We Have a New Pastor
Rev. Dr. Aaron L. Dobynes

Up Close and Personal:
An Interview with
Rev. Dr. Aaron L. Dobynes
By Frances Sugg

The Rev. Dr. Aaron L. Dobynes, Sr. has been a senior pastor for 25 years. Much is known about his many accomplishments as a pastor, civic and community leader, and educator, but many of the church members want a more personal glimpse of the man who has become the new leader of Shiloh Old Site Baptist Church.

As a child, Rev. Dobynes considered two different occupations than the one that he entered as an adult. First, he wanted to be a medical doctor. The death of his paternal grandmother, when he was five or six years of age, affected him deeply. In Sprott, Alabama, as in most southern states, there were no African-American doctors. There were, however, black and white waiting rooms. The white waiting rooms usually emptied first. Rev. Dobynes’ grandmother had pneumonia, and he felt that during the wait for the doctor, something could have been done to save her life. As a result, this would impact his future life choices.

His second passion, his love of basketball, prompted him to picture a career in the NBA. His favorite player was Julius Erving, a.k.a. Dr. J of the famed Philadelphia 76ers. Rev. Dobynes noted that Dr. J was the “Michael Jordan” of that time. However, his childhood aspirations did not materialize, and he was destined for a different road that would lead to the pulpit.

It is no wonder that he chose the ministry as recourse when asked about any difficult moments he encountered as a child. Pastor Dobynes replied that seeing racial segregation, first hand, and not understanding the complexity of it, or why people disliked him because of his color, was very difficult. His father and uncles were involved in civil rights reform, and even participated in the historic Selma, Alabama march. These negative experiences set him on a positive path to seek justice, and gave him the passion to help others.

There were many traditions passed down in the Dobynes’ family, but the importance of family, faith, education, fellowship, and witnessing things that people have in common are values that have been passed down through the generations. Pastor Dobynes, much like

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Dr. Maya Angelou’s poem, “The Human Family”, asserts that we all come from different places, but regardless of our background, customs, language, and even faith, we really are the same people. These sentiments developed early on because of the deep impressions etched by Dr. Dobynes’ parents, who were an influential force throughout his life and on the man he has become. He feels very blessed to have them still as they are now age eighty-one and eighty-three. The two of them were positive role models who showed him what a strong black man should be. His father, a retired pastor and his mother a retired librarian, stressed the importance of education to him and his brothers. However, they also encouraged and exemplified humility as lessons to ensure that all people are treated equally. No one should feel he or she is any better than anyone else. Such lessons at an early age, predisposed Pastor Dobynes to consider a career akin to his father.

During the interview, Rev. Dobynes was asked if there was a defining, or profound spiritual moment that led him into the ministry. He replied that he was in his father’s shadow, as a child. He is a fourth generation pastor from the 1800s. His family, which includes many ministers, helped him to become a public speaker, and helped him to verbalize his faith. Listening to his father every Sunday prepared him for his first sermon, at age 15, to mostly family in a little country church. His father did not necessarily use the lecture format, but instead utilized a “learning and burning” template as key elements. This meant, “head and heart, intellect and emotion” are involved!

The pastor was asked to elabo-rate on some of the most important lessons that he has learned in life. His elaboration included the following: “Faith cannot truly operate in a vacuum, but has to be tested and tried. It is very important for me to speak up if someone is being mistreated. Gender should not be used to measure a person, especially women, and in particular, women ministers, etc. Those people that have been predetermined should not be judged. We should meet everyone as part of the family.”

Another important lesson came to light when asked about advice that would be helpful to married couples. Rev. Dobynes indicated that couples should work as hard to keep their spouse as they did to get them. They should remember the time when they first met, and what it was that caused the attraction. Most importantly, couples should emphasize a “fresh” approach to maintain vitality in their marriage.

Still another life lesson occurred in a story that was shared by Pastor Dobynes, who has been a minister since the age of 23. He was visiting a very ill person, with a little apprehension about what to say and how it should be conveyed. Pastor Dobynes was relieved when the person said something indicating he had accepted his fate. He also let him know that there is more to come after death. Pastor Dobynes took to heart what the late Dr. William Augustus Jones used to express that being a preacher is the worst job that one will ever love.

Dr. Dobynes’ love of life and career extends to other areas, as well. His favorite hobbies are reading and being with family and friends. He loves listening to and telling a good joke. He also loves sports and listening to music. Dr. Dobynes also enjoys being around positive people who spread positive energy--those who enjoy life, but who realize that the joy of life is not in the acquisition of material things.

Near the end of the interview, Dr. Dobynes shared some personal insights of which he is most proud: the love he has for his family and for people in general; being a husband, a father, and a minister for those who trust him to have their best interest at heart, especially when they are most vulnerable.

Pastor Dobynes also shared that if he were given the opportunity to interview anyone, living or dead, other than a celebrity, he would love to be able to interview Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was five years old when Dr. King was assassinated. However, he was able to meet many people who were close to Dr. King, including his wife, Coretta Scott King, and two of his children. Once, while dining at a restaurant, Dr. Dobynes saw Mrs. King, and went over to introduce himself. He thanked her for her years in keeping the dream alive. Mrs. King was also the cousin of his school principal, and he saw her again at graduation.

Dr. Dobynes further revealed that people who knew Dr. Martin L. King, Jr., called him “Mike” because his name was actually Michael Lewis. At age 13, Dr. King’s dad, Martin Sr., changed both of their names to Martin Luther King, Jr. and Sr., respectively. Pastor Dobynes has also interviewed Andrew Young, gone to church with him, and had dinner with him. On occasions, the pastor has had Jesse Jackson and Martin III preach for him at his church in Selma. He also had the opportunity to inter-
view Rev. Jackson. Rev. Ralph Abernathy was also a very good friend of Rev. Dobynes, whom one can say, has experienced some history with these civil rights “greats.”

In conclusion, the Lord has blessed the congregation of Shiloh Old Site Baptist Church with the Rev. Dr. Aaron L. Dobynes, Sr. as our new pastor. We anticipate a great spiritual journey with this God-sent Shepherd.

Pastoral Search Committee Up-Date
By Deacon Harold Conway

In compliance with Article III, Section 4 of the Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site) Constitution, the Deacon Body appointed a Pastoral Search Committee whose responsibility was to find and bring to the Church qualified candidates for the position of Pastor. The Deacons’ action happened because of the retirement of Shiloh’s beloved pastor, the Rev. Lawrence A. Davies, who served for 50 years. On September 25, 2012, after approval by the congregation, the committee members began their work on this important task.

In response to the Committee’s recruitment activity, 99 resumes were received. After a rigorous review and evaluation process, the number of applications dwindled considerably. Upon further scrutiny, the committee determined that there were four best qualified candidates for the position. From these four applications, Pastor Aaron Dobynes emerged as the one best qualified candidate.

On April 10, 2014, the Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site) congregation elected Pastor Dr. Aaron Dobynes. He received a commanding majority vote of 94% of the 188 members present and voting. These results translated to 177 “Yes” votes, 10 “No” votes, and one undecided. The Search Committee will remain together to participate in the July 20, 2014 installation of Rev. Aaron L. Dobynes as Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site). After this event, the committee will be released with special recognition for a job well done.

The Community Wellness Coalition
By Marva Moore

The Community Wellness Coalition sponsored a Diabetes Management Seminar to provide members of the community with information to help persons with diabetes management. This disease continues to grow at a rapid rate among the African American and Hispanic population. I recently attended the annual meeting of the Diabetes Management Center of Mary Washington Hospital. Below are the statistics shared with the group by Cathy Peterjohn, Director of the Diabetes Management Center of Mary Washington Healthcare.

Please keep in mind that these statistics are several years old. 8.7% (531,366) of adults in Virginia have been diagnosed with diabetes; 13.5% are Black and 8.5% are White. 79 million Americans aged 20 years or older are pre-diabetic. The number of persons with diabetes increases with age. Fewer than 1% of persons 18-24 have diabetes. Over twenty one percent (21.5%) of age 65 and over have diabetes.

The reason for sharing the statistics is to establish that there is a problem. There are two types of diabetes (Type I and Type II.) Type I is referred to as juvenile diabetes because persons are, in most cases, born with Type I (The pancreas does not make enough insulin.) Type II diabetes, which is most prevalent, is caused by eating the incorrect types of food and lack of exercise. Uncontrolled diabetes can destroy the heart and kidneys, can cause blindness, and could result in amputations and ultimately death – not from diabetes per se but from the complications listed previously.

The Community Wellness Coalition wishes to inform the community that diabetes awareness is important. The Coalition can provide tools and information to help manage diabetes. The members of the Coalition are working with Mary Washington Hospital Diabetes Management Center to ensure that citizens know how to read nutrition labels, understand good fats from bad fats, and educate themselves on portion control. In addition, children should be taught concepts concerning nutrition. For example, the supersized sodas and other sugary drinks forebode future problems.

The Coalition is committed to sharing information and working to assist our communities in controlling and preventing diabetes.
Buffalo Soldiers and the 23rd Colored Troops
By Deacon Harold Conway

The Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club of Central Virginia (BSMCCCV) celebrated its annual “September Breeze” event in the Fredericksburg, Virginia area September 27-29, 2013. The local Club joined with other BSMC organizations from across the nation and representatives from the 23rd Colored Troops for this event. The celebration activities highlighted the legacy of the original Buffalo Soldiers and the 23rd United States Colored Troop Regiment.

The BSMCCCV ceremony honored the memory of SGT. Matthew Garnett, an actual Buffalo Soldier, serving from 1876 through July 1881. He was the Grandfather of Shiloh’s own Mrs. Grace G. Sprow. This special honor was carried out, in part, by the laying of a wreath at the gravesite of SGT. Matthew McKinley Garnett on September 28, 2013 at the historic Shiloh Cemetery.

The 23rd Regiment of the U.S. Color Troops, like the Buffalo Soldier Units, fought in and won major battles to help secure this country’s freedom. The 23rd Colored Troops were the first Regiment of Black Troops to fight in direct combat against Confederate General Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia. On May 15, 1864, during the battle of Spotsylvania Court House the Colored Troops rescued the 2nd Ohio Cavalry and defeated Thomas Rosser’s Confederate Cavalry Brigade at Catharpin and Old Plank Road.

The 23rd suffered the highest number of casualties of any Regiment that fought in the Battle of the Crater in Petersburg, Virginia on July 30, 1864. This same Regiment was present on April 8, 1865 when Gen. Lee surrendered his Army to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse, west of Richmond, Virginia. An article, “Forgotten Soldiers” by Col. Horace McCaskill, in the fall 2009 edition of Travel Host, describes other activities of the 23rd Regiment.

It is not by accident that these two groups of Americans, “Buffalo Soldiers and the 23rd Colored Troops,” had so much in common. In different campaigns, both fought gallantly and won skirmishes and battles which contributed significantly to victories by the United States Army. Although, little recognition has been given to these groups of military men, this nation is grateful to all of its men and women for their service.

The Shiloh Cemetery is owned and operated by three local churches: Shiloh (Old-Site), Shiloh (New-Site), and Mt. Zion Baptist. It is located at Monument Avenue and Littlepage Street. Each church is truly grateful and pleased that the Central Virginia Buffalo Soldier organization chose Fredericksburg for this very special annual celebration. Family and friends of Sgt. Garnett joined with other citizens from across this nation to honor and celebrate the memory of this American. As was indicated in previous Shiloh Herald articles, Buffalo Soldier Army Units contributed significantly in settling the Western United States. Their service to this nation opened the way for African Americans to become Soldiers in the regular U. S. Army.

Church Transitions After 50 Years
By Deacon Harold Conway

Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site) recently transitioned from the leadership of a beloved Pastor of 50 years to temporary leadership of the Deacon Board as required by the Church Constitution and the Holy Scriptures. This brought additional responsibilities that the Board met in the accustomed fashion of the church. The Board’s first act was leading the congregation through the appointment and establishment of a Pastoral Search Committee. While in the process of selecting an Interim Pastor, the Deacon Board brought to the church multiple preachers to fill the pulpit during Sunday worship services. This noble act gave the congregation opportunities to hear a number of different preachers.
The different preacher approach continued until an Interim Pastor was elected by the Church.

The Shiloh Leadership studied what seemed to have been an endless list of Do’s and Don’ts while preparing for the Church’s transition. In spite of this, conflicts did occur. One such example born of the transition is that several leaders and members of the congregation were not receptive to what the existing leadership was doing to carry on day to day church activities. Some even attempted to exert their own authority and personal agendas, while others refuse to respect Biblical leadership roles.

Under the leadership of the Interim Pastor, the Church improved in several important areas. First, 71 members were added to the roll which made up for the sharp reduction in the number of individuals who stopped attending Sunday worship services. Unity prayer was included as an agenda item in Sunday worship services. Member attendance at the Wednesday evening Prayer service increased from six to forty-two people.

For the first time in years, the Church was filled to capacity with worshippers during each evening of revival services. Pastor Oliver also taught a Wednesday evening Bible Study class that had to be moved from the Multi-purpose room to the church sanctuary because of the large increase in the number of individuals attending the class. Among other things, the class helped build unity in the congregation, promoted fellowship, and focused on the Holy Scriptures. The aforementioned items are but a few of the changes brought to Shiloh through the Servant He sent to guide and prepare the church for the next Pastor. In addition to the accomplishments cited above, existing Shiloh ministries, including the family ministry program, are functioning very well at this time. We are especially thankful to God for leading the church through difficulties associated with transition, such as the grieving of members for the retired pastor and ineffective ministries. We are also grateful that the transition to this time has been smooth.

These positive accomplishments, though important, are not to suggest that the church’s transition has ended. It may continue far past the election of a new pastor. However, activities and initiatives completed during the 2013 year of preparation resolved major problems that were identified in the church at the beginning of the transition period. As a result of these improvements, the recently elected Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site) will be able to move the Church into the future with fewer difficulties.

The Church elected Rev. Aaron L. Dobynes as Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site) on April 10, 2014. What a mighty God is our Heavenly Father! The large number of members that voted for Rev. Dobynes indicates that he has the support base needed to successfully lead Shiloh through the next phases of this transition and into the future.

Welcome to Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site), Rev. Dobynes and Family.
The Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site) Archives Committee
By
Mrs. Janice P. Davies

During the late eighties and early nineties, various committees planning events at Shiloh Old Site often found it difficult to locate or verify the historical information that they needed. It was evident that the annals of our history, while expansive and accessible, were in total disarray, and a concerted effort would be needed to create a permanent repository to preserve, catalog, and make available this valuable information. This realization led to the formation of the Shiloh Old Site Archives Committee.

As the committee got underway, Ms. Brenda Sloan, a member of Shiloh New Site and the special collections librarian at Mary Washington College (now the University of Mary Washington), graciously consented to advise, instruct, and assist the committee in establishing an archives. The original committee with whom she met included Bernice Easley, Janice Davies, James Lucas, and Mark Olson. More recently, Faye Jones and Roland Moore have joined the committee.

The committee has spent nearly twenty years sorting, organizing, preserving, and cataloging the church’s documents, publications, photographs, and other memorabilia. Unfortunately, some documents were lost when the original building collapsed in 1886, and others were lost during major floods. Nevertheless, much history has been preserved, and what we have is now housed in two large, secured file cabinets. These archives provide an extensive “dioramic representation” of our past, present, and perceived future.

Our search for supplementary items continues, and all donations of information which significantly impact our history are welcomed. In recent times, the Archives Committee collected and used valuable materials from these chronicles to participate in the city-wide celebration of the Civil War Sesquicentennial. This documented history led to the acclaimed drama, “Remembering Miss Julia,” a narrative from the African American perspective that illustrated the local journey from slavery to emancipation to the long struggle for civil rights.

The March 2012 celebration of the fifty years of eminent service of our pastor, the Rev. Lawrence A. Davies, also included materials drawn from the archives. In addition, in 2013, the committee drew from its files in presenting an historical program for the Elder-Study program at the University of Mary Washington. The program highlighted the unique role that Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site) has played in Fredericksburg’s long history.

More recently, the committee completed a detailed, illustrated, and carefully footnoted narrative of the church’s history to be used as part of the church’s application for inclusion in both the Virginia Landmarks Registry and the National Registry of Historic Places. The committee continues to work on an even longer and more exhaustive historical narrative. When completed, this fully documented account, drawing from both our own archives, as well as outside sources, will provide a much more comprehensive picture of our history as a congregation than has been available in any one place before.

Troop 46 Gains New Eagle Scouts
By
Roland Moore

The ultimate goal for many Scouts is to make the final rank of Eagle. This task is not easy. The life of teenagers competes with
this goal which must be achieved by one’s 18th birthday. Nationally, only 2-3 percent of all boys that join the Scouting program make this rank.

During the last year, Shiloh Old Site Troop 46 has had the distinct honor of having three of its young men make this rank. The first is Bernard Hayward, who finished his requirements in 2013; Bernard’s project was to upgrade a park in Caroline county. Joron Miller completed his requirements earlier this year; his project was to refurbish a large tot play area in his neighborhood. Our own Marcus Hill finished his requirements recently; his final project is on display in our nursery / Home Mission room. His project is a visual reminder of the talent our youth possess.

Not only have the aforementioned scouts completed their Eagle rank, they have also completed graduation requirements. Along with Bernard Hayward who graduated in 2013, 2014 graduates include Stratton Thompson, Marcus Hill, Terrell Robinson, and Joron Miller. These honor graduates are all college bound.

Congratulations are in order to these young men and their mentors: Scoutmaster Thurman Brooks and the Assistant Scoutmasters Robert Weisbeck, Richard Davis, Orbin Terry, Scott Barker, and Roland Moore.

Scoutmaster Thurman Brooks also received one of Scouting’s highest Honors this year, the Silver Beaver. The Silver Beaver Award is the council-level distinguished service award of the Boy Scouts of America. Recipients of this award are registered adult leaders who have made an impact on the lives of youth through service given to their Scouting council. The Silver Beaver is an award given to those who implement the Scouting program and perform community service through hard work, self-sacrifice, dedication, and many years of service. It is given to those who do not actively seek it.

Scoutmaster Brooks and his assistants will begin the camping phase of the troop’s yearly trek to Camp Bashore in Pennsylvania for a week of outdoor activities on July 6, 2014. The scouts of Troop 46 thank Shiloh for its support through our breakfast events and other sales. This continued assistance has help to provide our youth with a great summer activity that promotes their advancement and commitment to community service.

Mark Olson: Shiloh’s Faithful Servant
By S. J. Cordell-Robinson

The untold story of many of Shiloh’s faithful servants lingers in many corners, some which may never come to fruition, others which may stumble to the forefront, and yet many which may evolve in the time to come. This reporter (with a fair amount of
persistence) has brought forth the storied life of one of Shiloh’s humblest parishioners: Mr. Mark Olson, a gentleman among gentlemen. Mark came to this branch of Zion in 1980 and for 34 years, he has maintained a presence as forceful as any “quiet” storm.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”
By Janice P. Davies

One hundred and sixty years ago, this branch of Zion, now known as Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site), had its beginning, and it wasn’t an easy one. This mighty fortress of our God was conceived in an unwelcoming womb. It knew first hand the malevolence of 1850s America. It endured the degradation of slavery. Despite finding itself enmeshed for generations in a culture that thrived on an abject cruelty toward blacks, this branch of Zion persevered—and grew.

From its infancy until this day, Shiloh has been nourished by an unfailing faith in God. It has thrived and flourished, thanks to sacrifice, determination, and courage. This branch of Zion has survived destruction, rebuilding, and even division. Emerging victorious from these multiple assaults, Shiloh stands today as a citadel of faith and a beacon of hope. We have the distinction—and bear the responsibility—that comes from our long history as
the principal anchor of the unique and storied history of African Americans in Fredericksburg.

Much of our initial success and continued prominence can be attributed to Shiloh’s congregants. From the beginning—and continuing right to the present—those who have made their spiritual home here have been people with a vision. “Where there is no vision,” says Proverbs 29:18, “the people perish.”

Today, as we commemorate 160 years of God’s blessing and grace, it is imperative that we, as a congregation, renew our resolve. Unified in our faith and empowered by an acute foresight, we must remain vigilant, proactive, and involved as we pursue the continuing vision that has guided our steps.

Dr. B. H. Hester, who was the pastor here from 1921 through 1961, described Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site) as “a living organization, a growing institution, a holy society having a beginning but no end.” And yet many challenges and changes—some rather subtle, others more obvious—may soon jeopardize our ministry as an incarnate body of Christ in this area.

Today one of the most pressing challenges we face comes from the city of Fredericksburg which has initiated and approved the construction of a riverfront park across from our edifice. This imposing development will have a major impact on Shiloh Old Site. Even now we vie with others in the catchment area to obtain parking spaces because of limited, inadequate provisions to park around the church. A viable, equitable solution must be reached. Therefore, it is imperative that we as a congregation remain alert, aware, and vocal by continuing to be involved in the proceedings and decisions regarding the park. The future of Shiloh Old Site may well be at stake.

We have been told the park will be a pedestrian-designated venue not requiring additional parking. This seems foolhardy and unlikely. There will be a large influx of local people and tourists found visiting the park which will appeal to multigenerations. In addition, the city has approved the construction of a four-story condominium across the street from Shiloh in the 700 block of Hanover Street, and an immense new courthouse is nearing completion in the 700 block of Princess Anne Street. More development is possible which will lead to ever-shrinking parking opportunities and fewer opportunities to expand our ministry to meet the physical
and spiritual needs of our ever growing community. Shiloh Old Site must not become an isolated, insignificant island sinking in a corrupting sea of “modernization” and gentrification. The city’s goal is progress. But Shiloh’s goal must be perseverance. It is not that we seek only to preserve our historic edifice. It is rather that we seek to preserve our vision and preserve our calling as a living, spiritually rooted, productive organism that is a vibrant contribution to this city and this area.

Michelle Caldwell-Thompson is our very competent representative on the city designated Riverfront Task Force and she needs our support.

We must pray for and work toward a deepened vision and a heightened commitment so that together we will preserve our history, honor our ancestors, and keep Shiloh’s many ministries both strong and vibrant. We dare not let ourselves be pushed aside. Too many generations have worshipped and labored here before us. Even now, we need to hear their voices ringing, urgently reminding us that, “where there is no vision, the people perish.”

**Gideon Pastor Appreciation and Visit to Shiloh**

By Deacon Harold Conway

On September 6, 2013, in response to an invitation from Gideon International, Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site) and other churches from the surrounding counties, attended a pastor appreciation dinner. During that event, area churches were offered an opportunity to increase their foreign outreach by partnering with the Gideon organization. Expanding the scope of foreign outreach for churches is an attractive proposal that is consistent with the mission of Shiloh Old-Site.

The Gideon International is an organization of Christian business and professional men working together to bring to men and women the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is done mainly through providing Bibles to people locally and internationally. Many in attendance at this dinner expressed awareness of the New Testament Bibles, which the Gideon Order places in hotels, motels, correctional institutions, and units of the U.S. Armed Forces. The mission of Gideon International is leading people to Christ through outreach at home and in foreign lands.

The Gideon Order currently enjoys a wide outreach through their association with Christians in more than 185 countries. Through their outreach, they are able to provide Bibles for as little as $1.25 per copy. Partnering with an organization capable of reaching such a large audience could be an economically sound decision for churches experiencing reduced resources because of downturns in the economy.

The Gideon Order accepted an invitation from Interim Pastor Oliver and visited Shiloh Baptist Church (Old-Site) on October 27, 2013. Their comments to the Congregation highlighted the many activities their organization is involved in here at home and in foreign lands. A partnership with churches would give the Gideon Order the ability to reach a much larger number of the world’s people.

The Shiloh Church mission and the Holy Scriptures link the church directly to outreach locally and in foreign lands. Jesus told His disciples that they should “make disciples of all nations.” (Matt. 28:19) This outreach work of declaring the Gospel message is one of the purposes of God’s church. Moreover, such a partnership could make the Gideon organization an
important missionary arm of Shi- loh Baptist Church (Old-Site) and other local churches. The feasibility of such a move perhaps could be explored during future planning to broaden the church’s foreign outreach.

Scholarship Sunday
By Alexa McNeill

When a season arrives for us to celebrate and bring loving light to accomplishments, we shout and encourage, we delight, and we pray for the continued success of those so honored. This is what Scholarship Sunday brings to us each and every year. It was no different on Sunday, June 8, 2014 when Shiloh Old Site Baptist Church recognized its high school and college graduates during the 11 A.M. services.

The Co-Chairs for this well-planned service were Mrs. Michelle Caldwell Thompson and Mrs. Joyce Hill. They set the stage to honor eight high school and three college graduates with a Bible, Gifts, and Scholarship awards. The Clubs and other organizations presented generous recognition to the honorees.

The Service was designed to present educators in various roles. Mrs. S. J. Cordell-Robinson, a teacher at James Monroe was the Worship Leader who cited various scriptures as biblical advice to the graduates. The greeters for the service were Mrs. Jane Hargraves, retired elementary teacher from Smithfield, VA who now resides in Fredericksburg; Mrs. Yvonne Spencer, a retired educator who is now an instructor for adult education, and Mrs. Tinka Harris, a member of the Caroline County School Board.

Retired educators, Mr. & Mrs. Johnny and Jean Johnson led the pre-service devotions and music was provided by the Men’s Chorus. The Reading of the Holy Record was done by Mrs. Virginia Griffin, an educator at James Monroe High School and the morning prayer by Mrs. Barbara Bates of the Fredericksburg Head Start Program. Announcements were the loving task of Mrs. Laura Montgomery, a retiree from Falk- mouth Elementary School, whose enthusiasm was felt by the audience. Retired Walker-Grant and Head Start educator, Deaconess Rosetta Noel, in full camping regalia, presented the Vacation Bible Preview, and Mr. Timothy Jeter, Cub Scout Leader, gave an enlightening overview of the Cub Scout Program.

Mrs. Joyce Johnson, former scout leader and trustee of Shiloh gave a wonderful welcome. Deacon Sidney Robinson, an educator at Courtland High School prayed over the offering and Mrs. Karen Ward, who teaches at Walk-er-Grant Middle School, gave the Responsive Reading. Deacon Willie Conyers, one of the area’s most prominent educators delivered the prayer for special needs, and Pastor Dobynes brought a powerful word to the honorees and the church.

Ultimately, the services were heavily emphasized by furthering one’s education while keeping God first in the process. Many of the graduates will be entering a world they are unfamiliar with. They’re used to being told by their parents what to do and how to do it. It is so easy for them to be influenced by temptation, forcing them to make wrong decisions. Rev. Dobynes expressed his own personal stories about college, stating to “use what you’ve got.” This means never think that you’re alone. We as a church family will always be there to support all of them through it all.

At a reception in the Fellowship Hall, the graduates were warmly greeted and congratulated for entering the next phase of their lives. We proudly salute the following graduates:

HIGH SCHOOL—Noah Frazier, Marcus Hill, Cameron Johnson, Antoine Lewis, Terrell Robinson, Omari Smith, Stratton Thompson, and Ashley Vines.

COLLEGE—Kimberly Clinton, Amanda Gray, and Amanda Malone.

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