

November 1, 2020

Greetings, Beloved Church Family!

Well, the Lord has graciously granted us the privilege of entering the 11th month of this year. Neither of us could have anticipated that this year would have brought with it the tumult we have seen over these past months. Few of us could have imagined that our daily discourse would include words like “pandemic” or “quarantine” or “COVID-19.” The vast majority of us had great expectations for the possibilities of this year, but each of us has had to adjust to what I continue to call, “our new abnormal.”

And yet, our reverberating refrain must continue to be, *To God be the glory for the things He has done!* God continues to bless and favor us despite the tumult. God continues to prosper and strengthen us despite the adjustments we have been forced to make. Our vocabulary still includes, “Hallelujah!” and “Thank you, Jesus!” even as we use the aforementioned words that have been included in our expanded lexicon. God is still faithful and merciful and gracious and good! So even at the beginning of this 11th month of 2020 I encourage you to give thanks to the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endures forever (*cf.*, Psalm 107:1)!

Permit me to offer my immense thanks to this wonderful congregation for all the kindnesses extended to me in the month of October. It began with the cards and well wishes you shared for Clergy Appreciation Month, but it continued with the overwhelming show of love as we celebrated the 16 years the Lord has graced me to serve this congregation as pastor. One of my greatest joys is having the privilege of being successor to Pastor Lawson. His love and encouragement, mentorship and fellowship continue to astound me, and I can't thank God enough that he is still 'alive and well' to experience the harvest of his labor of love. I am grateful that we had the chance to reflect upon that peaceful transition of service as we reviewed the pastoral installation from 2004. What a delight it was to watch what I considered to be a glorious worship experience as we walked by faith into what has become Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church 2020—still committed the same God Who led Pastor and Mrs. Lawson, along with those Charter Members, who walked by faith in 1962. *To God be the glory!*

Our service to God and God's people will continue this month as we make our way to Lake Charles, Louisiana to show our love and concern for those still reeling from the rough realities of the storms they've experienced over the past several weeks. Although we cannot serve meals in the same way we traditionally have for more than a decade, we will still serve the homeless and hungry brothers and sisters in our community with a hot meal on Wednesday, November 25th. And, YES! We will have Thanksgiving morning worship. Stay tuned for what will be a joint Thanksgiving worship service between Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church and our sister congregation, Alfred Street Baptist Church, in Alexandria, Virginia, where Dr. Howard-John Wesley serves as pastor!

Despite “pandemic” or “quarantine” or “COVID-19,” all of which continues to get worse, not better, we still shout “Hallelujah!” and “Thank you, Jesus!” and *To God be the glory for the things He has done!* Let's continue to celebrate and give thanks to our God for He is good; for His mercy endures forever!

Forever grateful,

M. D. Cosby