



Committee Members Ruben Gonzales and JoAnn Allen.

CDC gives coats

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

In the spirit of the holiday season the Liberty Community Development Corporation is continuing to support the greater Liberty Street neighborhood with a variety of initiatives both large and small.

This past weekend, the CDC held a coat give-a-way at its 1713 N. Liberty Street headquarters for neighborhood residents. The Liberty CDC Board collected coats and distributed them to more than 50 families in the area.

The CDC and Liberty Street businesses like the new Exxon Station and MediCap Pharmacy are

demonstrating that no need is too great or too small for attention.

"The Liberty Community Development Corporation Coat give-a-way ... was a 100 percent success," said CDC Committee Member JoAnn Allen. "Those stopping by from the community to receive a free coat or jacket were very thankful that Liberty CDC was there to give back to the community of their time, effort and patience."

The Liberty CDC invites everyone interested in helping to revitalize Liberty Street to join them. Call 336-721-9020 for more information.

Rites

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strength, confidence & persistence."

The students embarked upon their journey in February of this year. They received their African names in ceremonies held at the church and the school. Dr. John Mendez, Emmanuel's pastor, and Ruth Hopkins, the head of Carter G. Woodson, had the insight and the wisdom to bring this opportunity to students.

The Whole Village Program was embraced the first time Mendez and Hopkins met with Nana Vee Terry, the founder and director of the program and an Emmanuel member.

The Rites of Passage Crossing-Over Ceremony will begin at 4:30 p.m. The



Ruth Hopkins

free celebration is open to the community.

For more information about the program, contact Nana Vee at 336-293-7810.

Calendar

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For more information, call 336-725-7390.

Watch Night at Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity Full Gospel Baptist Church, 651 Akron Drive, will have a New Year's Eve Celebration and Watch Night Service on Dec. 31 starting at 10 p.m. Breakfast will be served following the event. The public is welcome to attend the free event.

For more information, call 336-744-9293, ext. 105.

Watch Night at New Birth

New Birth Worship Center (NBWC) will observe Watch Night Service on Dec. 31st. from 10:30 p.m. -12:00 midnight. Everyone is cordially invited to attend. The pastor at NBWC is Rev. Dr. James L.E. Hunt. The church is located at 1033 New Birth Dr. in East Bend. For additional information, call the church at 336-699-3583.

Aiken

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a complete surrender to God, Aikin passionately sings: "Here I am on bended knees, with outstretched arms, crying Lord, not my will but your will; less of me and more of you."

Also included on the CD, is the resonating "What If," a thought stirring song of what if God said no to miracles and blessings; while the jazz-inspired "Lord You Reign Forever" and "Turn To Him" are impassioned reminders to trust God and believe in the power of prayer. The energetic "He's So



Worthy" is a favorite of Aikin, who calls the song a "Gospel joint," adding, "He's worthy of all the praise and all the glory. It provokes you, no matter what you might be feeling at that moment; you're like

"Umph! He's so worthy!"

Powerful vocals, complimented with a bubbly personality, Aikin delivers a fresh sound to Gospel music.

"My desire for my album is that people will be inspired to bless God and worship God. I want them to get the Crystal artistry, but have the God experience."

Lesson

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with Herod the tetrarch ruling in Galilee. During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, John begins to preach his message. Isaiah, the prophet said that he was a voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way for the Lord. John is a direct, in-your-face guy. He doesn't pull any punches. "Oh you brood of vipers (malicious or spiteful) who warned you to flee from God's coming wrath? He is confrontational towards them. He questions their motives and behaviors. If they are so good, he asks for the fruits of their repentance (change of mind to do good instead of evil). The crowd is cautioned not to rest on their ancestry for that isn't enough! Urgency is in the air because the axe (judgment) is on the root now.

Every root that is cut down will be destroyed - the judgement. Even though hundreds of years have passed since the Babylonian Captivity (Old Testament) the crowd is well aware of this implication. They ask, "What needs to be done?"

John's response covers three areas of sin. First of all, if a person has two tunics (cloak), give one to a person who has none. This exposes greed at the simplest level. When a person has more than enough, why not share? Secondly, John states to the publicans (tax collectors), known for their corruption, to collect only what is required. This covers the "get over" mentality of people. The soldiers who come for baptism are told to be content with their wages and to stop bullying and falsely accusing people as a way to elevate themselves. In simple terms, true repentance sparks a "do the right

thing" attitude in believers. His statements are direct and simple. As the crowd listens and participates (some) in baptism they begin to wonder if he's the One. Recognizing their concern, he tells them about the One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. John proclaims that he isn't worthy to untie the One's sandals. His reference about a winnowing fan represents Christ separating the good from the bad. The bad are the chaff that will be burned up. John continues to preach the Good News to the people.

Application: The commitment in today's lesson is twofold. First let's consider the commitment of the leader - that's you! John wasn't concerned about popularity or the opinions of the elite. He was committed to his Call. Are you that type of leader, or are you concerned

with being friendly? A committed leader will at times stand alone even in the face of rejection. John's personality was direct and confrontational. All of us will not be like him, but our level of commitment should match his. The other commitment covered in this lesson is the challenge to turn from evil to good. True repentance changes a person's attitude and behaviors. This isn't always easy, but believers are expected to act righteously (having right relationship with God and others). Stop being greedy, slack on the job, having a different face at home, exploiting others and the like. The challenge to change is staying the course - don't go back. The change is worth the challenge as others notice the difference in you. May our level of commitment to God be strengthened in the coming year. Happy New Year!!!



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