



September 2022

VOL. XXV Issue 3

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Like so many others throughout the country, the Rising Mount Zion Baptist Church family's way of life was indelibly disrupted by the pandemic, causing numerous illnesses, deaths, closings, cancellations, and unexpected events and circumstances. The Zion church family was sincerely disappointed that we had not been able to acknowledge with great gratitude the selfless act of the late Mrs. Evelyn Jewett Robinson Bowman who bequeathed her debt-free home to her Rising Mount Zion Baptist Church. We were equally disheartened that we were unable to provide the traditional Celebrations of Life services for many of our departed members. In spite of the circumstances, we trusted in and relied on God to provide the knowledge, wisdom, and guidance we needed to demonstrate His Spirit in the decisions we would make to show our love and gratitude. In our hearts, we realized that it was also an ideal time to publicly dedicate the RMZ Paver Garden that was established upon the completion of our new edifice. It represents a permanent monument for the untold homage, respect, and appreciation to the Zion individuals, families, and contributors whose pavers were already planted; others were waiting to be positioned, and the opportunity to include future pavers. Thence the RMZ Memorial and Dedication Day was birthed to honor and show appreciation to the late Mrs. Bowman for her abundant gift, to bless and give hope to those Zion families and friends affected by the church closure, and to share the purpose, love, and development of the RMZ Paver Garden.

It's good to be a Christian and know it, but it's better to be a Christian and show it!

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another

John 13:35

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Thus, the *RMZ Memorial and Dedication Day* was gratified, welcomed hundreds of Zion members, families and friends to witness the Sunday afternoon event on June 5 that took place in the sanctuary and outside at the RMZ Paver Garden. Pastor Roscoe D. Cooper III warmly greeted the large assembled audience and presided over the program. Zion Associate Ministers Rev. Rosemary Morris and Rev. Harold Sayles read the Old (*Psalms 23*) and New (*John 14:1-6*) Testament scriptures, respectively. Deacon Lorenzo Doswell offered prayer; followed by Mrs. Desirée Roots, the guest soloist who sang, "He's Done Enough." Pastor Cooper gave a brief statement of purpose and compassionately gave tribute to the late Mrs. Bowman. Deacon Mary Kemp lit the memorial candle, and Trustee Cheryl Jordan-Sayles rang a bell as Pastor Cooper called the name of each deceased member as their picture was displayed on the church screen. Deacon Renita Thornton introduced the guest evangelist.

Succeeding Mrs. Roots' beautiful rendition of the song, *I Shall Put On My Robe*, the esteemed Reverend Dr. Angelo V. Chatmon, Pastor of the Pilgrim Journey Baptist Church, located in Western Henrico County stood, kindly acknowledged Pastor Cooper and the congregants, chose his basic scripture, *Psalms 27:1-3*, and entitled his sermon, "Stable Words." The devout statue and the worshipful voice of Dr. Chatmon demanded immediate interest to the inquiring sermon title. Having captured everyone's attention, Dr. Chatmon delivered a thought-provoking, powerful, and meaningful message, mentioning several poignant points: 1. Stable words are necessary and can form a phrase, a sentence, statements, etc. 2. Stable words can provide comfort, stimulate, stabilize, instruct, help, inspire, lift up spirits, encourage, strengthen, move you through whatever you're going through, and minimize signs of despair. 3. Stable words such as, "I can make it. I believe in myself. I love you. The Lord will make a way. Jesus loves me, and He'll never leave me nor forsake me" are readily used. Dr. Chatmon utilized several chapters in the Book of Psalms to further reiterate his emphasis on the impact of "stable words." Subserviently, he concluded his evangelistic message by stating that power is given to God's Word when you yield to His Word, and enthusiastically emphasizing that the most powerful stable word of all is "JESUS." The audience joined in as he sang a few lines of the song, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, There's something About That Name." Dr. Chatmon's sermon was electrifying and was overwhelmingly received as the audience gave a standing ovation, shouted verbal accolades, clapped, and some even shed tears!



Rev. Chatmon

Finally, the Spirit of the Lord calmed to a level that the parishioners were able to move to the outside near the RMZ Paver Garden. Pastor Cooper called upon Trustee Phil Downey to give the *Statement of the Occasion*, and Deacon Mary Kemp to offer the *Dedication Prayer*. Afterwards, Pastor Cooper reverently dedicated the *Paver Garden*, praying and asking for blessings upon those pavers already planted, the ones available to be planted, and the ones to be planted in the future, as well as those persons who have donated pavers in the past and present, and shall donate in the future. After Pastor Cooper gave the solemn, yet uplifting *Benediction*, many persons accepted a bottle of water to drink and be refreshed from the heat, stood around, chatted, viewed the pavers already planted, the ones waiting to be planted, and were invited to become future donors. The day was God-blessed, God-sent, and God-fulfilled!

To GOD be the Glory!!!





Dear Zion Family!

Being protected and thriving in the richness of God's grace and mercy, I greet you my Zion family and friends, in the name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who daily orders my steps in His Will, His Way, and His Word. It is God's grace, with our surrender to His love that motivates us to become fruit-bearing disciples. How privileged we are to be children of the King and chosen to serve with joy, however difficult the task. Accordingly, our lives and work radiate joy that is constant and eternal because it comes from our perfect Source, Jesus Christ. The guarantee of His new mercies every morning always allows us to become a channel of His mercy and compassion so that we may through His empowerment continue to make a difference in the lives of those around us. You see Zion, when Jesus enters our hearts and our purpose in life is to serve God and our fellow man; we discover a deeper meaning of our existence through the power of His marvelous light and joy. Therefore, it is essential that we continuously praise, worship, glorify, and serve God because we are created to do just that. *We are God's people and God is our God!* As a result, we have a shared identity through our kinship to God--living, suffering and giving. In our loneliness, isolation, and perhaps at times feeling empty because of circumstances in our life, let us ask God for His guidance through prayer first. Read and meditate on His Word that promises that God will fill us with His joy. In addition, be patient and wait on Him, believing that He has a plan and purpose for your life. Sometimes, Zion, waiting can be hard. Nevertheless, it is one of life's best teachers for in it we learn the virtue of waiting—waiting while God works in us, for us, and through us. It is via the merit of waiting that we develop endurance, the ability to trust God's love and goodness, and the comforting sense of His nearness in our desperate moments. Our Omnipresent God will gradually intensify our faith so that we experience our dependence on Him and His faithfulness in a way that we never felt before. He becomes personally involved in our lives by revealing His Will, guiding us to make choices, and daily protecting, shielding, healing, empowering, strengthening, and equipping us for everyday situations. But, eternally right on time--He answers our prayers! No doubt, things may look dismal and hopeless until the small three-letter word, "yet" (*Yet I will rejoice in the LORD - Habakkuk 3:18*), jars us awake despite being bogged down in the depths of despair. In those "light bulb" moments, we clearly see evidence of God's presence in our life that lifts us up, gives us reason to rejoice, and let us know that He truly deserves our praise! We must be forever grateful and constantly sing praises to our Savior for His amazing grace that enables us to bear what we could not otherwise bear and do what we could not otherwise do. Growing in grace means that we perceive that God is greater than anything that we might face in this world. As Christians, we have no idea what is coming in our storm; but we can find solace in knowing that God is the One who is always faithful and true.

In reminiscing, I thank God for the great things He has done in my personal life and the life of His (our) church, mentioning the over a year blessed and safe in-person worship services, the preordained Memorial and Dedication Program, as well as the accomplishments of our children, youth, graduates, adults, retirees, and others, the way God has kept, protected, guarded us, and the true riches of wisdom that He offers to all who seek and follow Him. God saves, empowers us to honor Him, and manifests our growth in Him through our redemption, not because we have special qualifications but because we're each valuable members of His Family.

Being servants of the King let us embrace life with the different flavors of "sweet and bitter", and in every instance have the reassurance of God's presence and greatness!

Be Blessed...

Pastor C. J. [Signature]



JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY

Submitted by the VOICE Staff

JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY is also known as **Freedom Day**, **Emancipation Day**, **Jubilee Day**, and **Black Independence Day**. The name "Juneteenth" references the date of the holiday, combining the words "June" and "nineteenth." In the wake of the nationwide protests against police brutality in 2020, the push for federal recognition of Juneteenth gained new momentum, and Congress quickly pushed through legislation in the summer of 2021. It became an official federal holiday on June 17, 2021 when the President of the United States, President Joe Biden, signed the **Juneteenth National Independence Day Act** into law, making Juneteenth the 11th holiday recognized by the federal government. At the White House ceremony, President Biden singled out **Opal Lee**, an activist who at the age of 89 walked from her home in Fort Worth, Texas to Washington, DC. The President called her "a grandmother of the movement" to make Juneteenth a federal holiday. The law went into effect immediately, and the first federal Juneteenth holiday was celebrated the next day. (The holiday was observed on June 18, as June 19 fell on a Saturday). It is the longest running African-American holiday and it recognizes June 19, 1865, as the date that news of slavery's end reached slaves in Galveston, Texas and other states in the southeast.

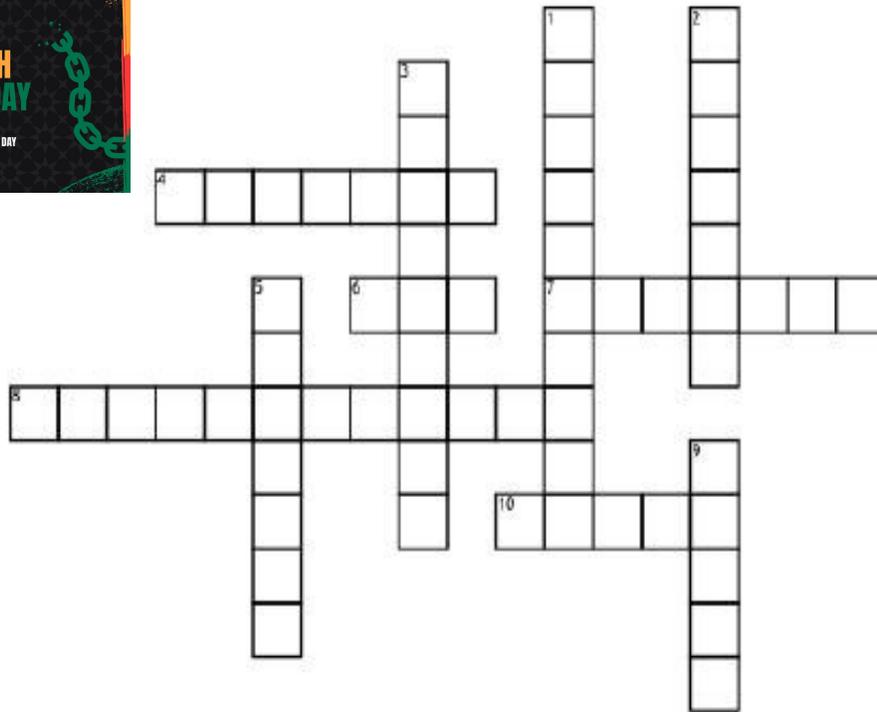
While slavery ended in 1865, racism, laws that deny civil rights, voting rights, and social injustices still persist in countless institutions and governments. Therefore, it is hoped that June 19 will be a day to educate people and reflect on critical issues that perpetuate discriminations against Black people and people of color around the world. Juneteenth commemorates African-American **freedom** and emphasizes **education and achievement**. The new federal law has provided opportunities for all Americans to learn more about this historical holiday, including special educational events and exhibits at the National Museum of African-American History and Culture in Washington DC. Multiple days of festivities such as cookouts, 5K walks/runs, prayer breakfasts, religious services, art exhibits, gospel festivals, biking, traveling, and celebrations and performances in music and words were some of the ways people celebrated..

This year, Juneteenth, June 19, fell on Sunday, therefore the holiday was mostly observed on the following Monday. In Virginia, employees had a paid-day off, and government offices, public schools, courts, public libraries, trash pickup and recycling, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, ABC stores, U S Postal Service, banks and financial institutions, and some specific offices and businesses were closed. Additionally, people flew Juneteenth flags, wore Juneteenth paraphernalia, decorated their homes, attended celebrations in music and words, exhibits, fashion shows, storytelling, a Jubilee Soiree, festivals, a Black Woman Flea Juneteenth Market, band performances, and much more. The day certainly championed its purpose and objectives!



Normie Cameron
Celebrating Juneteenth!

Juneteenth: A celebration of Freedom



Across

4. President during the 1860's?
6. Traditional color of food and drink during Juneteenth
7. Representative who made Juneteenth a holiday in Texas
8. An official announcement
10. General Order Number

Down

1. Word made out of two words
2. A special day of celebration
3. City where enslaved people were freed
5. General Gordon
9. First state to make Juneteenth a statewide holiday

Word Bank

Lincoln	Galveston	Texas	holiday
Granger	proclamation	Juneteenth	three
Edwards	red		



The RMZ 2022 Youth and Young Adult Recognition



by
Karen S. Brown

*Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.
Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)*

The greatest gratitude is owed to God who showed favor to the Rising Mount Zion Baptist church family, allowing its members and friends the opportunity to worship in-person following the COVID 19 era. Thus, on Sunday, August 7, during its morning worship hour, the Zion family held its annual Youth, and Young Adult Recognition Program. Listed below are the recognized promotions received from the elementary, middle, high school, college, college graduates, and professional students:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: **Pre-K** - Corey Mickleberry, Jr.; **Kindergarten** - Brookland Blizzard, Andrew Wallace; **1st Grade** - Kori Hines, Nazir Lightfoot, Antonio Wynn; **2nd Grade** - Ivey Thornton; **3rd Grade** - Ava Gaddy; **4th Grade** - Londyn Blizzard, Journey Coleman; **5th Grade** - Kennedi Ellis

MIDDLE SCHOOL: **6th Grade** - Trey Gatewood, Jr., Mackenzie Lewis; **7th Grade** - Dezmon Gaddy, Madison Hampton; **8th Grade** - Tayla Gatewood, Andre Ingram, Laila Robinson

HIGH SCHOOL: **9th Grade** - Jason Boatwright, Anaya Winston-Callicutt, Chiaya Deloatch, Janiya Edwards, Aaliyah Ingram, Amiyah Roland, Darrell Vaughan, Sage Walker; **10th Grade** - Brianna Coleman, SaNiyah Townes; **11th Grade** - Kadiya Ellis, Diondré Reid; **12th Grade** - Lexi Pittman

STUDENTS	HIGH SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY
Michae'la Banks	Varina	Old Dominion
Ryeann Bates	Glen Allen	North Carolina A&T
Raegan Best	Peachtree Ridge, Georgia	Univ. of Pittsburgh
Lindsey Brown	Varina	North Carolina A&T
Christian Cooper	Glen Allen	George Mason
Jaleah Mack	Highland Springs	Morgan State
Melique Manning	Huguenot	Virginia State
Algie Mayo	Homeschooled	William and Mary
A'Jon Orange	Richmond Community	Virginia State
Eryn Preston	Highland Springs	Louisiana State
Zahria Reid	Hanover High	University of Southern California
Jaelyn Tyler	Richmond Community	North Carolina A&T

COLLEGE Sophomore - Mickalya Manning - Norfolk State University

COLLEGE GRADUATES: Justin Best - Georgia Gwinnett College; D'Andra Crawley - James Madison University; Tyanna Edmonds-Rustin - Norfolk State University; Amber Townes - Virginia Commonwealth University; LaWanda Wallace - Virginia State University. **Kendra Johnson, PhD** - Virginia Commonwealth University

PROFESSIONAL: Jovon Sayles - Henrico Firefighter Academy; Leandra Sutton - Licensed Massage Therapist

Students were given a certificate, gift card, candy bar and/or college supplies and cash stipend. A gas card was given to college graduates donated by Sister Vera Burton.

The Zion family thanks, is extremely proud of the achievements of all participants who submitted complete, required forms by the deadline, and wishes them success in all their future endeavors!

Congratulations on a Job Well Done!

THE JOY OF LAUGHTER:

5 REASONS IT'S GOOD FOR THE SOUL

Inclination Life---A Comprehensive Resource
 Researched & Shared by Deborah S. Andrews

Can laughter really be good medicine for the soul? According to science, the answer is a resounding “yes!” But science wasn’t the first one to discover this idea. The Bible teaches believers in **Proverbs 17:22** that “A cheerful disposition is good for your health; gloom and doom leave you bone-tired.” There is a joy in laughter that shouldn’t be ignored. It can change your day and benefit you in so many ways and is also one of the easier self-care methods. Let’s see why...

What is the saying laughter is good for the soul? You’ve likely heard this over and over in some form, but it’s true. There are some heavy things happening in the midst of your soul that houses your mind, will, and emotions. It’s where the thinking happens, the choices are made, and the impact of life hits first. Your soul is the deepest part of you that affects everything else in your life. The good news is, laughter is a powerful tool for keeping healthy and ridding it of toxins that eat away at your peace and joy.

What is the importance of laughter in life? Laughter is important in life because it’s a release, a way to let go of the pain, the hurt, and the stress that we carry around with us every day. We can’t control everything in life, but laughter gives us a little bit of control over our circumstances. It helps us take a step back from the situation and see it for what it is—a situation, not the end of the world. Life can cause us to pass from moment to moment without any enjoyment. Laughter is one of the things that remind us of the beauty of life and **living in today**. It also connects us with other people, breaks down barriers, and allows us to connect on a deeper level than just words can do.

Five Reasons It’s Good For the Soul. There’s some science behind laughter, but there’s more to it than just what we can see and measure. It does things like improves blood flow by 20 percent, lowers blood pressure, protects against heart disease, etc. The following provides more support for its benefits:

1. Stress Reliever. Do you know what it’s like to be stressed? Sometimes stress is just there as we try to manage life and responsibilities and can be amplified when life throws us a curveball. Though these are our reality, God never meant for life to pull us apart. Know that when we are stressed, our laughter decreases and our anger increases. In these moments, it’s more important than ever to have laughter because it’s a way of release and it can help us to find perspective.

2. Health Booster. According to *helpguide.org*, “Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, and triggers the release of endorphins, the body’s natural feel-good chemicals that promote an overall sense of well-being and can temporarily relieve pain.” It’s a natural remedy to some of the health issues we experience such as worry, stress, business, etc. that takes a toll on our mind which eventually matriculates into our body and impedes us from having a healthy mind.

3. Mood Booster. Laughter decreases stress hormones and releases endorphins that also provide a natural high similar to exercise. Laughter can be a mood booster that just doesn’t benefit the individual but also being around people who laugh contagiously is an instant mood booster and is infectious for everyone!

4. Cognitive Stimulator. On the days when we experience brain fog or just can’t seem to think for the next moment, it may be a sign that a laugh break is needed. The laughter helps to stimulate the brain and can move things from a cloudy state to clear. Not only does laughter add clarity, but it also promotes positive thinking which can help you change your position in life for the better!

5. God’s Prescription. The Bible is clear that God does allow us to enjoy some humor and is often delightfully spontaneous. In addition to the Bible, there are multiple ways to experience laughter whether it is with a spouse, family, watching a movie, or looking at memes, etc. you should take purposeful action to allow yourself to be around the people or situations that make you laugh.

In conclusion, laughter really is the best medicine. It’s good for the soul and it’s a wonderful way to take care of oneself. It is one of the simplest and most effective ways to boost your mood and improve your overall well-being. So, go ahead and try it. **How do you incorporate laughter into your life?**

“Always laugh when you can, it is the best medicine.” George Byron, adapted



Health Matters

By Cheryl Jordan-Sayles, MD



Mental Health Awareness

Dial **988** for Suicide Prevention Lifeline Hotline Number

On July 16, 2022, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number became “live” for persons to dial 988 seeking help in a moment of crisis. **THIS NUMBER IS AN UNIVERSAL NUMBER AND AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.** This number is meant to be the same concept as dialing 911 for other emergencies. Currently, there are over 200 centers that receive these calls 24/7 and are confidential and are staffed by trained professionals. Numerous studies have proven that in a moment of crisis, persons feel less suicidal, less depressed, and less overwhelmed after contacting and speaking with a counselor. Suicide and suicide ideation are a major public health crisis that can affect anyone at any time.

However, suicide is more prevalent in younger persons and especially high among youth of color including LGBTQ youth. The National Institute of Mental Health lists suicide as the 12th leading cause of death in the United States and the second leading cause of death in the age group of 10 to 34. The US Surgeon General and the American Academy of Pediatric have stated that there is a growing mental health crisis among youth that’s been exacerbated by COVID 19 pandemic. Furthermore, the Center for Disease Control found from a report in April 2022 that 44% of teens in the US feels persistently sad and hopeless. Suicide rate is seen to be higher in Black and Hispanic males and multi-racial females. Risks factors for teens and young adults include bullying, discrimination, family rejection and lack of social support all of which negatively affect one’s mental health. **Depression** is the most commonly associated diagnosis leading to suicidal ideation. Other risk factors include ***substance or drug abuse, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and personality traits of aggression, mood changes and poor relationships.***

Recognizing the **warning signs** is the first step in helping to prevent suicide. *These signs include* **talk of killing themselves or having no reason to live, feeling hopeless, feeling like a burden to others.** Also behaviors may signal an increased risk for suicide including withdrawing from activities, increased used of alcohol or drugs, isolating from family and friends, giving away prized possessions and/or sleeping too much or too little.

There is **HOPE!!** Having this number accessible serves as a link with experts that can assist persons in getting help in a crisis. Getting the appropriate help and support to persons that are emotionally distressed can save lives. **Make your family and friends aware of this new lifeline number so that improved accessibility can help make suicide preventable.**

If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts and suffering mental distress dialing **988 will give you the support you need with a trained professional.**

God's Grace & Mercy

Hallelujah...Thank You, Lord, for bringing us through...

by Deacon Mary Kemp

This year on July 17 marked one full year of successful in-person worship services available to parishioners desiring to return to the sanctuary for a worship hour each Sunday morning. Every precaution continues to be followed to make sure the edifice and persons entering into the facility are safe and remain healthy. The Zion family is blessed and offers its highest praise to God for His grace and mercy for the uninterrupted sanctified worship services that take place in-person, as well as because there has been no report of persons contracting the virus as result of attending worship services and/or events on the Zion campus.

Because the year has passed so quickly, many congregants had to be reminded that a year has actually passed. Yet, during the shut-down, no one has to be told what a blessing the online worship services are. The rituals are instrumental in keeping the church family connected while being isolated, increasing membership and financial funds, providing meaningful spiritual growth, and developing friendships. Gratitude is constantly expressed to the foresightedness and dedicated Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Roscoe D. Cooper III, for being the brain-child spiritual leader and for assembling a willing, qualified, and talented group of volunteers to lend their media knowledge, skills, and time in order to provide the much-needed unwavering religious services. He is also the principle leader for the Worship on Sunday mornings, Prayer Call on Monday evenings, and Bible study on Wednesday nights that are still readily available online to everyone no matter where he/she may be at the time of the service, and especially to the increased membership and listeners that expand to several states throughout the country. In addition to his substantive and faithful rites, Pastor Cooper prays for, calls, visits, encourages, and counsels the sick, engaged couples, bereaved families, and individuals/families, is the eulogist for funerals, performs marriages, and plays a significant role in community activities. So, we thank God for keeping him, and giving him mental, physical, and emotional energy to carry on.

But on this day, a large eager, grateful and beholden-to-God crowd gathered to witness another blessed, memorable and powerful sermon, and also, to celebrate having worshiped in-person safely and healthily for a full year. In advance to beginning the worship service, Pastor Cooper greeted the audience and immediately and graciously thanked God for blessing, guiding, and keeping the Zion family for a whole year without any reports of illness contracted due to the in-person worship. Pastor Cooper's sermon captured the mentality of the congregants, utilizing the scripture, *1 Samuel 21:1-3*, and entitling his sermon, "We All Have Needs." Like David in the scripture, as Christians, our lives have moments that are challenged by disaster, courted by chaos, and even confronted with jealousy. Seemingly, our assignment is trying to assassinate us in places we know God has put us for a purpose. Pastor's sermon was not about how to avoid trouble, struggle, and chaos, but rather, how does one survive? The three basic needs needed to survive are: a) Have a safe *refuge*--The presence of God is our refuge, the Tabernacle, a place accessible in midnight hours. b) God is our true Source who provides a *resource*, a helper who supports you through thick and thin situations. c) A prophet or a *reminder* who can stand before God on your behalf to help you through dark, gloomy times. The sword was not given to David for fighting but rather to remind him of the power of his faith. God's anointing on our life is enough to defeat any enemy and give us victory. As usual, Pastor's message was powerful, thought-provoking, poignant, meaningful, blessed, memorable, and very well received!

VOTING IS A BIG DEAL!

Plan your VOTE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2022, is Election Day in the United States. **Every** Election Day is important and if possible everyone should vote in every election. You are voting to exercise your rights, stand for your beliefs, and fight for the persons you want to represent you. Additionally, you are voting for Americans' future, our identities, our friends, families, and loved ones; and for gun control, reproductive rights, civil rights for everyone, fair and affordable housing and education, and so much more. *Information given below refers to Virginia and specifically the Richmond Metropolitan Area. For all other areas, please check with your local government.*

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

How do I become an informed voter? Read, ask questions, attend sessions/discussions, media, computer, newspaper

How do I register to vote? Contact your **local government** (the *Cities of Richmond, Hopewell, Petersburg or the County of Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico etc.* in order to register or to verify your eligibility to register, as well as to learn other places where you may register. You can also use the **Citizen Portal** at <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>

When is the deadline to register to vote? The deadline to register and be able to vote in the mid-term (November) election is **Monday, October 17, 2022**.

Where is my polling place? Check with your **registrar**, go to Vote.org--Enter your address. The site will reveal your designated polling place, the hours during which you can vote, and offer directions. You can also go the **Virginia Department of Elections** at <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>

Has your address changed? If your address has changed, chances are your polling place has also changed. Again, contact your local government. That office will direct you to the right place, give you a telephone number to call or connect you to the correct office.

Can I vote early or absentee? Yes, you may vote early in Virginia. The dates and hours will be widely broadcasted. You do not go to your polling place to vote early or receive an absentee ballot. You will go to the city or county local government and/or to a specified area that will also be widely broadcasted.

Is transportation available for early voting? Yes, check your local government, neighbors, churches, businesses, etc.



The **RESOURCE** Page

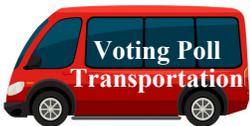
HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR ELECTION DAY?



What if there is inclement weather? Dress accordingly. Wear comfortable and warm shoes, clothing, and perhaps gloves, a raincoat, hat, an umbrella, etc. *The weather does not change Election Day.*

Should I go to bed early? Yes, so that you can get a good night's rest. Plan and layout what you are going to wear before you go to bed.

Should I eat before leaving home? Yes, if necessary carry a snack, and/or a folding stool in case you have to stand in line for a period of time. *Put trash in your pocket, a trash can or a plastic bag.*



Is transportation available? Yes, let it be known if you need transportation to and from your polling place. Often times, individuals and/or groups will provide rides for little or no cost.

What provisions are available for those who have disabilities? Check in advance to learn if accessibility or curbside voting is made available to persons with disabilities at your polling place.

Your **VOICE** deserves to be heard!

Let your **Vote** be your voice!

VICTORY doesn't offer excuses!

VOICE!

VOTE!!

VICTORY!!!

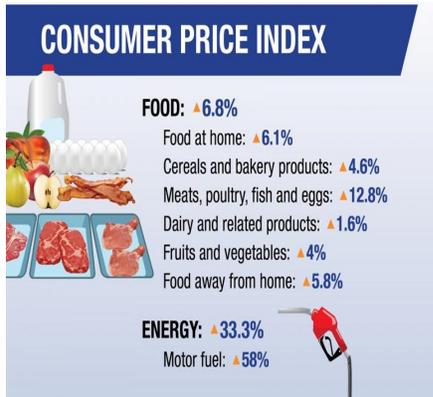
City of Richmond <https://www.rva.gov/elections/registrar-home>
City of Hopewell <https://hopewellva.gov/voter-registration-information/>
City of Petersburg <https://www.petersburgva.gov/291/Voter-Registration>
Chesterfield County <https://www.chesterfield.gov/registrar>
Goochland County <https://www.goochlandva.us/359/Elections-and-Voter-Registration>
Hanover County <https://va-hanovercounty.civicplus.com/365/Voting>
Henrico County <https://henrico.us/registrar/>

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/>

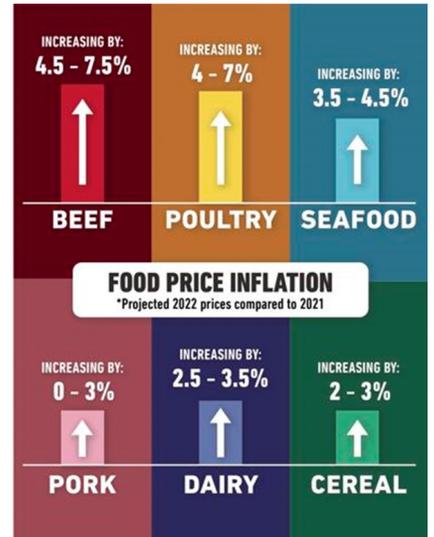


★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT of ELECTIONS

God Will Provide

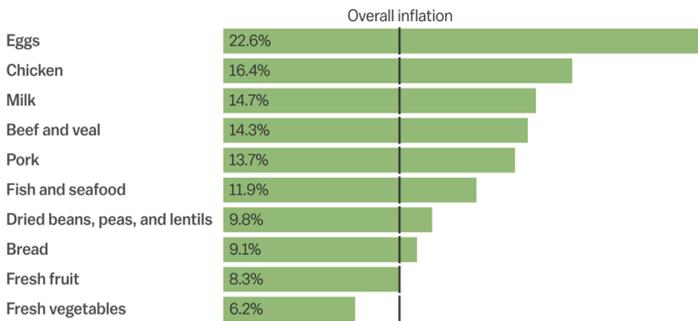


(Graphic by Lindsey Pound)
Source: Farm Journal Editors



Meat, milk, and egg prices have risen much higher than inflation

Percentage increase from April 2021 to April 2022



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Vox

FOOD HIGH, I'm still eating good...





GAS HIGH, I'm still driving...



U.S. Mortgage Rates Surge to Highest Level Since 2009

Average 30-year fixed mortgage rate in the United States



Source: Freddie Mac



statista

MORTGAGE INCREASED,

I still have a roof over my head!



MORAL OF THE STORY....even in this inflation, GOD WILL STILL PROVIDE!!!

Spratley Allen Missionary Circle

By Sister Valorie McBee

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. Matthew 25:35(NIV)

The Baptist General Convention of Virginia sponsored its 123rd Annual Session and Congress of Christian Faith Formation at the Richmond Downtown Marriot on June 26-29. The Hybrid Convention was convenient for persons who attended online and/or in person. Because of the pandemic, the religious community is exploring new methodologies and models of ministry that will enable them to remain relevant in teaching and spreading the Gospel. BGCVA empowers over 1,077 congregations and 28 associations to be involved in worship, fellowship, stewardship, evangelism, missions and discipleship. The Rev. Dr. James E. Victor, Jr. of Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Arlington, served as President for several years. Rev. Milton Palmer Bunting, Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Eastern Shore, was elected as the new President and was interviewed by Rev. Dr. Roscoe Cooper, Jr., Metropolitan African Baptist Church, Richmond, on his talk show. A retirement celebration was held for Mrs. Sheryl McDowney, former BGCVA Director of Christian Faith Formation. The convention held worship services, morning prayers, and roundtable discussions. The master classes consisted of plenary sessions, sermons and lectures; all were enlightening and informative.

The Master Class on *Discipleship & Stewardship in a Post Pandemic World* was presented by Rev. Dr. Kenneth Cooper, Pastor of Spring Creek Baptist, Moseley, VA. Rev. Dr. Cooper taught from the scripture, *Jeremiah 18:1-6*. He stated that we must watch and see what God is already doing, discover our purpose and who we are in Christ as each person is different. First and foremost, Christ must be at the center. God's grace is the mechanism because discipleship is a process. We should celebrate one another as we grow in Christ. And as we connect with others, particularly in small group settings, we must strive to become more Christ-like. Good stewardship of God's Spiritual Gifts is essential to Discipleship. New models of leadership could strengthen volunteerism and ministry involvement within the congregation.

Discipleship through missions is guided by the Holy Spirit and sends people outside of the church to do the work of the Lord. Missional discipleship involves being on a journey to share God's redemptive message and to become more Christ-like. It requires us to invest in the lives of others through acts of hospitality with no bias or prejudices. People may be invited to gather in service with and for one another and to also discuss social and cultural concerns. We must show compassion and treat people who are less fortunate with dignity and respect.

Discipleship through small groups may include various discussions about certain issues such as mental health or conflict resolution. Small group discipleship: 1. Connects people. 2. Creates a safe space for non-believers. 3. Fosters care for each other. 4. Creates a pathway for believers to practice their faith by helping someone in need. 5. Fosters better learning because everyone in the group participates. 6. Fosters encouragement and accountability. 7. Helps to identify possible leaders in the church and find those persons with gifts and talents.

The use of technology can help provide a flexible system to meet the needs of the church. Planning Center www.planningcenter.com is a set of software tools designed specifically for churches to help organize information, coordinate events and communicate with members. The program can create discipleship menus where each group can connect through their app for workflow scheduling, resources, documents, events, registration, attendees and databases.

The Spratley Allen missionaries continue their outreach ministry by remembering the sick, the bereaved, and by helping those in need through donations of gift cards and monetary gifts. We give God the glory, honor and praise.

Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

Matthew 25:40 (NIV)





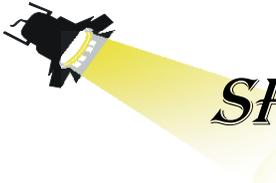
Sick, Shut-in & Bereaved Families

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear... Psalm 46:1-2 NKJV*

A word of encouragement can make the difference between giving up or going on! When unexpected events and circumstances such as serious illness, death, failure, or other disasters cause great anxiety, believers ask God to bind us in Him, humble us to accept encouragement, and give us His Holy Spirit to comfort and guide us through the situation. The blessed assurance of God's love, His loving presence, His amazing grace and mercy, and His unfailing promises remind us to trust in Him, keep the faith and never lose hope! Pastor Cooper and the Zion family love, support, embrace, and pray for you as you come to grip with your happenstance.

- **Sister Tanya Simmons Williams** and **Sister Deborah Murray** mourn her daughter and her goddaughter, *Sister Demetrise Simmons*,
- **Sister Barbara Jones (Brother Steve A.)** mourns her brother, *Brother Alvin L. Puller, Jr.* of Delaware.
- **Sister Patricia Mason, Sister Robinette Mason, Sister Rebecca Mason,** and *Brother John Webb* and **Sister Alasia Mason,** and **Sister Martha Worsham** mourn their mother, their grandmother, and her sister-in-law, **Deaconess Viola W. Mason.**
- **Sister Karen Scott** mourns her uncle, *Brother Melvin Howell* of Manakin-Sabot VA.
- **Brother Albert J. Scott III (Sister Carla),** and their sons, **Brother Julian Scott** and **Brother Landon Scott** mourn his father and their grandfather, **Deacon Albert Scott, Jr.**
- **Brother Steve A. Jones (Sister Barbara)** mourns his brother, *Brother Maurice Jones.*
- **Sister Edna Henderson** mourns her grandson, *Brother Quincy Henderson*
- **Sister Gloria Cunningham** and **Brother Travis Ellis** mourn their aunt, *Sister Dorothy Ingram.*
- **Brother Melvin Webb** and **Brother Michael Holmes, Brother Paul Holmes (Sister Pam),** and **Sister Tara H. Abney (Brother Robert)** mourn his brother and their cousin, *Brother James Webb.*
- **Sister Karen S. Brown (Brother Bernard)** and **Sister Kimberly Brown** mourn her sister-in-law (his sister), and her aunt, *Sister Lisa Anita Payne.*
- **Brother Gregory White, (Sister Cassandra Reeders), Sister Louisa L. White,** and **Brother Anthony (Tony) (Sister Valerie), Sister Sandra Moody,** and **Sister Narcissa Best** and other relatives, mourn their brother, their uncle, her cousin, and their relative, **Brother Douglas White.**
- **Brother Walter Robinson (Sister Audrey)** mourns his cousin, *First Lady Jeanie Lawson Mitchell* and his aunt, *Sister Willie Mae Lewis.*
- **The Zion family** joins **Sister Robena Perry** and family in mourning her best friend and a faithful Zion member, **Sister Rosalyn McDuffy Scott.**
- **Brother Donte Jones** mourns his cousin, *Brother Kelvin Johnson* of Detroit, Michigan.
- **Sister Cynthia Roane** and family mourn their cousin, *Brother William Radden, Jr.*
- **Sister Pamela Holmes** and family/relatives mourn her aunt, *Sister Peggy Green.*
- **Brother Sean Ingram** and family/relatives mourn his maternal grandmother, *Sister Marie Johnson.*
- **Sister Daryl Allen** and the **Zion family** mourn her mother and a devoted member, **Sister Eva I Allen.**





SPOTLIGHT ON.....

Matthew C. Jones, Ed.D

By Marquita Y. Jones

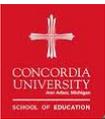


Matthew C. Jones is originally from Richland, Georgia. He is the youngest of three sons born to Ms. Hazel Jones. Matthew accepted Christ at an early age and joined St. John A.M.E. Church where he served as an usher, choir member, and in several other capacities.

Matthew attended The Fort Valley State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Plant Science. After graduation, Matthew received a full-time offer from the United States Department of Agriculture (Natural Resources Conservation Service) and moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan. While in Ann Arbor, he attended Bethel A.M.E.



Church where he served on several ministries including the media ministry, Faith Feeds, The Pastor's Stewards Board, Praise Team, Male Chorus, and Mass Choir. During this time, Matthew furthered his education by obtaining a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from Concordia University. While attending Bethel A.M.E., Matthew met the love of his life, Marquita, whom he married and shortly after, they moved to Virginia.



After many years of avoiding the field of education, Matthew answered his call into the arena of education in 2017. With the help of the late Mrs. Betsy Gunn, Matthew was able to land his first teaching position with the Caroline County Public Schools (CCPS) where he taught 6th grade science for two years.

During that time, Matthew earned a Master of Arts in Teaching: Middle Grades Education from Liberty University. Upon leaving CCPS, Matthew became a member of the Henrico



County Public Schools and taught 6th grade General Science and International Baccalaureate (IB) Life Science at Fairfield Middle School for two years.

Currently, Matthew serves as the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Coordinator for the Henrico County Public Schools. Most recently, Matthew earned his Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership from Liberty University.



Matthew loves to spend time with his family which includes his and Marquita's two daughters, Moriah and Maliah, as well as his mother and their English Bulldog, Max. He enjoys traveling, photography, and watching his Fort Valley State Wildcats and Georgia Bulldogs hit the gridiron each Saturday during the fall months. He is also a Life Member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and loves to participate in community service projects and the uplifting of his community. Since joining the RMZ church family, Dr. Jones attends church regularly and has been involved in several ministries and activities including the choir and multimedia ministry.



From an early age, his relationship with God and education has always been at the forefront. This is due to the instilling of a thought from his *Big Ma*, Doris Powell, and his mother that "the world can take a lot from you, but they can't take your faith in God, or your education...GET AS MUCH OF BOTH AS YOU CAN!"

Matthew believes deeply in the passage of scripture found in Romans 8:18 (NIV) that states, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

His loving family joins the RMZ church family in extending with love, hearty congratulations to

Matthew Jones for being selected as the Rising Mount Zion VOICE Newsletter spotlight person for its September 2022 issue!

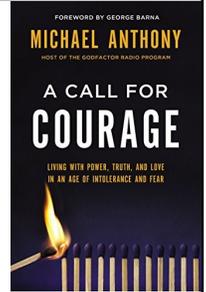
BOOK REVIEW

A Call For COURAGE

*Living with Power, Truth, and Love
in an Age of Intolerance and Fear*

By Michael Anthony

Overview by Sheila Cunningham Price



Many Christians may be asking how to translate the incredible courage, wisdom and humility of Christ into our own interactions with others and decisions for our own lives. The author seeks to provide practical advice in this regard. He draws on his position in leadership as a servant for Christ, suggesting that Christians in America should refuse to settle for what is easy instead of fighting for what is right. We often settle for the mundane life, rather than the transformed, best life that God offers us.

The problems facing the American culture will only abate when all of us have the courage to face our own issues and deal with them in an appropriate manner. We must stop pointing fingers at others for their actions, but strive to begin to facilitate positive change. Rather than waiting for others to solve the problems we face, we must identify our own responsibility to rise up with the strength, wisdom and courage of God to effect the changes we hope to see in our world. We must start by taking off the blinders that many of us wear. The real change will have to begin in God's house, not the White House. There will have to be a spiritual awakening in each of us, because we often see the world through our own biases, myopia, apathy, distraction and detachment. There is no single problem at hand, but rather a convergence of many issues, which is often the catalyst for the perfect storm.

We Christians need to educate and equip ourselves to be bold enough to speak out against cowardice and arrogance with humble courage and we must teach by example others to do the same. We must rally to create a resolute army against the growing number of intolerant haters. Evil is rampart and if evil does win, we all lose. We must crush hatred and extremism with courage. God wants to use us ordinary people at such a time of this testing to do what others won't do—to stand up and speak out against the wrongs we witness.

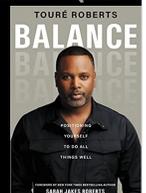
Mr. Anthony speaks of *reverse intolerance* as a pandemic of its own. He portends that many of us present ourselves as liberal, tolerant, loving and compassionate beings; yet when we disagree with a position of another, particularly those of some Judeo-Christians and white Evangelical Christians, we become antagonistic and less than civil in our rebukes of the others' viewpoints. He describes this as a new form of bigotry; our displaying boisterous prejudice to others for disagreeing with our own stance on specific political or moral issues. In speaking truth as we know it, we must let our words be full of grace and "seasoned with salt" in order to avoid reverse intolerance being projected onto others. We should turn our eyes to Jesus and not grow weary in fighting the attacks against what he deems as attacks against religious freedoms. He tells us we must be "salt shakers" to feel free to speak against the barriers that keep God in a box, which he references as the division of church and state. He feels that Christians are being persecuted for exercising religious beliefs through bullying, which should be combated with repentance, love and truth. We should love even when we disagree with one another. We must avoid the hypocrisy of selective sin. We cannot be pious in our approach to effect change in our world, by denying others' rights afforded us as US citizens. We must be forthright with what we stand for; not just what we stand against. When we live for God in secret, He can make great moves through us in public. We must allow the strength and fire of God into our furnace (spirit) for these days of testing which have surely come. If we surrender to Him, He will give us the means and the fortitude to fight ferociously against the evil and the ills we now face. We can be the light in an increasingly dark and difficult world.

Suggested Reading



"BALANCE:
Positioning Yourself to do All
Things Well"

By
Touré Roberts



*"If you do what you're supposed to do, when you're supposed to do it,
the day will come when you can do what you want to do when you want
to do it."*

~Zig Ziglar



Are You Building or Blocking Your Blessings?



A story is told of friends who loved each other greatly. One was a contractor; the other very wealthy. The wealthy man called his friend one day and said, "My wife and I are leaving to travel for a year. While I am gone, I want you to build me a house. I want in it the finest building material. I want you to spare no expense. It must be supremely the best house of all houses."

His friend agreed, and the wealthy couple left on their journey. The building of the house began at once, but the temptation to save on the contract was too great for the builder. He argued that his friend would never be the wiser, and so he began to scheme and cheat. Secondhand materials were put into the structure --- the cement was of an inferior quality and everything else likewise. It was only a make-believe house and a very poor representation. At the end of the year his friend and wife returned, and he inquired, "Is my house completed?" The contractor friend replied, "Yes it is." "Then," said the friend, "We will dine there tonight bring your wife, and we will celebrate this day."

At the appointed time, dinner was served in the new home, and, after it was over, the wealthy man said with a smile, "I am glad this house is so beautiful and so fair, and it is so inviting. I rejoice that it is made of such fine materials, that nothing inferior has gone into it and that my wishes have been met. I am going to deed this house to you. It is my gift to one who has always been in my affections."

Men may choose many philosophies of life; but Jesus drastically narrows the choice, as to the final outcome. In our relation to God we must choose a character that will "**build**" or "**block**" God's blessings to others and ourselves. When we choose Jesus Christ as the foundation of the house we build. "*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (1 Corinthians 3:11), blessings will always result. Never settle for second rate or short cuts! They are blockers to the way of heaven! Hear the words of inspiration: "*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me"*" (John 14:6).

Question: Are you a **blocker** or a **builder**?

(a shared email)

Bible Worksheets for Kids

Finish the Verse 1



Add words from the box to finish each Bible verse.
All verses are from the New International Version.

1) "In the _____, God created the heavens and the _____." (Genesis 1:1, NIV)

2) "Your Word is a _____ for my feet,
a light on my _____." (Psalm 119:105)

3) "Commit to the Lord whatever you _____, and he
will establish your _____." (Proverbs 16:3)

4) "For God so _____ the world that he
gave his one and only _____, that whoever
believes in him shall not perish but have eternal
_____." (John 3:16)

5) "For the _____ God gave us does not make us timid,
but gives us _____, love and self-discipline."
(2 Timothy 1:7)

beginning
do
earth
lamp
life
loved
path
plans
power
Son
Spirit



Activity Page



JUNE
REBELLION
UNION
DISCRIMINATION
EMANCIPATION
HERITAGE
JUBILEEDAY
CONFEDERACY
SLAVERY
MANDATE
HOLIDAY
INDEPENDANCE
TEXAS
FREEDOM

Juneteenth

A	E	R	I	O	E	N	O	I	N	U	N	N	E
D	D	L	E	I	E	P	N	O	A	I	O	E	S
T	O	Y	Y	B	S	L	Y	D	F	I	I	E	L
O	E	A	C	N	E	R	A	N	R	N	T	M	M
I	G	J	A	A	E	L	B	D	E	D	A	A	A
N	A	U	R	E	T	A	L	I	E	E	N	N	N
A	T	B	E	Y	J	E	C	I	D	P	I	C	D
S	I	I	D	A	E	U	X	O	O	E	M	I	A
L	R	L	E	D	E	I	N	A	M	N	I	P	T
A	E	E	F	I	C	D	E	E	S	D	R	A	E
V	H	E	N	L	I	O	I	I	L	A	C	T	X
E	E	D	O	O	X	M	N	R	R	N	S	I	O
R	T	A	C	H	I	A	N	I	A	C	I	O	C
Y	F	Y	A	D	A	N	A	E	T	E	D	N	D

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2515258/>



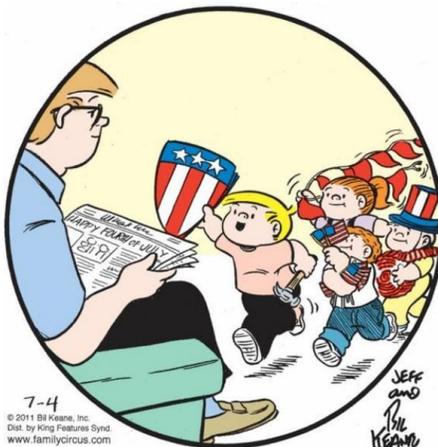
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7-4
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“C’mon, Daddy! It’s time to put up the decorations of independence!”



9-9
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“Yeah, I had just figured out what I wanted to do during summer vacation and then it was over.”