



First Rising Mt. Zion Baptist Church  
*"For we walk by faith, not by sight."*  
 2 Corinthians 5:7

# MISSION STAR



November 2020

Volume 20, Issue 2

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sister Jean H. Whitley

As we approach the 68th Anniversary of First Rising's Missionary Society Ministry, it is difficult to adequately express my gratitude, my thankfulness, and appreciation to you for allowing me to serve you in the Presidency position. I thank God for your support and contributions - your commitment, dedication, and service which has so spiritually kept this Ministry moving. May you as Missionaries, always carry yourselves in such a way as to assure that passersby will say, with admiration and respect, "There goes a missionary or better yet, "a godly woman." May we always be of good cheer, being sure to smile, give a friendly greeting to all. Let us make learning and growing an integral part of our spiritual lives. Let us make good use of our experiences, knowledge, and wisdom for others as well as for ourselves. As we grow older, let us remain active and stay active to the very end, remembering that, even when disabled, it is not what we have lost but what we have left that counts. And though we are part of a group, let us remain individuals and express that individualism **within the bounds** of the Church Vision and the Missionary Ministry purpose.

It has been a trying time for me this year (health matters). But God, who knows all things and working on my behalf blessed this ministry's officers and even members who stepped up to the plate and did what had to be done. We have lost two outstanding leaders this year; Sister Mattie Howell's resignation and Sister Loretta Wilson's departure from this earth. I can only say to you as well as convince myself ... "When times get hard, remember Jesus, when people don't listen and you feel like throwing in the towel, remember Jesus, when burdens weigh heavy on your heart, remember Jesus, when sickness comes and death is approaching, remember Jesus." (Max Lucado, Author: "Remember"). He and He alone can work it out!

Remembering those who have gone to their eternal rest, placed a ladder for us to climb, those who spoke the Word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 12:7-8)

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*FRMZ Missionary Society Ministry Celebrates 68th Anniversary Sunday, November 15, 2020*



1 Corinthians 2: 1-4 NIV

And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power.

## A TRIBUTE TO OUR PRESIDENT, JEAN H. WHITLEY

Written by Sister Dorothy E. Fowlkes

Have you ever thought that you knew someone but you discovered, to your surprise, you only knew one side of the person's life? Well, I'd like to share with you "some" of what I have learned about of our President's life. Are you interested?

Sister Jean H. Whitley joined First Rising Mt. Zion Baptist Church in 1953. She immediately began serving diligently in many organizations within the church. In 1979, she joined the Annie Barnes Circle in the Missionary Society. She was a committed member who was eager to study God's word weekly with the Circle. Years later, she was appointed President of the Missionary Society and remains in that position today. Additionally, she is a member of numerous other organizations in the church; namely, Adult Sunday School, Senior-Choral Choir, New Members Orientation, Senior Citizens Ministry, and Baptist Training Union.. She serves on many committees, such as the Women's Day Committee, Mothers' Day Committee, and any others when asked to serve.

Her service in the missionary arena extends beyond First Rising. She is a Past President of the Women's Auxiliary of the Baptist Convention of DC and Vicinity (BCDCV); Past First Vice-President of the Women's Auxiliary (BCDCV); member of the Mt. Bethel Association; member of Lott Carey Convention; and represents Washington, DC as Past State President in the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

Now that you have been brought up to date on our President's religious side, let me introduce you to what I call the "lighter side" of her life. Sister Whitley was born in Selma, North Carolina. She had five children. "When we were growing up in North Carolina she would leave notes of encouragement all over the house for us, such as 'don't quit', 'hang in there', etc.," stated her daughter, Minette. "Those notes meant more to us than she will ever know. I still remember them and still live by them. She is an encourager! "She always carried

her children with her wherever she went if it was feasible." Sister Whitley loves to travel and has traveled much during her lifetime – Bermuda, Alaska, California, to name a few. She loved to ski. Surprised? In her younger days, she and her daughter, Minette, often traveled to Liberty Ski Resort in Pennsylvania. She likes to stay active and will try anything, once. "She is very independent and is co-dependent on Jesus," says her daughter.

She exhibits compassion for her family as well as others. She is her family's Historian. Remember the "Armageddon" snowstorm some years ago? Well, during that snowstorm, she provided shelter in her home for four families. Also, there was a fire that completely burned down a house in the community. She provided shelter for that family in her home for two months. She loves her neighbors as herself. She never seems to get tired of working for kingdom building.

Sister Whitley was a hard-working woman. She was the first African American entrepreneur who opened a shop in Georgetown. In 1970, she opened her first business – "Jean Moni Boutique" in Georgetown. And, she has worked alongside the late former Mayor Marion Barry and former Congressman Walter Fauntroy, She is still a civic and community activist.

It seems as though she got stuck in Washington, DC, when she got off the train from North Carolina. But not so! She still travels back and forth to California to check on her daughters and to the various state conventions. Yes, she still enjoys boarding the plane to 'wherever!' Her hobbies are arts and crafts, storytelling, and writing. She loves to write plays and is an avid bowler. Praise be to God for our President, Sister Jean H. Whitley.

My thanks to Sister Whitley's daughter, Minister Minette Wood, for providing the information necessary for the contents of this article.



## FAITH RE-IMAGINED

Sister Audrey Haley, Secretary  
Rosalie Jackson/Anna Stewart Missionary Circle

Our nation is in chaos! Can you imagine living a life in it without faith? Today, we are faced with the Covid-19 virus and millions of people sick and dying; racial unrest; high unemployment; virtual school learning; voter tampering; climate change; homelessness; an ineffective President and congress; and let us not forget the lost souls. As Christians, we know that it is our faith that moves the heart of God toward our situations and circumstances. It is our faith that keeps us strong and motivated. Ephesians 3:20 (NIV) tells us that our sovereign God "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us." We, therefore, must pray without ceasing and allow the Holy Spirit to rest, rule and abide in our hearts as we navigate the challenges of life to do God's work in such a broken world. James 2:26 (KJV) reminds us, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." It is impossible to please God without faith. It is our faith in God and God's grace and mercy that gives us hope.

## YOU ARE NEVER TOO LOW FOR JESUS TO LIFT YOU UP

Deaconess Vanessa Jones, Director  
Missionettes & Girls Auxiliary

*"Shackled by a heavy burden, 'neath a load of guilt and shame. Then the hand of Jesus touched me. And now I am no longer the same. He touched me, oh He touched me. And oh the joy that floods my soul! Something happened and now I know. He touched me and made me whole!"*

Words to this wonderful song by the Bill Gaither Trio are a soothing balm to a weary person who has gone through difficulties and trials. It's not the melodious tune or the passion of the singer's voice that moves us. It is the subject of the song – Jesus! Jesus the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star, who reaches down, lifts up the bowed down head, and fills the heart with hope. This has been a trying year! We may be or have loved ones who are in the midst of a storm right now. Whether it's dealing with sickness, financial hardship, death of loved ones or relationship issues, the situation may feel like a heavy burden pressing down, bringing low. But Jesus will say and has said, "Peace, be still!" which assures us that He cares for us and has promised never to leave us or forsake us. We are renewed and strengthened and able to carry on – trusting in our God. Now, that's good news!

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## GOD IS IN CONTROL

Deaconess Harriett Penny, Leader  
Arbell Brooks/Mattie O. Jones Circle

All my life I've been taught to praise and thank the Lord for all the blessings He has bestowed on us. I was also taught that all our possessions belong to the Lord and He is only letting us use them. Currently, we are experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 virus which has killed so many people around the world. Could this virus be God's way of getting our attention, because He is not satisfied with our behavior? In the Bible when the Lord was displeased with His people He always sent a warning sign, such as famine and flood. Is this COVID-19 a warning sign? Just remember to praise and thank Him for all your blessings because God is in Control.

Congratulations to Sister Barbara Wormsby on your Consecration to Trustee Wormsby.

*In all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:6 (NIV)*

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## LIFE DURING COVID-19

Sister Patricia Martin, Leader  
Sylvia Allen/Inolia Williams Circle

If you asked me what it meant to be a missionary prior to the pandemic, I would have easily stated that being a missionary means to be engaged in or devoted to a cause to serve others. During the pandemic, I would say more than ever that being a missionary means stepping outside of the box to serve others while sustaining your own mental health. It requires us all to learn something we may have never experienced before, such as learning to use technology for worship services, video visits, working, etc. This pandemic has reminded us all of the importance of staying in touch with our sisters in Christ, our family members, friends and those with whom we wish to share a word of encouragement or simply uplift their spirits. This time has taught us that we may never know what others are experiencing in the quietness of their home.

There are many ways to continue our mission of serving God and others in need during this time. In addition to making one-on-one telephone calls, we may wish to participate in a video call or organize a conference call, send cards, share a picture. Find out if one of our sisters is in need and pick up a few extra items on your grocery day and have them delivered or mailed to her. Today, it is important to use the resources around us to lend a helping hand and share the Word. This is a time to renew our spirit, renew our mind, and stay focused on our goals.

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## COMFORTING THOUGHTS AS WE WEAR OUR DAILY MASKS

Sister Virginia Robinson, Leader  
Frances McMulling Circle

It seems that we have been going through a very difficult time this Year of Our Lord 2020. The Coronavirus, which was predicted and not heeded by our President, came in full blast and caused many sicknesses and deaths, especially among our senior citizens. The pandemic created necessary precautions which affected our daily living. We should not congregate in groups. We should stay at least six feet apart from each other. We should wash our hands routinely and sanitize the surfaces around us. And, we should wear a facemask whenever we are in public or around other people to avoid contracting or transmitting the virus.

So as we go through these trials and tribulations, reflect on these Words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." (Psalm 50:15 NKIV); "Trust in the Lord with all your heart. And lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him. And He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5,6 NKJV); "I will never fail you, I will never abandon you." (Hebrews 13:5 NLT)

But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men, this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." (Mark 10:27 NKJV)

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## THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

Sister Harriet Tweedy  
Copy Editor

When we think of forgiveness we often think only in terms of the offender. We fail to realize the harm that an unforgiving heart does to us.

Holding grudges allows us to dwell only on the wrong that has been done to us. This mindset can create many problems – stress, anxiety, and mental health issues. It takes away our ability to live our lives to the fullest. I am not saying that forgiveness is easy, but it is surely the best way to live the life God promised us. In Matthew, Chapter 6, Jesus tells His disciples that if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Forgiveness = Freedom.

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*The Chrysanthemums Auxiliary  
Celebrates 48 Years with FRMZ  
Missionary Society Ministry*





**MISSION STAR**

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**Deadline to submit articles for next issue: March 1, 2021**

**NO HIDING BEHIND THE MASK**

Sister Addie Watson, Leader  
Ethel Dudley/Bessie Walker Circle

Our lives have been altered tremendously this year. My prayers are to always thank God for His mercies and goodness. We have to accept circumstances as they come up and try not to be dismayed when trouble arrives.

When people ask me, "What do you do?" I tell them, "Whatever it takes to keep my sanity during this pandemic." Although we wear our mask, as missionaries we cannot hide behind the mask when it comes to God's work. The Ethel Dudley/Bessie Walker Circle is happy to report that five members have joined our ministry this year. And, though we are not as mobile as we used to be before Covid-19, we are in constant contact with all our members and others outside the Circle to lend a helping hand where needed. We, however, were saddened to have three of our members experience death in their immediate families during this period. But, we rejoice with them in knowing that the faithful has a seat with God.

The Ethel Dudley/Bessie Walker Circle congratulates Sister Dorothy E. Fowlkes on her recent election as Vice President of the Women's Auxiliary, Baptist Convention of DC and Vicinity. Sister Fowlkes also serves as Second Vice President of the FRMZ Missionary Society Ministry. Sister Fowlkes, your Circle is proud of you.

Everyone have a super, prayerfully safe Thanksgiving and a Blessed Christmas.

**SCRIPTURES OF ENCOURAGEMENT DURING A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY: BIBLE VERSES ABOUT HOPE**

Sister Chrissie Cobb  
Director, Sisters in Fellowship

God has beautiful comforting words of promise to encourage us when we lose hope. These Scriptures will remind you of the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13 (NIV)

"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast." 1 Peter 5:10 (NIV)

"Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful." Hebrews 10:23 (NIV)

"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people," Ephesians 1:18 (NIV)

"We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 1:3 (NIV)

"being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

"I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in His word I put my hope." Psalm 130:5

**MISSIONARIES IN LEADSHIP ROLES IN AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS**

**Baptist Convention of DC and Vicinity Women's Auxiliary**

- ♥ Sister Dorothy E. Fowlkes  
Vice President, Women's Auxiliary  
Chair of the Lifetime Membership Committee
- ♥ Sister Dorothy Wells Fowlkes  
Chair, Ways and Means Committee

**North American Baptist Women's Union Baptist Women's Fellowship of Washington, DC and Vicinity**

- ♥ Sister Jean Whitley  
Correspondence Secretary & Statistician
- ♥ Sister Addie Watson  
Historian

**Mt. Bethel Baptist Association of DC, MD & VA Women's Auxiliary**

- ♥ Sister Mary Jackson  
Secretary
- ♥ Sister Addie Watson  
Assistant Recording Secretary  
Correspondence Secretary

**General Baptist Deacons Association of Washington, DC and Vicinity & Its Auxiliaries Women's Auxiliary**

- ♥ Deaconess Ann Gilliard  
2020 First Vice President



**Save the Date**

- Nov 2, 2020 Baptist Women World Day of Prayer
- Nov 12, 2020 Mt. Bethel Baptist Assoc. Women's Auxiliary Prayer Breakfast
- Nov 14, 2020 Mt. Bethel Baptist Assoc Women's Auxiliary Adjunct Session
- Nov 15, 2020 FRMZBC Missionary Society Ministry 68th Anniversary
- Nov 19, 2020 NBC Women's Auxiliary, Hour of Power Mission Session
- Nov 21, 2020 Virtual Community Affair
- Nov 28, 2020 W.I.S.E., Lott Carey
- Dec 5, 2020 Missionary Christmas Party