



# HIGHLIGHTER

A BIBLE BELIEVING, CHRIST CENTERED, & SPIRIT LED CONGREGATION

## “Can You Keep A Secret?”

by Dr. Henry P. Davis III

“The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him. And He will show them His covenant.” (Psalm 25:17, NKJV)



by Dr. Henry P. Davis III

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How many times do you [as a Believer] run into people who want to know what your secret is? Sometimes you respond with a bewildered look, but the reality is that when you’re walking with the Lord, He will indeed give you all of the strength that you need. When we came to Christ initially, we had no idea what the Lord had up ahead for us and that’s exactly why it is so important to share your faith.

Psalm 25 is one of the Psalms of David and in it you will find him having to deal with challenges in a new land. We never know what kinds of situations that we might face, but we do have the assurance that God can and will bring us through. Many times we seek to put God in a box and that limits the possibilities in your life.

Our language must change and as a result, it will have an effect on our actions and reactions. As children our friends would ask us to keep secrets. Later in life we entrusted confidential information to persons whom we could [and can] trust. There are some friends who can never keep a secret no matter what they might verbally express to you.

Well “The Secret is Out” [a sermon I preached a couple of years ago], and that is when one invites Jesus into your life, there is an undeniable glow. Other Believers can quickly identify what is going on but non-Believers can be somewhat confused and that is why Believers must share their faith. You never know how your witness is going to impact the lives of others. All we’re doing is simply being obedient to God fully realizing that through His Holy Spirit, there will be a positive end.

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### Weekly Service Schedule

**Saturdays:**  
6:30 pm -  
Evening Worship Service

**Sundays:**  
7:30 am -  
Early Morning Worship Service

9:30 am -  
Sunday Biblical Institute

11:00 am -  
Morning Worship Service

10:45 am -  
Baptism Service  
on Second Sundays

**Wednesdays:**  
12:00 pm - West Sanctuary  
The Power Hour  
of Praise & Worship

6:45 pm - Main Sanctuary  
Wonderful Wednesdays  
with Jesus (WWWJ)

# "Can You Keep A Secret?"

## conclusion

David lets us know in Psalm 25 it is so important to reverence the Lord. This can be demonstrated in how we treat others and how we respond to challenging situations. Believers refuel themselves through reading/studying the Word, engaging in Worship, and constant communication/prayer with our Heavenly Father.

The New York Times Best Sellers list will invariably have books that will help us [or at least point us in a direction] that will be successful, but let us not forget that the Bible is always trying to point, push, and pull us to our best selves. Yielding to God through our relationship with Jesus Christ is the best decision that one could ever make.

Your closer relationship with the Lord will put you in a position that God will be able to entrust you with even more. That is the blessing of maturing in the faith. We come to Christ as babes, but God does not want us to stay at that immature state, many things we would not have been able to handle during those early stages of one's Christian walk.

Psalm 25:15 (NKJV) states, "My eyes are ever toward the Lord, For He shall pluck my feet out of the net." The Devil is always trying to tie us up in things that really don't matter, but we are to be reminded that God can loose us from any [and every] negative situation.

Of course we should express gratitude to God when He intervenes in our lives and that can be done through your worship, how you show the love of God to others, and your tangible gifts of faith.

Don't you want God to show you the deeper things of life? Well, that means you must put yourself in the right position. We're now in baseball season and one of the things that is so essential is making sure that you position players in such a way that they are able to consistently be in the right position to field the balls, as they are hit. When a player regularly hits the ball to one side of the field, then it would make sense for the opposing team to shift more players in that area. Years ago, the San Francisco Giants had a player by the name of Willie McCovey. McCovey was a left handed batter, who consistently hit the ball to the left side of the field, so opposing teams would institute "The McCovey Shift" and teams are still employing that strategy today as baseball depends more and more on computer analytics.

Anytime you have exciting news, it's very difficult to keep it to yourself, as you just want to tell somebody. A recent Gospel song said, "You Better Run and Tell That!" Well, that's what we have to do when you look at all that the Lord is doing in your life.

## Post-Graduate Degrees

**Graduate 2018**

Is there a "Doctor" in the house?

It is often said, everything you need can be found in the house of God. This year First Baptist Church of Highland Park has been blessed with six young people to receive doctorate degrees; doctorates each in dentistry, urology, pharmacology and three Juris Doctorates.

Let us continue to pray for these young people as they embark upon the next journey of their lives.



Alicia (or LeCee as known by her family and friends) is a May 2018 graduate of the Howard University College of Dentistry. She has been a member of First Baptist Church of Highland Park since birth. She was on the children's usher board and worked in the Sunday nursery with her mother. Alicia is a 2013 graduate of Bowie State University with a degree in Biology. While in her sophomore year at Bowie State University, she decided to change her major from Business to Biology because deep down inside, she knew that she wanted to do something in the medical field.

During summer breaks, she volunteered at the Prince George's County Dental Clinic so that she could learn more about a career in dentistry. This turned out to be a valuable experience and validated that this was the career that she wanted to pursue. But, she knew that she had to keep her grades up and that she needed mentors, and knowledgeable persons who could help direct her path. She found out that the National Dental Association (NDA) conference was coming to Baltimore so she signed up to attend. Her parents booked a room at the host hotel and they made the short trip up to Baltimore. She was lost, did not know the protocol, and was kind of feeling her way through the conference.

While sitting in the hotel lobby, she met a lady who told her about a program called the Increasing Diversity In Dentistry (IDID) Pipeline and that she would introduce her to the program founder. This had a huge impact on her path. Although Bowie State was not a feeder school for a career in dentistry, the IDID Pipeline took her in right away. The program Director called and emailed her throughout her senior year at Bowie State instructing her on what to do to prepare. After graduating Bowie State in 2013 she started studying for the Dental Acceptance Test (DAT), and in 2014 she was accepted into the Howard University College of Dentistry.

This Fall Dr. Belton will begin a 1 year residency in Denton, Maryland. After residency, she plans to specialize in Endodontics. She tells others to never give up on your dreams. She was told that she couldn't become a dentist, but God says that all things are possible. She prayed every day and her parents were her biggest cheerleaders throughout dental school. During graduation, one of the dentist who worked at the Dental Clinic and also a professor at Howard University, surprisingly gave her an award at graduation for being a first generation dentist and a community leader. She didn't know that he was pulling for her the entire time, and that he appreciated all of the volunteer work that she did at the clinic while in undergrad.



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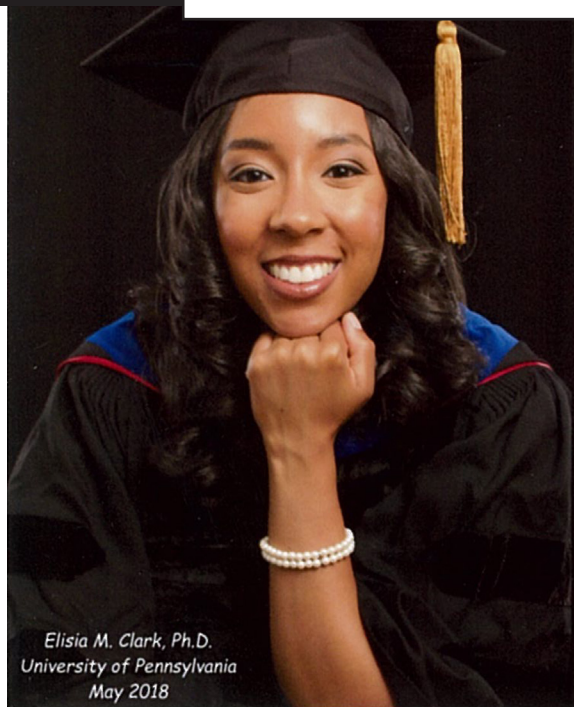
## Elisia M. Clark, Ph.D.

Graduate 2018

Elisia Clark is the daughter of two proud parents, John and Nancy Clark. She was dedicated as a baby by Pastor James J. McCord at four months old, accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Savior at the age of seven and baptized on Mother's Day in 1997. Since the age of three, she was involved in different ministries and activities at First Baptist Church of Highland Park (FBCHP) including Sunday School, attended the FBCHP Christian Academy, AWANA and JAM Teen Ministries, Youth Choir, Junior Usher Board and Girl Scouts where she earned a Silver Award and Gold Award. Her involvement in church also included being the award presenter at an Usher's Anniversary Program, participation in the Mother and Daughter Book Reading Group with the Guiding Ministry, the opportunity to introduce the Guest Speaker at two Women's Day Services, participated in Bible Quizzing and Olympics with AWANA, attendance at Christian Conferences and Teens Involved with JAM, scripture reading at Pastor Davis' Installation Service and Workshop Presenter for the FBCHP Education Explosion.

It says in Ephesians 2:10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." Participation in the many FBCHP ministries, services, and activities was the foundation of Elisia's confidence and relationship with Jesus Christ, which has allowed her to walk in Christ's good works throughout her life.

Elisia participated in the Science and Technology Program and graduated Salutatorian from Charles Herbert Flowers High School in June 2008. While on the biology tract, she became interested in understanding more about the biological basis of life. This led her to pursue a Biochemistry and Molecular Biology degree at University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) where she was a Meyerhoff Scholar and Howard Hughes Medical Institute Scholar. During her time at UMBC, she participated in multiple research experiences studying human brain activity, prostate cancer and drug response. The combination of research experience and coursework sparked an interest in understanding drug development and personalized medicine approaches.



Upon obtaining a Bachelor of Science Degree, Elisia went on to pursue a Ph.D. in Pharmacology at the University of Pennsylvania where she helped identify mechanisms underlying disease severity in patients with a rare disease called Friedreich ataxia. As a graduate student, she taught and mentored undergraduates, authored four scientific publications, and presented her research at scientific conferences both nationally and internationally.

Elisia's favorite scripture is Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Elisia thanks God for how He has had His hand on her life and firmly believes that He knew all about her before she was born, for it was His perfect plan for her life that guided and provided for her every step of the way. Currently, she is continuing to pursue research as a Post Doctorate Researcher at the University of Pennsylvania. She thanks Pastor Davis and the FBCHP family for all of their prayers, love and support and asks that you please continue to pray for her as she continues into the next chapter of her life.

Lilybelle was in the second grade when our family moved to Prince George's County. As one would expect, she was apprehensive about the move and school transfer. She missed her friends at the Collegiate Academy in New Jersey. Lilybelle started Rockledge Elementary School at the beginning of the second quarter grading period. She was assigned to Mrs. Pompano's class who was an excellent guide for the transition. Mrs. Pompano was a long time Bowie resident and she generously shared tips about living in Bowie with our family. It was Mrs. Pompano who told me about the Summit Scholars program at Bowie High School, when I saw her having lunch one day at the now gone Italian Delight in the Free State Mall.

One of the pluses with the move was living in the same state as my parents. For Lilybelle this meant more sleepovers at their home, more mani-pedis, more soda, more late night television, more yeses, just more, more, more. She loved going to Ma's house. My parents loved having her, they treated her like an adult.

Lilybelle was a focused student and the only discipline concern raised by teachers was her talking in class. Lilybelle loves to talk and laugh. I remember talking to my mother about the issue when she said, "She comes by it honestly, her dad loves to talk."

Mercifully, by the time Lilybelle got to high school, the talking bug had lost its itch. So did the acting bug. In elementary school Lilybelle pursued acting, she was the lead in the sixth grade musical, Babes in Toyland. She also enjoyed taking dance and tap classes. During the middle school and high school years, the piano took center stage.

Lilybelle always enjoyed going to church. Her favorites were AWANA, JAM Teen Ministry and when Mrs. Smith would recruit her for a Drama Ministry play.



She also liked serving with Mrs. Christmas and the Youth Ushers, for her the bonus was chatting with her friends in the back of the church.

A reflection of Lilybelle's journey to law school would not be complete without including the importance and influence of friends.

Lilybelle was blessed to journey from second grade to high school graduation with a core group who became high achieving students. They studied together. They helped each other. They stayed on the Honor Roll. When they graduated from Bowie High School, every one of them received at least one mark of distinction. As a parent it has been a privilege to watch them excel academically from the second grade through to college graduation.

When I run into a parent of one in that group, we still talk about that Rockledge crew. And to a fault, we credit the other parents' son or daughter with being the motivating force. Though, I believe we know it was the synergy that was created. They say we become who we surround ourselves with, "Keep Company" with the wise and you will become wise. More than this, for me, I look back and know that God did it.



On May 18, 2018, I graduated from the University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law! I have dreamt of graduating from law school and becoming a lawyer since I was a little girl obsessing over TV shows and movies like *Law & Order: SVU*, *How to Get Away with Murder*, and *Legally Blonde*. I have always been fascinated with a lawyer's ability to solve problems with a keen mindset, style, and grace. Now, I have the tools to represent, defend, advocate, and solve problems in my community with that same sense of style, grace, and poise. Words cannot describe how happy I am to achieve this accomplishment. Achieving this goal was not easy. In fact, the past three years have been the hardest three years of my life, but by far the most rewarding!

Before I began law school, I spoke with multiple attorneys to gain their perspectives on my upcoming journey. Ninety-nine percent of them either encouraged me not to go or questioned if I wanted to be a lawyer. At first, I was turned off by their discouragement. I would always ask myself, "Why are they discouraging me from chasing my dreams?" Nevertheless, I ignored their warnings and enrolled in law school.

Three years later, I understand why they were trying to deter me from applying. Law school is HARD! Not only is it hard academically, but it also challenges you mentally and emotionally. There were many times when I thought I was not smart enough or good enough to become an attorney. I allowed self-doubt, implicit biases, and my unique differences question if the legal profession was right for me. It wasn't until my second year of law school when everything started to click, and I began to trust and appreciate the process. I realized there is no one like me. There is no one with my personality, my experiences, or my gifts that can contribute to the legal profession in the way only I can. I am unique to my process as you are unique to your process and current set of circumstances. There is no right or wrong way to obtain your dream, and the road is specific to what you put into it.

Once I embraced my uniqueness and my God-given purpose, I began to enjoy law school. I discovered my passion for the law and the types of practices I wanted to pursue. I allowed God to use me for His will and stopped being the Type A control freak most law students are. Accepting the process and allowing God to use me changed my law school experience tremendously. Through Him, I served as President of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA) and became a member of one of Maryland's five scholarly journals and the National Trial Team.

Through Him, I am the recipient of the William P. Cunningham Award, an award recognizing graduating students for their academic achievement, leadership, and service to the school. I was also inducted into the Order of Barristers, a national honorary organization for law students who have excelled in trial and appellate advocacy. I NEVER imagined any of that was possible entering law school as a first-year student. God is amazing! Today, I have graduated with the tools and skills that have prepared me to represent my clients zealously and take the legal profession by storm, and I'm super excited about it!

As this chapter comes to a close, I want to use my platform to offer others one piece of advice. While it is nice to listen to others advice, ultimately the only voices you should follow is that of God and your inner voice. To anyone reading this newsletter, remember always to chase your dreams and to trust God's process.

Every success and each failure is preparing you for the next level. Accept your uniqueness and embrace your purpose! God is purposeful, God is trusting, and God is faithful. Through Him, anything is possible!

## Jordan Green, Juris Doctor

Graduate 2018

I was born and raised in Virginia Beach, Virginia by two amazing parents, both of whom are military retirees. I am the second youngest of four children, with two older brothers and a younger sister. As far as military families go, though, I experienced a very stable childhood in that we never moved, and I started and finished my K-12 education in the same school system. We did, however, have a certain discipline in the household that shaped our development.

I first thought about pursuing a law degree and becoming an attorney when I was eight years old. I had a habit of trying to argue with my teachers when I got answers wrong on tests, and one day when my second-grade teacher told me that I ought to become a lawyer, the idea stuck with me. I resolved that I would become a lawyer, come back to see my second-grade teacher, and finally be right.

In high school, I played football, stepped for a community male step team called the Iconz, sang in the school's chorus, and ran track and cross country. I took a ton of advanced placement courses with almost no students who looked like me. It was around this time that I started seriously considering going to an HBCU for undergrad. I applied and was accepted to Hampton University on a full scholarship through the Army ROTC program. I was excited for the opportunity to expand my family's history of military service, particularly as the first military officer.

In my freshman year at Hampton, I learned that I could marry my goal to become an attorney with my opportunity to become an officer in the Army by becoming a Judge Advocate in the Army JAG Corps. From that point on, becoming a JAG became my singular focus.



While at Hampton, I pledged Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. through the Gamma Iota chapter, became a student leader, worked as a resident assistant, and became the second-in-command for the Army ROTC program. I graduated cum laude from Hampton University in May 2015 with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and minors in English Arts and Military Leadership.

I also commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Reserves. In August of 2015, I moved to Maryland and began law school at The George Washington University Law School. At GW Law, I participated in moot court and argued cases before the Maryland Court of Special Appeals as a certified student attorney.

I also served as the 2017-18 National Vice Chair of the National Black Law Students Association. In 2017, I secured an internship with the Army JAG Corps and worked with Judge Advocates in the 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Following a successful internship, I applied for and was accepted into Army JAG Corps to serve on active duty.

On May 20th, 2018, I received my Juris Doctor from The George Washington University Law School. I will begin my legal career in training at the Army JAG School in Charlottesville, VA after I pass the DC Bar exam.

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. - Philippians 4:13*

## Jamaal Jackson, M.D.

## Graduate 2018



Jamaal Christopher Jackson came to First Baptist Church of Highland Park as a fourth grader. He became fast friends with Ramsi Gilbert, Jonathan Johnson, and Jerome Roberts and a little later with one of his best friends Christopher Williams.

He was baptized in 2000 by Pastor Henry P. Davis III. Jamaal was always active in church. He was a member of our Youth Choir, FBCHP Basketball team, AWANA Olympics, and the JAM Teen Ministry Oratory program where he won multiple trophies. Jamaal remained a member of AWANA & Teen Ministries through the 12th Grade.

He graduated from Charles Herbert Flowers High School May 2008 and was accepted at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina.

It was in spring, his sophomore year that the Lord changed Jamaal's plans. He found himself struggling with a set of circumstances that had him leaning towards leaving school. But, he decided just one more time to kneel in prayer and ask the Lord for direction. One of his greatest blessings was Teen ministry.

The Teen ministry taught him the importance of having quiet time with God. When he got up from his prayers the Lord had placed on his heart that he would become a doctor. And that summer he was accepted at East Carolina University's Summer Program for Future Doctors. It was there that he met his mentor Dr. Rukiyah Van Dross-Anderson. He assisted with a research project that was presented at one of the medical conferences and received acknowledgment in the published medical journal report. Jamaal completed his undergraduate program at Johnson C. Smith University a year early from his five year program, Cum Laude.

After graduation he studied 6 months before taking the MCAT Exam for medical school. After passing the MCAT Exam he sent out several applications. There were certain medical schools that he had his heart set on attending, but through much discussion with the Lord, family and friends and with encouragement from Dr. Van Dross- Anderson he accepted the medical school invitation from Virginia Commonwealth University.



Through this medical school journey he was blessed to be guided by the Lord to new mentors, Dr. Sherita Golden and Dr. C. Golden, her husband both of Johns Hopkins University Medical Hospital and Diabetic Center. He graduated this spring on May 11, 2018 with a specialty in Urology from Virginia Commonwealth University.

On June 14, 2018 Jamaal arrived in Chicago, Illinois where he has begun his orientation for his 5 year residency in training for Urology and Surgery at RUSH University Hospital. His first day on the floor was July 1, 2018. Please continue to keep Jamaal in your prayers because Prayer Works!!

## 2018 College Graduates

## Graduate 2018



Last Name	First Name	College	Degree
Banks	Jennifer Nichole	University of Phoenix	B.S. Human Resource Mgmt
Baugh	Andrew Jonathan	Coppin State University	Bachelor of Science
Belton	Alicia C.	Howard University Dental School	Doctorate in Denistry
Clark	Elisia M.	University of Pennsylvania	Ph.D.
Cave	Valecia Precious	Towson University	B.A. Health Science
Davis	Lilybelle Carter	Columbia University of Law	Juris Doctor
Faulkner	Taylor Alexandra	University of MD Law School	Juris Doctor
Green	Jordan Anthony	GW University of Law	Juris Doctor
Jackson	Jamaal	Virginia Commonwealth University	Doctor of Medicine, Urology/ Surgeon
Johnson	Tiffanie	University of North Carolina	M.A. of Business Admin
Kindred	Imani Nia	Washington Adventist University	B.S. Science Social Work
Lee	Jamie V.	University of DC	Associates in Liberal Arts
Parker	Sharkina D.	American University	Master of Science
Patterson	Naya Machell	University of Maryland	M.S. Public Policy/Education
Posey	Ethan Jerome	Florida A&M University	M.S. in Community Psychology
Turnstall	Talia Michelle	Bowie State University	Polital Science/Public Admin
Williams	Randi Cherise	Mass Institute of Tech (MIT)	M.S. Media Arts and Sciences



# *Your Talents*

*How beautiful the universe  
How radiant the clouds of white and blue  
The love you have shown so many people  
The talent that the Lord has given you*

*Now as you make a parting venture  
We bid you God's grace and care  
That you may go out into His vineyards  
And give of your talents everywhere*

*Helen Lee 2018*

## **2018 High School Graduates**

**Graduate 2018**

Last	Name	High School
Boyd	Alexander Isaiah	Largo High School
Bynum	Donte Xavier	C. H. Flowers HS
Clark	Chenelle Yvonne	Bowie High School
Epps, Jr.	Brian Wayne	Frederick Douglass HS
Hawkins	Asa Laurence	Northern High School
Scott	Jada Diana	Bowie High School
Scrivner	Avenn	C. H. Flowers HS
Sittman	Kainoa J.	Eleanor Roosevelt HS
Smith	Briana Vernell	Potomac High School
Tucker	Lawrence	St. Vincent Pallotti HS
Turner	Darnell Lawrence	Bowie High School
Veal	Lindsey Janae	Bowie High School
Walls	Wesley Alexander	James Hubert Blake HS
Williams	Maiya Kirsten	Largo High School
Wimbush	Alston Joseph	Central High School
Young	Anthony Michael	Frederick Douglass HS

by Dr. Tamara Henry

For the first time in six years, all graduates of the Highland Park Christian Academy middle school will attend private high schools in the DMV with a couple of the eighth graders enticed by lucrative scholarships.

Mia C. Freeman, valedictorian, and Michelleh N. Wainaina, salutatorian, proudly led the HPCA 8th Grade Graduation Monday (June 4) in the main sanctuary of First Baptist Church of Highland Park on Sheriff Road. Freeman will attend Elizabeth Seton High School in Bladensburg on scholarship, while Wainaina was offered a \$4,500 scholarship to attend Bishop Denis J. O’Connell High School in Arlington, Va.

In their special speeches to their classmates, parents, staff, family and friends, both young ladies talked about their successes and the lessons learned during their years at the academy. They exuded excitement about their future.

“The learning environment” is what Wainaina said attracted her to Bishop O’Connell. “They donated a lot of money to their Science Department and their Math Department. Last year, they donated \$21 million to their Science Department so they could upgrade it.”

Wainaina, who graduated with a 4.056 GPA, said she has a strong interest in science.

“My goal is to graduate from Bishop, hopefully get into Princeton University, which will allow me to become a doctor in the surgical field,” said Wainaina.

Freeman said, “I decided to go to Seton because when I shadowed there, it was really cool and stuff. I like their dance team and swimming.”

The scholarship offer helped make Seton “my best choice,” said Freeman, whose GPA was 4.061.



Also attending Seton in the fall are honor students, Joy N. Mwaura and Jessica V. Murray, as well as Terri W. Rickard and Destiny Sloan. The dance talents of Micaela E. Smith-Waller landed her on the Varsity Dance Team at Seton.

Rahsaan M. Thomas, Devin T. Bazemore and Javar M. Roberts all plan to attend Bishop McNamara High School.

The Highland Park Christian Academy is 35 years old, one of the oldest of the 122 private schools in Prince George’s County that provides spiritual, academic and social development for Pre-K2 through 8th grade. The academy Board of Directors approved a proposal to expand HPCA to include 7th and 8th grades in March 2010 and recruited the first class by the fall. HPCA is registered to become a member of the National Middle School Association.



“From preschool to middle school, our learners at Highland Park Christian Academy know they are special,” said Principal Niesha Wright, who taught math at the school before taking over the helm.

“Having been an educator for 18 years, I know what makes for excellent instruction that yields optimal student achievement,” she said. “I am of the philosophy that believes that every child deserves a fair chance at receiving a quality education.”

Honor student Jace K. Joynes plans to attend DeMatha Catholic High School and said he feels prepared for the challenges that await.

“I’ve learned time management here, organization,” Joynes said of his two years at HPCA. “You got to be organized in high school so you know where everything is.”

“I have a cousin who went to [DeMatha] and to Seton and they have gone to college and got pretty good jobs,” he said, adding that attending DeMatha “is the best opportunity for me to be successful.”

Other graduates, however, noted that their entire education, from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade

has been at HPCA so there is a concern about adjusting to larger classes and navigating through more people. David Ingram also will attend DeMatha.

“The number of eighth grade students who are accepted into private schools has always been close to 100 percent here at Highland Park,” said social studies teacher Edmund Bowie. “This year it is 100 percent but, in the past, there have been some families who have elected not to apply to private schools.”

Bowie underscored the educational quality at Highland Park, not only because he has taught for a number of years at the school, but also because his own son was educated at the academy.

“Absolutely, I can attest to the top notch learning,” Bowie said when asked. “One of those students was my son. My son went to school here. He started here in pre-K. This is the only school he ever knew until he graduated in eighth grade. He was accepted at DeMatha Catholic High School. He went there. He was an honor roll student all the way through there. He was extremely well prepared by Highland Park. And now he’s very successful at Towson University.”

“It all started here in pre-K at Highland Park,” said Bowie.

# “Life is Full of Firsts”

by Eric Hood

Throughout one’s life there will be countless “firsts” for them to experience. From their first cry throughout their entire existence, God will allow firsts in their lives. While some of those firsts may hurt, others will be very enjoyable and rewarding.

I’ve personally had many firsts that I would rather not remember, but God gave me one on May 30th, 2018 that meant the world to me!! On that day, after 30 years of mentoring and coaching mainly teenagers (10 in Prince George’s County Public Schools), I was honored to be the guest speaker for Central High School’s graduation. Wow! I honestly never imagined myself doing such a thing, but God sent me a sign two years ago while I was attending another graduation. The image of the speaker disappeared from my sight, only to be replaced with my image. That threw me a bit, but I shrugged it off. There was no way that a guy like me would ever be in that position. I have no college degree, and there are no alphabets behind my name! I’m just a guy that has struggled most of his life trying to figure things out. One thing I’ve grown sure of is that I’m an exhorter! God made that crystal clear in 2007 when I cried out to Him about why He woke me every day!

Last year, while visiting my god-sister, the principal at Central, she told me that I was doing her graduation this year. Because we have history dating back to my earlier days in the county at Suitland High, I said ok due to my level of respect for her. I believed that she was just being the sweetheart that she is. Well, she meant every word! Upon hearing my statement on retiring from coaching, she stated that my date was May 30th, 3:30 at Show Place! I’m glad that she couldn’t see my face through the phone. I was dumbfounded. I had no clue as to what she was talking about! When I shared that fact, she reminded me of my commitment to speak at her graduation. I had to honor my word, so I reconfirmed that I’d do it. From that moment on, God (usually in the wee morning hours) would feed me visual mental clips of me on the stage delivering His message to His children!

I was used to this part because He does that to me often. He feeds my soul while I’m asleep and there’s nothing to distract my receiving His communication with me. As time moved closer and closer to May 30th, I was often asked if I was nervous. No would always be my reply. By now, I’d become sure of the fact that God has me, and that His will would be done.

May 30th has arrived, the speech has been written and revised, and is now final! I’m relaxed and resting in the “green room” at Show Place Arena awaiting the start of the ceremony. I kept a written copy of the speech with me although I knew it by heart. Why!? Because I’ve learned that I’m God’s messenger, and once I start speaking His words come out as He sees fit. The written speech was an attempt on my part to stay within the five minutes that was given to me. After a very fine introduction, I’m at the podium, and it happened! All of the feelings that I had of how much God loves me, trusts me, and leads me, along with the fact that I was about to realize the greatest honor that I’ve ever received in my ten years of mentoring, coaching, sacrificing, etc. in the county school system all came at once! I wasn’t at all nervous, but I was overjoyed with appreciation for my dear god-sister thinking enough of me to honor me with such an opportunity. I was thankful for my wife Tanya, my daughter Erica, my unofficial mentor and brother, Dr. Willie Jolley, my mentees, family, and friends that came to support me. I was thankful to my God that He’d stuck by me over all of these years. When I was growing up without a daddy in the house, He was there! When I struggled trying to navigate life, He was there! When I did wrong, He was there! Before I accepted a relationship with Him, He was there! My Father has always been with me!

Now that I listen and obey Him to the best of my ability daily, He’s lifting me! He’s using my obedience for His glory! He’s sending me because I keep going for Him without a question or doubt. That’s what I experienced while delivering my Daddy’s message to His children. All of the accolades directed at me on the job I did, all belong to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, without whom I wouldn’t have life; without whom I wouldn’t be who I am.

Because of Him, I am...E. Hood



# 10 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD TITHE

**Tithe: To tithe is to freely give one-tenth of one's income annually to the Lord through His Church.**

1. It is Biblical - Approved by God in Old and New Testament - Malachi 3:10 & Matthew 23:23
2. To Show Your Love Toward God - Song of Solomon 8:7
3. It Demonstrates that you put God and His work first - Matthew 6:33
4. It is a Testimony that you recognize and acknowledge God's ownership - Psalm 24:1
5. It Helps to Spread the Gospel - 1 Corinthians 9:14
6. Because You want to avoid a Curse and Escape Condemnation - Malachi 3:8,9
7. It is an Act of Worship - Nehemiah 10:38
8. It is Holy unto the Lord and it belongs to Him - Leviticus 27:30
9. It gives confidence in the practice of prayer - 1 John 3:22
10. God's blessings are upon individuals who will tithe - Proverbs 3:9,10

# FRIDAY MORNING Prayer Call

EVERY FRIDAY MORNING  
TIME: 6:30 AM

Conference with us: 302-202-1102  
Conference Code: 192857



Also on Periscope: @REVHPDIII



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Saturdays at 7:30 am



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Sundays at 1:00 am, 7:00 am, & 8:00 pm