

The Pastor's Pen

September 24, 2017

Wallace Charles Smith, D.Min.
Senior Minister



I am pleased to welcome to our pulpit today two outstanding Gospel preachers, who come to share in the commemoration of our church's 154th anniversary and my 26th anniversary as pastor of our beloved Shiloh. At 7:45 AM, the message will be delivered by Shiloh's son in the ministry, the Reverend Barry Hargrove, Pastor of the Prince of Peace Baptist Church of Baltimore and at 10:55 AM, the Reverend A. Michael Charles Durant, Pastor of the Tenth Street Baptist Church of Washington, DC and a nationally renowned preacher and denominational leader. I know we will be encouraged by the spirit-filled inspirational sermons these gifted men of God will share with us today.

For 154 years Shiloh has been a congregation devoted to preaching and teaching the Word of God. Our worship services have consistently focused on spirit-filled praise and heartfelt devotion to God. Also, throughout our history, Shiloh has been devoted to equality and social justice, for people of color in particular, but for all people in general. During reconstruction against extraordinary odds, our congregation worked to promote education, establish businesses and assist in the formation of the Lott Carey Mission Society. During the First World War, we worked on anti-lynching initiatives and promoted the rights of Blacks to serve in the military equally with whites. During the Great Depression, we formed investment societies and attended to the physical as well as spiritual needs of the scores of Washingtonians who were unemployed, hungry and homeless. During the Civil Rights struggle, Shiloh joined marches to end the Jim Crow segregation in the nation, and worked for political self-determination for the citizens of the District of Columbia. In the 1970s, Shiloh led the way in developing the first Family Life Center built by a Black church in America.

Throughout its 154 years, Shiloh has been a voice for justice. For that reason, we have established our vision for the next five years as being, ***The voice of justice for the Black church in America.*** Specifically, this year, we will look at *understanding justice through the lens of Christ*. We anticipate that all of our programs and initiatives will focus on that theme. In October, at the outset of our new church year, I will lead the Bible Institute on our theme so that going forward, we will understand and remain mindful of the Biblical premise of justice. Those who accept leadership this coming year will be expected to participate in these sessions. The materials from these sessions will be made available through online and other media; we want to be sure that this exciting time of study will be available to all.

In these anxious times, we as a Black church family must continue to make every effort to build on the rich legacy of justice that has been our signature for 154 years.

