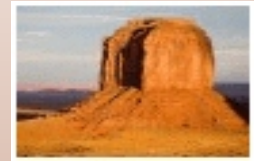


The Rock



“On Christ, The solid Rock, I stand...”

Flat Rock C.M.E. Church Newsletter

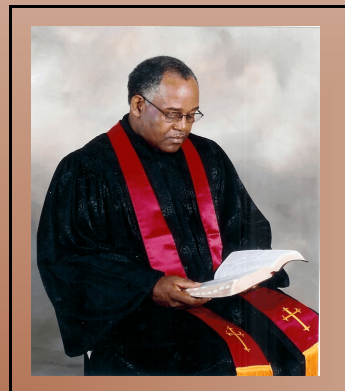
July 2007 † Vol. 1 • Issue 1

Special Edition

A Silver Celebration for Pastor Thornton

Celebrating 25 Years of *Service*

This July, Pastor Eddie S. Thornton celebrates 25 years of pastoring at Flat Rock C.M.E Church. Under the ministry of Pastor Thornton, Flat Rock C.M.E. Church has grown with his spiritual



leadership. Membership and attendance have also increased, and still continues to do so. Flat Rock Church, worship service expansion, now includes an Evangelism Ministry, as well as a weekly Bible Study.

Because of this growth, the Flat Rock C.M.E. Church family was inspired to expand its spiritual outreach into the community by building the Flat Rock Family Life Center. Open house for the Life Center was held May 26, 2006. The Life Center gymnasium was

officially named The Eddie Thornton Christian Fellowship Center.

And now, as we come to a milestone celebrating Pastor Thornton’s 25 years of *Service* at Flat Rock C.M.E. Church, Pastor Thornton reflects on his past years at Flat Rock:

Greetings in the name of Christ, Jesus of Nazareth!

Twenty-five years ago, on the campus of Paine College in Augusta, Ga., the Georgia Annual Conference was held. In the Gilbert Lambuth Memorial Chapel, on campus, Bishop Joseph C. Coles was the presiding bishop. It was at this conference, I was appointed pastor in charge of the Flat Rock Circuit, which included several churches: Norman Grove C.M.E. Church, St. James C.M.E. Church, and Flat Rock C.M.E. Church. Then, two years later (1984), I was appointed pastor in charge of Flat Rock C.M.E. Church.

From 1982 until the present, I have served as pastor of Flat Rock Church. I am grateful to the members who embraced us and have supported every effort. My life has been shaped by members of this church, for you have made me, by opening opportunities and challenges that shaped me and allowed me to grow up in Christ, who is the head of the body, the church.

But, for the past twenty-five years I have truly been blessed. The Lord has been so very good to me. If I had to tell the truth, I’ve had some good days, and I’ve had some sleepless nights. There were times I asked, “Why me Lord?” Then I would look around me and think things over, and it would always come back to me. He’s been good to me.

Continued on page 2

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In this Issue...

A Silver Celebration for Pastor Thornton 1

The 12 Tribes of Israel a
Flat Rock’s Official News b

Flat Rock’s Scholarships Awarded 4

The Body is Your Temple 4



Special Points of Interest:

The Pastor’s Corner 2

The First Lady’s Message 2

The Word 3

Flat Rock’s Good News 3

The Congregation’s Recipes 3

Youth Center Section 4

Flat Rock’s Calendar 4

Did You Know? 4

Continued from page 1

Furthermore, I thank God Almighty for the spirit of cooperation from our devoted Officers, Board of Stewards, Stewardesses, Class Leaders, Recording Steward, Treasurer, Trustees, Board of Christian Education, Director (BOCE), Women Missionary Society, Board of Ushers, Choirs, Men Fellowship, CYF, Sunday School, Young Adult Fellowship, Adult Fellowship, Musicians, Outreach Ministry, Secretary, Exec. Secretary, Recreation Ministry, Children Church, Membership and Evangelism, Pastor's Aide Ministry, Van Ministry, Sound Personnel, Education Excellence Ministry, and the Church Publication (The Rock).

And, I would be remissed if I did not thank God for my darling wife and helpmate, Betty L. Johnson Thornton. She has been a true inspiration, deep-rooted motivator, and continued source of support in my life and ministry for the past 34 years. Thank you, Betty, and may God bless you.

Finally, to all of my brothers, sisters, and friends, thank you for twenty-five years of blessed service. I shall never forget the love you have shown my family and me. Thanks, Flat Rock, for the privilege to serve!

Pastor Eddie S. Thornton

The Pastor's Corner

21 Shelah was one of Judah's sons. The descendants of Shelah were Er (the father of Lecah); Laadah (the father of Mareshah); the families of linen workers at Beth-ashbea; 22 Jokim; the men of Cozeba; and Joash and Saraph, who ruled over Moab and Jashubi-lehem. These names all come from ancient records. 23 They were the pottery makers who lived in Netaim and Gederah. They lived there and worked for the king.

1 Chronicles 4:21-23 (NLT)

Potters were the very highest grade of workers, but "the king" needed potters, and therefore they were in royal service, although the material upon which they worked was nothing but clay. We, too, may be engaged in the menial part of the Lord's work, but it is a great privilege

to do anything for "the King." Therefore, we will abide in our calling, hoping that, "although we have lien among the pots, yet shall we be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her heathers with yellow gold." The text tells us of those who dwell among plants and hedges had rough, rustic hedging and ditching work to do. They may have desired to live in the city, amid its life, society, and refinement, but they kept their appointed places, for they also were doing the king's work.

The place of our habitation is fixed, and we are not to remove from it, out of whim and caprice, but seek to serve the Lord in it, by being a blessing to those among whom we reside. These potters and gardeners had royal company, for they dwell "with the king," and although among hedges and plants, they dwelt with the king there.

No lawful place, or gracious occupation, however mean, can debar us from communion with our divine Lord. In visiting hovels, swarming lodging-houses, workhouses, or gaols, we may go with the King. In all works of faith, we may count upon Jesus' fellowship. It is when we are in His work that we may reckon upon His smile.

Ye unknown workers who are occupied for your Lord amid the dirt and wretchedness of the low, be of good cheer. For jewels have been found upon hills of dirt, earthen pots have been filled with heavenly treasure, and ill weeds have been transformed into precious flowers. Dwell ye with the King for His work, and when He writes His chronicles, your name shall be recorded.

A Message From Our First Lady

Greetings in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. May the blessing and peace of God be upon each of you.



This month, I attended a music workshop in Macon, Ga. The song that resonated with me the most was Isaiah 40. This song was taken from the biblical text of ***Isaiah 40:28-31 (KJV)***.

Chester worked diligently with us on this song for a great deal of time. Please enjoy the text, as we were blessed to enjoy the music and the words.

continued on page 3

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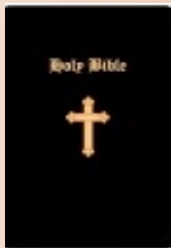
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28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. 29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: 31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

First Lady Betty Thornton

The Word:

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? Saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. Isaiah 1:11 (NJV)



God was unhappy with their sacrifices, but He was not revoking the system of sacrifices He had initiated with Moses. Instead, God was calling for sincere faith and devotion. The leaders were carefully making the traditional sacrifices and

offerings at holy celebrations, but they were still unfaithful to God in their hearts. Sacrifices were to be outward signs of their faith in God, but the outward signs became empty because no faith existed. Why then, did they continue to offer sacrifices? Like many people today, they had come to put more faith in the rituals of their religion, than in the God they worshiped. They had no faith and no purpose.

The power of focusing can be seen in light. Diffused light has little power or impact, but you can concentrate its energy by focusing it. With a magnifying glass, the rays of the sun can be focused to set grass or paper on fire. When light is focused even more as a laser beam, it can cut through steel.

In Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, it states that without a clear purpose, we will continue to change directions, jobs, relationships, churches, or other externals. We are constantly hoping each change will settle the confusion or fill the emptiness in our heart. Don't live carelessly or unthinkingly; make sure you understand what it is that God wants in your life.

If you want your life to have impact, focus it! Stop dabbling. There is nothing quite as potent as a focused life, one lived with purpose.

Flat Rock's Good News

~ Marriages ~

Sabrina Butler & Aundray Harper, on April 21, 2007
Judy Wheeler & Rev. Richard Sheller, on May 5, 2007

~ Births ~

Makaya Anaya Tate, born on April 16, 2007
to Katina Curry & Chris Tate
Endiya Jaleece Burton, born on June 4, 2007
to Jamie & Romeshia Burton

~ Anniversaries ~



~ Retirements ~

Ms. Brenda Rouse - Hart County Middle School, 32 yrs.
Mrs. Charlotte Harper - Hart Co. Board of Educ., 33 yrs.
Both retired at the end of 2006-07 academic school year.

Flat Rock's Necrology: (Obituary)

Mrs. Ruby Jones of Cleveland, Ohio, passed on July 1, 2007. *She was the sister of Mr. Robert "Bob" Jones.*

Recipes from the Congregation

Frozen Strawberry Dessert

8 oz. frozen strawberries
8 oz. cream cheese
¼ cup sugar
15 oz. crushed pineapple (drained)
Container of cool whip
2-3 bananas sliced
1½ cups mini marshmallows (optional)
1 cup pecans chopped (optional)

Blend cream cheese and sugar. Mix remaining ingredients (except cool whip) in with the cream cheese mixture. After mixing ingredients, fold in cool whip.
Pour in a 9x13 container suitable for freezing
Freeze 2-3 hours. Cut into squares before serving.

submitted by Mrs. Pam Martin

The Youth Center

~ HS Graduates ~

Steve Burton, Jr. - Hart Co. High School
Channing Allen - Elbert Co. Comprehensive HS
Marques Hughes - Orlando, Florida

~ College Graduates ~

Avery Harper - Garner Webb Univ., BS
Son of Woodrow and Charlotte Harper
Braddrick Teasley - Georgia Southern Univ.
Son of Ms. Brenda Teasley
Lillie Sturgis - ITC Seminary Extension Program,
Atlanta, GA
Pastor Eddie S. Thornton - ITC Extension Program,
Atlanta, GA.

~ Sports ~



~ Scholarships Awarded ~

Flat Rock C.M.E. Church Family held Student Recognition, Sunday, June 10, 2007. Forty-one students, from pre-K through college, were recognized for outstanding achievements during the 2006 - 2007 academic year. Students from pre-K through the eleventh grade received a certificate and \$10. Graduating high school seniors received certificates, a Bible, \$50 and a \$100 scholarship from the Flat Rock Missionary Society. College graduates received a certificate and \$50.

The Body is Your Temple

Signs of a Stroke

Know the Signs: Because stroke injures the brain, you may not realize that you are having a stroke. To a bystander, someone having a stroke may just look unaware or confused. Stroke victims have the best chance if someone around them recognizes the symptoms and acts quickly.

The **symptoms of stroke** are distinct because they happen quickly:

- † Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg (especially on one side of the body)
- † Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech
- † Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- † Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- † Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Source from NIH and NINDS - website

Flat Rock Church 2007 Calendar

July

- 7 **Elder Lee's Appreciation**, Flat Rock Life Center
- 8 **Rev. Richard Sheller's Appreciation**. Pastor Thornton, the choir, and church family are invited.
- 14-15 **Family Life Center reserved**, Family reunion
- 15 **Rev. Tracy Curry's Appreciation Service**, 4:00 p.m. Pastor Thornton, the choir, and church family are invited.
- 16-22 **Pastor Thornton's Appreciation Week**
An Appreciation Banquet
(on Saturday - July 21, 2007, at 7:00 p.m.)
Adult tickets for Banquet are \$15 ea.; youth, ages 8-18, are \$10 ea. The Appreciation Service will be held on Sunday, July 22, 2007, at 4:00 p.m.
- 29 **Fellowship Service**, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Anderson, SC, 4:00 p.m. Pastor Thornton, the choir & the church family are invited.

August

- 4 **Back to School Youth Jamboree**, Family Life Center
- 6-10 **Pastor Thornton** will be in revival at Wesley Chapel UMC, Elberton, GA.
- 12-17 **Homecoming & Annual Revival Services**
- 18 **Family Reunion**, Family Life Center reserved
- 25 **Wedding Reception**, Family Life Center reserved

~ Celebrations ~

Members of the **Barnes Family Reunion** attended worship service on May 27, 2007, and had their family dinner in the Flat Rock Church Family Life Center.

Did You Know~the Shortest Verse in the Bible?

Jesus wept.
~ John 11:35

Note: Worship Service is now available on cassette tapes and CDs. See Mr. Sylvester Logan or Mr. Zack Mattox in the control booth.