

THE VISION

A Quarterly Newsletter of Providence Missionary Baptist Church

"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

Galatians 5:13 (ESV)

Inside This Issue

A Testimony	2
A Word	3
Outreach	4
Basketball Team	5
The Youth	6
Vacation Bible School	7
Upcoming Events	8



A Church *in Action*

WHERE YOU ARE ACCEPTED, YOU ARE FORGIVEN, YOU ARE LOVED

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'" Matthew 25:35-40 (ESV)

A Call to Service

When we say 'works' we often mean 'service'. Service brings to mind action. Providence is a service driven church and that is a blessing!

The lazy days of summer do not apply to our Providence ministries. We are continually involved in activities inside and outside the church. In spite of the temperature we are a church that cares about and shows compassion to those in need.

We must serve others, we are directed by the Scriptures to do so, "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus,

how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35 (ESV)

The works we do can consume our time, energy, and resources. However we must look at it as a worthwhile sacrifice. If God has blessed us with mental, physical, emotional and spiritual abilities, He has given us all we need. We will be replenished by simply asking for renewal.

You will see examples of our commitment and good works in this issue. We, as a family, should be very proud of our church and the direction we are going and the pace in which we are growing. God is blessing us everyday.



The PMBC Basketball team (in white) in action during a playoff game. Read more on page 5 about this amazing program.

Providence Vision

We appreciate our Providence Church family—growing strong in faith, exuding energy and being rooted deeply in our love of Jesus Christ. Our new logo (on each page) represents a modern, fresh and vibrant Providence Missionary Baptist Church. Watch for more exciting changes!!!



You Are Accepted, Forgiven and Loved

ADDICTION

A Testimony by Dwellie Langston

Many addictions result from a chemical imbalance in the body. Generally, everyone has the potential to develop an addiction—either as the result of heredity, or exposure to certain chemicals being deliberately ingested to fill a void. An addiction can begin innocently, but the resulting chaos is swift and unforgiving.

I remember my journey to addiction. I was about seven years old and I was a bit of a jokester, especially when company came to visit. My father used to give me beer to clown around for a while, and then I would fall asleep. Not only did it put me to sleep, it laid a foundation for me—I really loved the taste and was addicted immediately. It seemed harmless to my father, but it filled a void in my body and for a temporary moment, it filled the chemical imbalance. I didn't act on it much until later in my life.

At age thirteen I took my first hit of marijuana. My best friend and I rolled up some 'roaches' and smoked them. We laughed so hard that it was obvious to everyone that we were high. As I went through high school, I hung with the cool crowd and older guys—drinking beer, liquor, and wine. I didn't know that I was hurting myself by destroying my brain cells and body.

After I graduated from high school, I immediately went into the military. When I enlisted, I just wanted a change of scenery, but what I got was an introduction to life. I was drinking every day, and loving it. I did my required two years of active duty and went into the Reserve; where I started back smoking weed and was introduced to crack, cocaine, hash, and acid. I became a full-fledged addict.

My God-conscience kicked in, but I ignored it although the facts were there in my face. I couldn't keep a job; never had any money; and couldn't take care of my kids. So when I got my dream job, I went to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) so I could keep it. I slowed down using tremendously,

but didn't stop altogether because I only went to AA to keep my job. That wasn't the way the program works, but I didn't care. I only got high on the weekends and on my time off. That was okay, I thought. I was only putting a bandage on the problem and it showed. I lost my job, and I had to relocate.

Life was good for a couple of years and I even moved back home and continued to do okay. I convinced myself that I could use successfully, and sneak here and there getting high. That didn't last long at all. The demon rose in me again and this time it was detrimental to my life. I hit rock bottom and began to free fall—losing everything. I just

couldn't understand that it was the addiction and that if I had done all that was suggested, I could live a drug free life.

So this time when I went into the program I went for me. You see, my life was on the line. I had broken a promise to God and I knew I had to submit totally to Him. I was homeless, but I was determined to work the program the right way.

I didn't care what anybody was thinking or saying about me. I had finally developed a thick skin and believed in God and myself. I was humbled, broken, and listening this time. I got a sponsor, home group, literature, and was going to meetings regularly. Life was okay. I prayed to God and I thanked God for my life after trying to take it. I knew He loved me! I loved myself, also. Every day and night I pray for the ones I hurt, my neighbors, my enemies, and anyone not under the sound of my voice. This is how I grow.

Today I am living the program and I realize that life is short. We never know the day or the hour our life may be over, so we must take advantage of each moment that we have. I do. I am a living witness for Jesus Christ, and I love you deeply. I pray that this testimony helps someone along the way. Please remember, **"Only what you do for Christ will last!"**

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."
2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV)

We invite true testimonies about acceptance, forgiveness and love for the quarterly newsletter. God's great work is evident in our lives daily. When we share our experiences it informs, reinforces, and confirms the promises of God. Please feel free to submit an article to the Communication Vision Team at PMBCMarketing@providenceatl.org or mail it to this Church address: 2295 Benjamin E. Mays Drive, Atlanta, GA 30311

A Word From Our Pastor

Reverend Damon P. Williams, Ph.D., Senior Pastor



Teaching



Preaching



Serving

It's Time to Move

Providence, it feels like summer has just begun and it's already been packed with church events, landmark legislation, and national tragedy. All within a two week span of time Providence had an exciting 2015 Vacation Bible School, the supreme court of the United States legalized marriage for all couples in the United States, and this all came on the heels of the horrific mass murder in Charleston, SC. It feels like things are moving rapidly around us. Our world is ever changing, like dynamic organisms do, and all our lives we have been told that in an ever changing world, the one constant is our God. Indeed, it is true that our God is constant, but one mistake the Christian church has continued to make throughout our history is to forget that although the existence of God is unchanging, how God is moving and revealing God's self in our lives is always changing.

God's power and presence in the life of Providence and in your personal life is by no means stagnant. God is progressive, forward thinking, and forward moving and our role is not to stand where we are wishing things could go back to where God was, but to be flexible and adaptable to meet God where God is. This is exactly what happened to Abraham and his family when God met him in Genesis 12 and told him to "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you." I am sure Abraham, his immediate family, and his extended fami-

ly were quite happy in Haran, the land where his Father had settled. But Haran was the city where God was moving for Abraham's Father, and if Abraham was going to faithfully walk with God he had to realize that there comes a point in every child of God's life when God will say, it's time to move.

I cannot, with certainty, say where God is trying to move you to and when. However, what I can say is that moving day is coming. It may be a physical move, an ideological move, a faith move, or a move of spiritual growth, but moving day is coming. How long have you spiritually been in the same place? How long has your biblical knowledge been constant and your prayer life been the same? How long have the relationships with your family members seen no change? These questions are intended to push us into the spiritual realization that God may have moved on to our Canaan, while we have stayed behind in Haran. Don't fear, God's presence and grace will surely reside with you back in Haran, but God's power and choicest blessings await you in Canaan. Yes, moving can be a scary thought and change can be a worrisome notion, but the blessing of a moving day with God that Abraham found out is that God's Word is true, God will surely be with you always.

PMBC I love you and may heaven continue to smile upon you!

OUTREACH

At Providence Outreach is an important part of our mission. Ministries and Auxiliaries are reaching out to the community and providing needed services. While we cannot highlight all of them, we are happy to share some of the activities recently done or will be done soon.



Singles

Denim and Diamonds—April 11, 2015

Single mothers had a nice time out at the event. Single mothers will often curtail social outings to care for their children. This was an opportunity for them to have a good time since childcare service was provided.



Women

Donation to the Gateway House—April 28, 2015

The Women of Providence gave unselfishly to benefit those living in a Homeless Shelter. Many needed items were donated and appreciated.



Youth

Feeding the Homeless—May 2, 2015

The Youth learned about giving without receiving. This outreach effort taught compassion, unconditional caring and working as a team to complete a goal.



Health

Kidney Walk—May 30, 2015

More than a dozen Providence members participated in this walk to help the American Kidney Foundation. Funds were raised and it was an opportunity to get in some exercise.



Brotherhood

Community Garden—June to September

Located at 2381 Herring Road. The Garden provides fresh produce to church members and the community. It is a source of organic vegetables.



Dorcas

Christmas in July—July 25, 2015

This organization has been donating toys for the children at Hughes Spalding Hospital for a number of years. It is a way to keep the children positive as they face illnesses and hard times.

Basketball—More Than a Game

Article submitted by Dwellie Langston

The Youth Basketball Program at Providence started 11 years ago as a result of the interest of two youth, and the support of then Pastor, Dr. Gerald L. Durley. Pastor Durley asked me to identify the leagues in the vicinity of the Church—somewhere the PMBC youth could play competitively. The rest is history.

Mitchell Ellerby and I assumed the role of coaches. We located the Elizabeth Baptist Church Outreach Program. Elizabeth has a full-court gym, and a league of several teams. Our team started with a few players who were PMBC members and their friends—some considered troubled youth; one a teenaged parent. Mitchell and I were up to the challenge—we both loved basketball; we both cared about our youth. The next year Billy Briggs came on board; and the youth basketball program took off! Later Coach Anthony Arrington joined in to assist with the coaching and motivation of the team. We added Bible Study and tutoring for more than half of the players that needed it. The team not only excelled on the court; they excelled in the classroom. The graduation rate was 96%, and we were able to assist players with college if they were qualified, or wanted to go.

The makeup of the PMBC team changed over time. We extended our outreach to the neighborhood and to any kid that wanted to participate in the program. Gradually, our genuine concern for the well-being of PMBC players, our neighbors, and their parents led us to elect officers and to seek the assistance of additional volunteers. The one thing

we all had in common was the desire to serve. There was no doubt the players' education came first, and that basketball was a gateway to them being introduced to, becoming interested in, and ultimately being involved in church.

We expanded the ministry to include a 14 years and under co-ed team, and a 14 years and under boys' basketball

team, to go along with our original 17 years and under boys' team. Eventually, we added an adult men's basketball team, and held a sports banquet at the end of the season.

Today, the program sponsors a youth boys' team, and continues to promote excellence in education first—basketball second! The youth and volunteers have traditionally been competi-

tive on the court. Adult volunteers have always attempted to help the youth participants in every aspect of their lives, and we make every attempt to be there for them even after they leave our program.

We thank God for the vision, and for the young people's lives we touch, and who touch ours. The PMBC Basketball Program—a part of the PMBC Youth Ministry—gives the mission of Providence an opportunity to reach, help and nurture the miracles God still performs in the most unlikely ways. We know that some of our participants have become productive members of society because they keep in touch. When we get the phone call and the caller says, "Thank you, coach," we give God the praise for the things He has done.



The 2015 Season

The 2015 Providence Kings ended their season on May 30, 2015. They placed second in the league and should be congratulated for a job well done!

The Team:

Marcus Hall—attending St. Johns University
Jamal Strickland—attending University of Michigan
Jamil Johnson—attending Howard University
Jordan Bates—attending Alabama State University
Charles Arnold—rising Senior—Mays High School
Ricardo Hussey—rising Senior—North Atlanta High School
Nathan Sparks—rising Senior—Mays High School
Otis Williams—rising Junior—Best High School
Quenton Greer—rising Senior—Carver High School



2015 Providence Kings: Flanked by Coaches Anthony Arrington and Billy Briggs





THE YOUTH OF PROVIDENCE

The PMBC Zone is a place where the youth of Providence learn a **ZEAL** for God, build **ONENESS** through enriching relationships, **NURTURED** with the Truth about Jesus Christ and challenged to **EXPRESS** to others their love for Christ through service and evangelism.

The PMBC Zone of Providence is all about the children of our Church. They are learning what being a good Christian means as well as being developed to be good citizens, students, and people. They have been very busy.

On May 2, 2015 the youth participated in an Outreach event of making sandwiches and delivering them to a homeless shelter. They made 500 sandwiches and went by the church bus and individual cars to the shelter at Peachtree and Pine. It was an inspirational endeavor and taught the children a valuable lesson of assisting those less fortunate and being civic minded.

On May 17th the Gifted, Elegant, Magnificent and Motivated Sisters (GEMMS) held the GEMMS GALA breakfast to celebrate the success of their first year. The goal of the program is to mentor girls to make healthy life decisions that glorify God; to empower girls to develop a meaningful, personal relationship with our Lord and Savior and to enable girls to reach their full potential.

On May 30th the PMBC Zone had a cookout and games at Trammell Crow Park on Cascade Road from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. The cookout was for all the children and was a time to celebrate the end of school and the beginning of summer break.

During the month of June the Youth were involved in GEMMS High Museum Outing, participation in Vacation Bible School and enjoying their summer.

May 2nd, Making Sandwiches and Delivering them to the Homeless



May 30th, End of School Cookout and Games





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School in Review

Submitted by Reverend Zandra Jordan, Ph.D., VBS Director

From June 22nd to the 26th, more than 200 children and adults gathered at PMBC for exciting Bible classes. Dinner was also served nightly. Toddlers, children, and teenagers enjoyed lessons on the theme, "Adventures at Sea: Diving Deeper for God's Treasures."

Through dynamic instruction, they learned how to delve into God's word for understanding, courage, peace, healing, and calling. The adult class explored "Texts of Terror," selected biblical narratives on genocide, rejection, sexual abuse, and others horrors. Led by Pastor Williams, the class learned how to hear God speaking through terrorizing biblical passages, even as they cry with the victims.

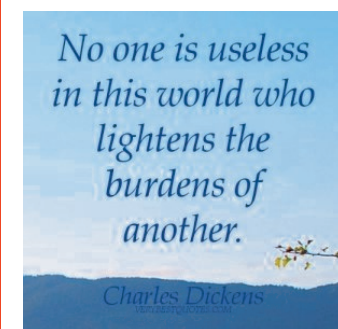
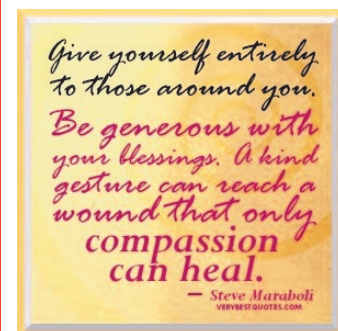
VBS concluded with a celebration of learning; each youth class delivered three-minute presentations reflecting highlights from the week. The 2015 VBS leadership team extends heartfelt thanks to all volunteers and ministries for their tremendous support.

PMBC—VBS -- A Great Time for All!!!!



Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Sponsored By
July		
Entire Month	Book Club Reading - <i>The Circle Maker: Praying Circles Around Your Biggest Dreams and Greatest Fears.</i>	Women's Ministry
25th	Christmas in July—Hughes Spalding Hospital	Dorcas Club
August		
4th	Book Review and Mochas Too	Women's Ministry
11th	Church Conference	Church Wide
21st	Sole Hope for Uganda	Youth Ministry
21st to 22nd	Annual Lock-in Weekend	Youth Ministry
30th	Back to School Supplies Distribution	
September		
20th	Worship on the Lawn—10:45 AM Service	Church Wide
October		
3rd	"I Give Myself Away" Youth Retreat at Camp Toccoa	Youth Ministry
3rd—4th	Open House	Archives Ministry
14th—16th	Fall Revival 7:00 PM Nightly	Church Wide
18th	Church Anniversary 7:45 AM and 10:45 AM Services	Church Wide
20th	Church Conference—7:00 PM	Church Wide
24th	Professional/Spiritual Development Workshop	Women's Ministry
31st	Trunk or Treat "Hallowed Be Thy Name"	Youth Ministry



These events come from our Church calendar. If you have an event that is not listed please check with the Church office. We would like to include all activities.



2295 Benjamin E. Mays Drive
Atlanta, GA 30311

Reverend Damon P. Williams, Ph.D.,
Senior Pastor