to thrive. One of the town's most significant achievements was the establishment of the first Black-owned newspaper in the area, known as the Austin Gold Dollar. Jacob Fontaine served as the newspaper's inaugural editor, bringing news and information to the community.

The residents of Wheatville included merchants and skilled laborers, reflecting a diverse and industrious population. These jobs played a crucial role in sustaining the town and fostering a sense of self-sufficiency among its inhabitants.

Wheatville's prosperity, however, faced major challenges beginning in 1928 with the implementation of the Austin city plan. This plan redirected resources and public facilities away from Wheatville, making it increasingly difficult for residents to access essential services. As a result, many were forced to relocate, and the area began to decline. The influx of white residents into the neighborhood contributed to a rise in the cost of living, further displacing the original African American community.

The loss of community resources reached a turning point in 1932, when Wheatville's only school was closed. This event marked the end of an era for the town, as families had to seek education elsewhere, and the sense of community was further eroded.



Allensworth, California was founded in 1908 by Allen Allensworth and stands as the first city in the state to be both financially

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: AA TOWNS IN THE UNITED STATES

independent and governed entirely by African Americans. Together with William Alexander Payne, Allensworth established the California Colony and Home Promotion Association, which was instrumental in the purchase of 20 acres of land from the Pacific Farming Company. Between 1912 and 1915, Allensworth received widespread recognition throughout California, with headlines often highlighting the town's status as a thriving, all-Black community.

The founders also established the first African American school district in the area, reflecting the town's commitment to education and advancement. Allensworth further distinguished itself with a range of civic institutions, including a library, hotel, church, and courthouse, which served as key pillars of community life.

In 1914, the town faced significant challenges when the Santa Fe Railroad moved its train depot from Allensworth to the nearby town of Alpaugh, resulting in a major economic setback. That same year, a drought struck the region, compounded by the redirection of water resources away from Allensworth. Despite these hardships, the town's 1915 voter registration records showed that Allensworth remained home to a diverse group of residents, including farmers, storekeepers, carpenters, and nurses, among others.

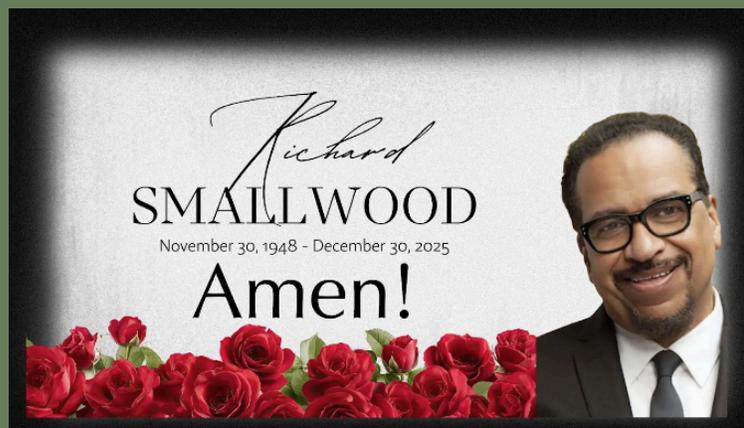
Tragically, in 1966, Allensworth was demolished after arsenic was discovered in the community's water supply, bringing an end to a significant chapter in the state's

history of African American self-governance and achievement.

These are just a few of the hundreds of black towns that were populated by black people in the 18th and 19th centuries. These towns were flourishing, prospering, and building communities. Some cities were destroyed by violence, some by economic strategy, and some by fear of the African American people striving to be self-sufficient and self-governed.



Highlighting the Congregation



Richard Smallwood was a beloved gospel music artist, born in Atlanta, Georgia, whose gift for worship through music touched countless lives around the world. He is most famously known for timeless songs such as “Total Praise,” “The Center of My Joy,” “I Love the Lord,” and many more that have become pillars in the gospel music repertoire.

One of his most profound contributions, “Total Praise,” carries a deeply personal story. Written during a season of personal distress and emotional struggle, Richard Smallwood found inspiration in Psalm 121, which speaks of lifting our eyes to the Lord, our help and sustainer. Through this scripture, he poured his faith, hope, and trust in God into the song—transforming his pain into a powerful declaration of praise.

To this day, Total Praise continues to uplift and encourage hearts across generations, serving as a musical testament to unwavering faith in the midst of life’s challenges. Amen!

– Submitted by Sis. Cynthia Urquhart



The “Smart Cookie™” is Changing The Way America Snacks

The world’s first cookie with edible fun facts stamped onto the bottom.

Founder Courtnee Maxey has been connected with Friendship for about 2 months since moving here from Texas. She launched the business after an unexpected challenge: enduring over 18 hours of power outages during an extreme Texas summer heat wave amid July 2025.



HIGHLIGHTING THE CONGREGATION

Instead of letting the experience defeat her, Courtnee used it as the spark to build something she could control, a dessert business blending her love for science, flavor and creativity.

The result? An experience that's not just about taste, but also about inspiration. Proving that even in the heat, you can create something sweet.



The Smart Cookie is an edible collectible made to spark your curiosity and feed your soul. It has never been done before... until now. The fun facts are designed & printed using an icing sheet and FDA-approved edible ink.

This is more than just cookies. This is invention. This is innovation. This is history in the making. We're starting small right here in the DFW, with small batch, handcrafted cookies baked fresh every week. This is only the beginning.



Contact

To arrange an interview, live demo, or send samples, please contact
Courtnee Maxey

Email:

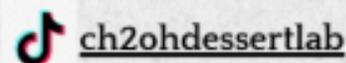
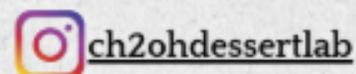
ch2ohdessertlab@gmail.com

Phone:

(214) 744-3873

Website:

www.ch2ohdessertlab.com



UPCOMING EVENTS

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Beginning February 1st

Drop off children 4-5 across from the Nursery
Doors open @ 9:45am - Pick-up after church

We are seeking
adult volunteers,
interested contact...

Contact Sis. Linda Davis
📧 healed_2001@yahoo.com
☎ 678-372-1690

Community Fitness Classes

SOFT REOPENING

Friendship Baptist Church & Tone Zone Fitness

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Senior Fitness Class

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

- Low-impact & joint-friendly
- Improve balance & strength
- Welcoming environment



FBC FLC Soft Reopening! February 10, 2026

Beginner HIIT Fitness Class

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

- Energizing workout
- Modifications for all levels
- Build strength & confidence



More to Come in
March 2026!
Register NOW!

Friendship Baptist Church

Tone Zone FITNESS

All Fitness Levels Welcome!

Join us for health, fitness & fellowship.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FBC CREATIVE LEARNING WORKSHOP

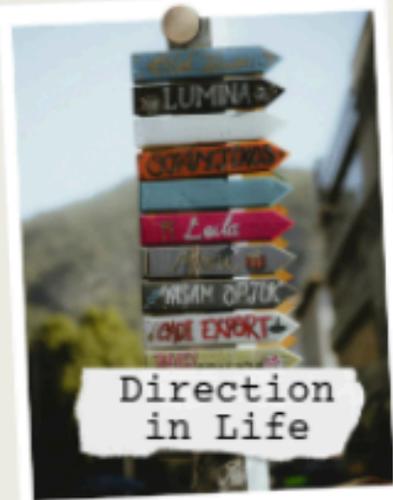
Free Workshop
Erichka Rogers
404-819-6901



Freedom



Career
Goals



Direction
in Life

VISION BOARDS

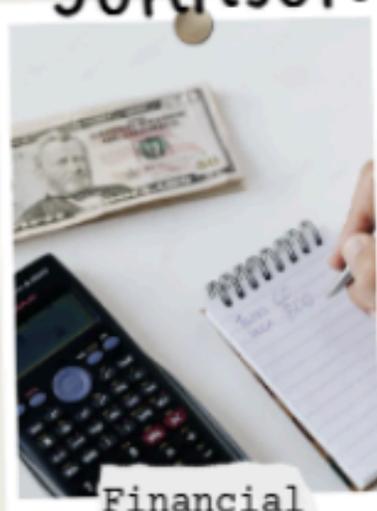
February 7,
2026
10 am - 1pm
Instructor:
Sharon
Johnson



Spiritual
Goals



Self-Care



Financial
Goals



Family
Goals

UPCOMING EVENTS

FREE SKILLS CAMP & OPEN RUN

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH



FBC
COMMUNITY
OUTREACH
 hosted by
ETG

Open to All Ages: Boys & Girls.

SKILLS CAMP
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

OPEN RUN
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF BASKETBALL!

Location: Friendship Baptist Church | 3375 Church St. | Duluth, GA 30096
 All skill levels welcome-come get better, then get buckets! Spread the word!

*Scan the QR code and click on the Family Life Center
 Registration & Waiver Tab or Visit the website at
fbcduluth.org and click the same*

FOCUS



Jamaica Initiative Shifts to Permanent Reconstruction

GOAL #1-Empower local communities

GOAL #2-FBC members mission trip

For more information go to fbcduluth.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



We're Back
55+
Senior
Ministry
Fellowship

Saturday, February 28th-11:00 am @ Family Life Center

Join us for fellowship, prayer, & activity planning

**FMI contact Reverend Eugene Graves 770.710.5016
 or Mother Brenda Graves 770.710.5128**



"Still I Rise"



Cake Making & Life Lessons Workshop

Saturday, February 28, 2:30-4:00 PM | FLC

Presenter: Mrs. Quinteria Dendy

Register online at
fbcduluth.org
 by **February 20th**
 Fee: \$0.00



Owner Operator
 of Sumthin
 Sweet Cake
 Factory

FMI: Cynthia Urquhart 501-554-5208 or cynthiaurquhart71602@gmail.com
 Ages 6-17: "Parents are welcomed to attend with "Childrental Consent"

"The love that God extends to us and expects us to share with others is Agape love."

Thanks for reading

Friendship's Voice

Friendship's Voice is looking for a new Editor in Chief! For more information, contact Bro. Louie Malone at tag49llm@aol.com.



Communications Ministry

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Louie Malone

Vice President

Tina Patterson

Secretary

Hyacinth Chung

Assistant Secretary

DeLauryn Brown

Treasurer

Michal Patterson

Chaplain

Regina Gilbert

Deacon Advisor

Michael Bailey

Newsletter Team

Editor-in-Chief

DeLauryn Brown

Editor/Proofreader

Christine Smith

Paulette Tapp

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DeLauryn Brown

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Shirley Price

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Louie Malone

Reporters/Writers

Latrell Carr

Hyacinth Chung

Jennifer Jones

Diane Russell

Christine Smith

Improvements to FBC's website are ongoing. Feedback can be provided to the

Communications Ministry at

tag49llm@aol.com



A Purpose-Driven Church

Friendly through Fellowship
 Developed through Discipleship
 Enlarged through Evangelism
 Sharing and Caring through Servanthood
 Stronger through God's Word and True Worship

Church Address and Contact Information

3375 Church Lane Duluth, GA 30096

Contact: Rita Bowens, Executive Assistant @ 770-497-8227

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Friday 9:00am - 3:00pm

Email: fbcduluth@att.net

Website: www.fbcduluth.org

Leadership

FBC ASSOCIATE MINISTERS

Rev. Ken Blacknell

Elder Chris Evans

Rev. Garfield Garner

Rev. Eugene Graves

Min. Shurron Green

Rev. Stanley Jackson

Rev. Artis Johnson

Min. Larry Jones

Rev. Timothy Twyman

Rev. Stanley Williams

Rev. Alton Wilson

FBC MINISTERS OF EVANGELISM

Min. Karen Blackwell

Evg. Geneva Burse

Evg. Valerie A. Montague

Evg. Ruthell Morris

Evg. Kimberly Rogers

Min. Monique Stroman

Min. Barbara Williams