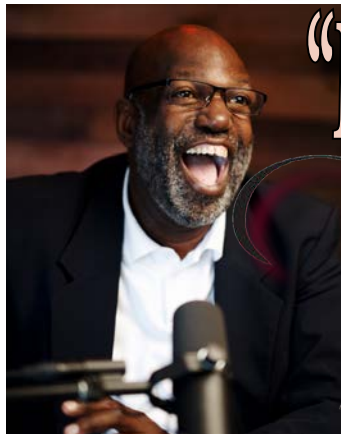


# Are You Standing Before Kings ... Why Not? - p. 5

**FREE**



## “Looking Forward, Not Behind” - p. 3



Friday  
January 12, 2024  
Vol. 10, No. 19  
ValleyWeeklly.com

**SALUTE!**  
Rosetta James Foundation  
ELDER OF THE WEEK



Dr. Razi Hassan

GLORIA B: “WHY WAIT? ...” - p. 5



“The higher we are placed, the more humbly we should walk.” - Cicero

## Martin Luther King Parade Scheduled for January 13

The Huntsville Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., will host the MLK Parade on Saturday, January 13, at 12 noon in Downtown Huntsville.

The parade will start from

Lot K on Clinton Avenue. This community parade honors the legacy of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., civil rights activist and member of Alpha Phi Alpha. “Keeping the

Dream Alive” is the theme for the annual parade.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., is the oldest inter-collegiate fraternity for African-American men.

The Delta Theta Lambda

(DTL) Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity was established on April 13, 1948 in Huntsville, Ala.

For more information, contact Jared Tarver at (404) 217-3079.

## ADC Membership Breakfast to Feature Montgomery Mayor

The Madison County Unit of the Alabama Democratic Conference will host its annual membership breakfast Saturday, February 10, at 9 a.m. in the Robert “Bob” Harrison Senior Wellness & Advocacy Center.

The theme for this year’s event is “Let’s Finish the Job: Protect Democratic Values.” The keynote speaker will be Steven L. Reed, the 57th Mayor of Montgomery, Ala. Reed, a native of Montgomery, has

been a lifelong public servant. He previously served as Montgomery County’s first African American and youngest elected Probate Judge. In 2020, he was named one of the 10 most powerful and influential local officials by Yellowhammer News. The Atlantic, The New York Times, Esquire and The Guardian, among other publications, have



featured Mayor Reed for his work to transform the narrative surrounding the Deep South. He has appeared on the Rachael Mad-dow Show, PBS Newshour, CNN New Day and CBS This Morning.

Mayor Reed is the Moderator at Community Congrega-tional United Church of Christ, an active member of Omega Psi Phi Frater-

nity, Inc. and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Inc. A cum laude graduate of More-house College, he received an MBA degree from Vanderbilt University.

This event is open to the public and reserved tables seating 8 for this event may be purchased for \$500 and individual tickets are \$50.

For additional informa-tion, contact Eddgra Fallin, at slimfall@aol.com, Eva Smith at (256) 859-6512 or Bonita Gill at (256) 682-9481.

## Huntsville Parks & Recreation Hosting MLK Basketball Clinic

Aspiring young bas-ketball stars looking to sharpen their skills on the court are encouraged to sign up for Huntsville Parks & Recreation’s MLK Youth Basketball Clinic.

The event is Sunday, Jan. 14, from 1-4 p.m. at the Dr. Richard Showers, Sr., Rec-recreation Center, 4600 Blue Springs Road, Huntsville. The free clinic is open to boys and girls ages 7-13.

A donation of a canned food item is requested, but not required. Donated items will go to the Food Bank of North Alabama.

Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King’s legacy and

held on the eve of the federal holiday recognizing his birthday, the clinic seeks to engage and uplift youth through the spirit of sportsmanship.

- Huntsvilleal.gov

## IMS Holds Annual Interfaith Forum at Athens State

On Thursday, January 11, at 6:30 p.m. at Athens State University’s Founders Hall Chapel the Inter-faith Mission Service (IMS) is scheduled to host an important session.

The yearly IMS forum on the mean-ing of Neighborliness, Benevolence and Peace within the world religions is hosted by the religion depart-ment’s Curtis Coleman Center for Religion Leadership and Culture.

IMS began in 1969 and has a rich history of over 40 years of promoting religious harmony and interfaith dia-logue, cultural and racial dialogue, and being an advocate for positive change in the Huntsville area. The Journey and Susan Smith’s Review of Interfaith Mission Service History: 1970-1994 document this rich tradition.



The Valley Weekly

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

- Washington in One Minute, Page 2
- Preston Brown’s “Spiritual Game Plan,” Page 3
- “Jahni” Moore’s PowerShots, Page 4
- Caldwell & Allston: Perspectives, Page 5
- Sunday Lectionary, Page 5
- Honoring Our Elders, Page 6

# The Valley Weekly Washington One Minute

by Ron Hamm



Here is what's happening in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, this week:

1. CONGRESS. The House and Senate convened the 2nd Session of the 118th Congress this week (the Senate on Monday and House on Tuesday). Last week, House Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) announced he would be absent from the House through February to receive a stem cell transplant and Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH) announced he will resign on Jan. 21 to become president of Youngstown State University, which will bring the House down to 218 Republicans to 213 Democrats. As Congressional negotiators and the Biden Administration (led by Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas) continue working to forge a consensus on new border security policy, the House began impeachment hearings against Secretary Mayorkas over his handling of border issues on Wednesday in the House Homeland Security Committee. Also on Wednesday, House Judiciary Committee Chair Jordan (R-OH) and Oversight Committee Chair Comer (R-KY) voted on separate resolutions to hold Hunter Biden in contempt for failing to obey a congressional subpoena to appear for a deposition.

2. THE WHITE HOUSE. On Monday, President Biden traveled to Charleston, S.C., where he delivered a campaign speech

at Emanuel AME Church and later traveled to Dallas, Tex., where he paid his respects to former Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (R-TX), who passed away on Dec. 31. The White House announced that President Biden has accepted House Speaker Mike Johnson's invitation to deliver the State of the Union Address on Thursday, March 7 (2 days after Super Tuesday when 15 states and American Samoa hold their presidential primaries).

3. SUPREME COURT. Last Friday, the Supreme Court issued an order that it will grant expedited review of the Dec. 19 Colorado Supreme Court ruling to disqualify Donald Trump from appearing on the Colorado primary ballot because he participated in an insurrection per Sec. 3 of the 14th Amendment, with arguments scheduled for Feb. 8. Also on Friday, the court granted the State of Idaho's request to put on hold a federal district court's ruling that would have allowed emergency rooms in the state to provide abortions per a federal law, the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act, that requires hospitals receiving Medicare funding to provide stabilizing treatment to pregnant women in emergencies. The court will hear arguments in the case in late April.

4. APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE. On Sunday, House and Senate leaders reached a bipartisan deal on

Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations with a spending ceiling of \$1.659 trillion (\$773 billion for domestic spending and \$886 billion for defense) – which hews closely to the number that President Biden and then-Speaker McCarthy agreed to in April 2023 as part of the debit limit negotiations. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) is touting that the agreement cuts \$10 billion in IRS funding and rescinds \$6.1 billion in Covid-relief funds; however, the conservatives in the House Freedom Caucus have already denounced the agreement as something that is “worse than we thought.” The first deadline to enact appropriations bills is Jan. 19.

5. DECEMBER JOBS REPORT. The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced on Friday that the U.S. economy added a surprisingly strong 216,000 jobs in December with the unemployment rate holding steady at 3.7%. In total, the economy gained 2.7 million jobs in 2023 and average hourly earnings for workers rose 0.4% in December from the previous month and were up 4.1% for the year.

6. FDA DECISION ON DRUG IMPORTS. In a significant change to federal policy, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) last week approved a Florida program which aims to import prescription drugs from Canada at a lower cost, with Florida stating it would start with drugs that treat HIV, mental illness, and prostate cancer to be available to patients at state-run facilities and Medicaid members. The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) quickly challenged the policy issuing a statement

calling the FDA's decision “reckless.”

7. FAA GROUNDS BOEING PLANES. Last Saturday, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ordered the temporary grounding and immediate inspection of Boeing 737 Max 9 planes (affecting 171 planes used by Alaska and United airlines) after Alaska Airlines Flight #1282 carrying 174 passengers and 6 crew members was forced to make an emergency landing just minutes into its trip from Portland, OR, to Ontario, CA, on Friday after part of its fuselage detached from the plane at 16,000 feet.

8. STUDENT LOANS. Last Friday, the U.S. Department of Education announced it is withholding almost \$2.2 million in payments to three student loan servicers because they failed to send 758,000

customers timely billing statements. The majority of the money, \$2 million, is being kept from contractor Aidvantage. The department is also withholding \$161,000 and \$13,000 from two other student loan servicers, EdFinancial and Nelnet, respectively. The Education Department has directed each company to put affected loan accounts into administrative forbearance until they fix the issues. The agency said that borrowers would not owe payments or accrue interest, but this time it will still count toward Public Service Loan Forgiveness or income-driven repayment forgiveness.

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## Deltas Will Present “ROUGE: A Go Red Event”

The Central North Alabama Alumnae (CNAA) Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated and the Rouge Foundation will present “ROUGE – A Go Red Event: The Silver Anniversary Collection. The event will be held at the Von Braun Center on February 10.

This night of elegance will feature community leaders, business owners and influencers who are selected as model ambassadors to advocate for heart health. Proceeds will benefit the American Heart Association as well as fund CNAA's programs.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cardiovascular disease is a prominent and fatal illness in women within the United States. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, is committed to advocating for local and international communities to bring awareness of various program initiatives. The CNAA Chapter proudly serves Lawrence, Limestone and Morgan counties.

Wear radiant red cocktail attire, put on dancing shoes and preparing for a night of fashion, fun, and fundraising for a tremendous cause! Cocktail Hour will begin at 6 p.m. and the ROUGE Program will follow at 7 p.m.

For ticket purchase information, visit [cnaadst.org/services-5](http://cnaadst.org/services-5). Event sponsorships are available through The Rouge Foundation. You may contact [therougefoundation@gmail.com](mailto:therougefoundation@gmail.com) for more information.

The Valley Weekly

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THE VALLEY WEEKLY  
**VALLEY  
DEATHS**



### SERENITY FUNERAL HOME

2505 University Drive NW  
Huntsville, AL 35816 (256) 539-9693  
www.serenityfuneralhm.com

Funeral service for MR. CLEIVER MORALES DIAZ (b. 2000) will be held Saturday, January 20, at Serenity Funeral Home Chapel at 2 p.m. Visitation: Jan. 19, 12-7 p.m.

Funeral service for MR. JOHN COLEMAN (b. 1955) will be Saturday, January 13, at Union Chapel M.B. Church at 11 a.m. Interment: Northside Cemetery

Funeral arrangements pending for MR. ISAAC DANIELS (b. 1933).

Celebration of Life service for MR. CLEM MALCOM JOHNSON (b. 1964) was held Saturday, January 6, at New Life Baptist Church.

### NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

2501 Carmichael Avenue NW  
Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-8189  
www.nelmsmemorial.net

Funeral service will be announced soon for MR. LAWRENCE JONES, JR. (b. 1939).

Funeral service for MS. LATRIVIA DARCINA BONNER (b. 1969) was Saturday, January 6, at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Funeral service for MS. WENDI TONEY (b. 1984) was Thursday, January 4, at Triana Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, Elder James E. Childress, Pastor.

### ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

4315 Oakwood Avenue NW  
Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481  
www.royalfh.com

Funeral service for MR. CARVER CHENAULT MYHAND, SR., (b. 1939) will be at 11 a.m., Saturday, January 13, at the Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church (229 Church Street NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Maurice Wright II officiating.

Funeral service for MRS. HASSIE REOLA MOORE (b. 1947) will be 1 p.m., Saturday, January 13, at the Blackburn Chapel Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (507 Plummer Road, Huntsville, Ala.).

Funeral service for MR. LARRY DONNELL McCOMB (b. 1960) was held Sunday, January 7, at the First Church of God in Christ (3801 Oakwood Avenue NW Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Curtis Banks officiating.

# Spiritual Game Plan

Valley Weekly  
PRESTON BROWN'S



## "Looking Forward, Not Behind"

Hebrews 11: 1 says, "Now Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

I believe that we all need a faith that looks forward and not behind. Even though it may not look like we are moving forward, if we are faithful God will always continue to bring us through whatever we are going through. Many

times, we just want out of our current situations without any action on our part. However, I have found that there are a few things we need to understand about faith and change. First, we need to understand that faith looks forward not behind. I believe that God is always pointing us toward our future.

Often, it's easy to focus on past hurts and disappointments. However, God doesn't want us to focus on those

things. Remember, Isaiah 43:19 says, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up, do you not perceive it?"

God's plan for our lives is to look forward and not behind. The apostle Paul says it this way in Philippians 3:13: "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead."

That word *straining* means making an unusually great effort. Moving forward won't be easy, especially since most of us view life only in the physical. In other words, we can only deal with the things that we can see, touch, feel, or see. However, the spiritual side of us wants to move on. We need to



forget the past and look forward to the future on purpose. The good news is this: God can always make a way out of no way, if we let Him lead us. This year, we all need to start saying, "I'm looking forward to it"—no matter what it is. If God is leading me, then "I'm looking forward to it."

May God grant you spiritual success in looking forward to the life he has for you.

Question: What are some things that we can do to forget what is behind us and strain toward what is ahead?

Stay encouraged my brothers and sisters and make sure you purchase a copy of my book *Spiritual Game Plans For A Successful Life* and *A Champion Game Plan for Life* at amazon.com, Westbow Books or, if you have a PayPal account, email me at prestonbrown81@gmail.com, and I will send you an autographed copy.

**NEXT WEEK:**  
"Better IN 2024"



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A New Generation Of Service

The Valley Weekly

# VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

## January 10

Kids Climbing Teams  
Open House  
High Point Climbing and Fitness  
Huntsville, Ala.  
5 p.m.

Huntsville Winter Event  
UAB National Alumni Society  
Kona Grill - \$10  
Huntsville, Ala.  
6:30 p.m.

## January 12

Jordan Rainer: Straight Shot Tour  
Mars Music Hall  
Huntsville, Ala.  
8 p.m.

## January 12-14

Huntsville's Steppin' & WorkshopWeekend  
Envy Entertainment and Restaurant  
Huntsville, Ala.

## January 14

"Calling All Titans"  
Huntsville Titans Champion Force Athletics  
erp.championforce.com

## January 26

Concert  
American Spiritual Ensemble  
Host: Huntsville Chamber Music Guild

## February 1

"Feathered February"  
Huntsville Botanical Garden  
Tickets: [hsvbg.org/featheredfebruary](https://hsvbg.org/featheredfebruary)  
Huntsville, Ala.

## February 2

Mardi Gras at MidCity  
MidCity & The Camp  
Huntsville, Ala.

## February 7

Alabama Tactical Officers Association's Event  
5827 Oakwood Road  
Huntsville, Ala.  
8 a.m.

## February 9

Crafting Social: A Special Galentine's Event  
Burritt on the Mountain  
Huntsville, Ala.  
5:30 p.m.

## February 10

All Girls State Chess Championship  
Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering  
9 a.m.

## March 9

Rosetta James Foundation "Honoring Our Elders" Celebration/Day Gala  
Huntsville, Ala.  
12 noon

## Concert

Lawrence Brownlee  
Host:  
Huntsville Chamber Music Guild  
Huntsville, Ala.

## March 22-24

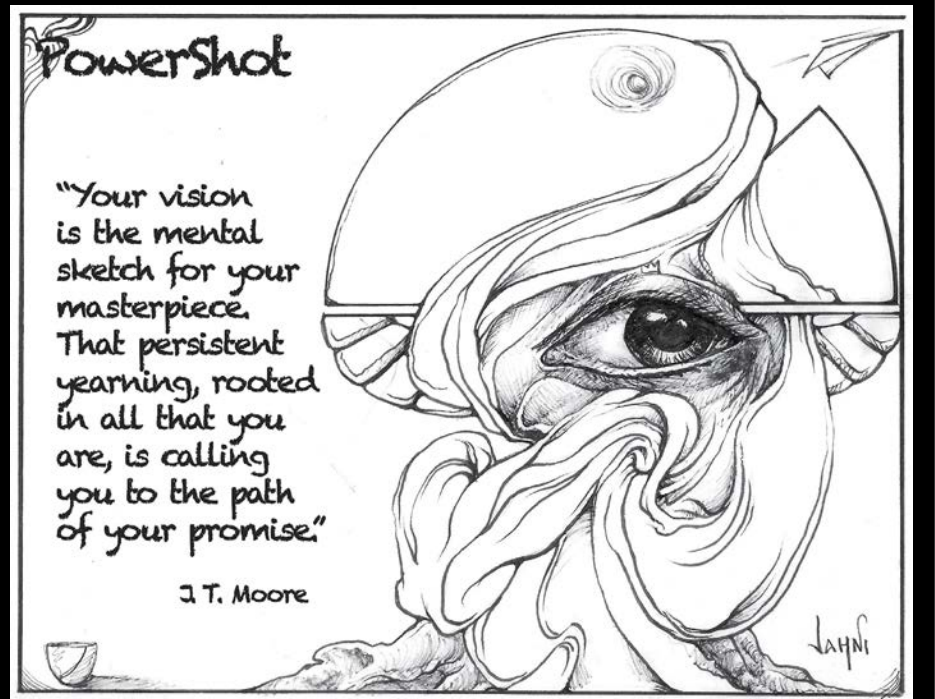
The 4th Annual Women's Expo Huntsville  
Von Braun Center  
Huntsville, Ala.

## May 10

Exhale Huntsville - A Mother's Love Girls Night Out  
Huemanity Studio  
Huntsville, Ala.  
7 p.m.

## May 18-19

Rocket City BBQ & Soul Fest  
National Speleological Society  
Huntsville, Ala.  
10 a.m.-10 p.m.



**JANUARY 12 - ISSA RAE** - Jo-Issa Rae Diop is an American actress, writer, director, producer, and web series creator. Rae's birth name, Jo-Issa, comes from a combination of the names of her grandmothers: Joyce and Isseu. Her middle name, Rae, is after an aunt, who was an artist. Rae's first book, a memoir titled *The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl*, was released in 2015 and became a New York Times best-seller. In the book, she chronicles her life through a series of humorous anecdotes and opens up about her personal struggle with not fitting in, and not being considered "black enough" at times.

- BlackCelebrityBirthdays.org



*"It's always something to remind you that everything ain't never gonna be alright!"*

- J. California Cooper

# Why Wait ...

## Millennial Moment by Gloria B. Caldwell

"I'm just going to wait." Something we tell ourselves often. That is not a problem when it concerns planning finances, especially if you're in a bind and splurge spending crosses your mind.

Let's be reasonable.

But let's take a look at accomplishing your goals/dreams. It doesn't matter what area you decide to enhance or advance. You can't wait forever.

Let's ask the question?

Every good solution starts with a question. What



are you waiting on? What opportunity needs to pose itself before you take a

leap and get moving? A handout.

Come on!

SMH, What about fitness? What "feel" are you waiting on to decide? THIS is the day I will start my fitness journey.

Nutrition, how about this one? What needs to take place for you to say, "That's it, I'm going to start being mindful of what I am eating!" Is it a near-death situation that needs to occur? Does a sickness need to set in? What are you waiting for?

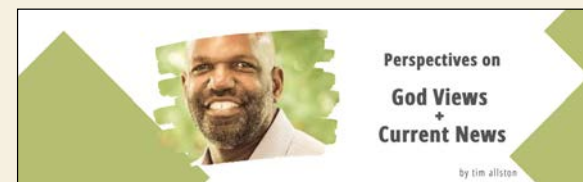
Are you waiting for some magical moments (which you have the luxury of changing) to occur? Guess what? It's all in your head. You can start today. That moment can be right now!

Start planning, writing, running, making connections, and putting those sweets down.

Think back on something you have accomplished. Think hard about that moment you decided to start. Grab that feeling and create an updated version of it today! Why wait? Start right now!

Lace Up!

Let's Go! Life is waiting for you!



### Are You Standing Before Kings - and Why Not?

*"You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, . . . But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak; for it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."* - Matthew 10:18-20

So often, we think that we cannot get an audience with VIPs - whom the Bible calls "governors and kings." They are unapproachable or too busy, we reason.

But one such VIP proved otherwise for my latest book, *Where Jump Shots Meet Jesus*.

Years ago, I read *Coaching Your Kids to Be Leaders* by Basketball Hall of Famer Pat Williams. He was a former general manager of the Philadelphia 76ers, Chicago Bulls, and Atlanta Hawks, and co-founder of the Orlando Magic. His resume made him appear too prominent and too busy to approach - that is, by human standards, but . . .

*" . . . for My sake, . . ."*

Because *How to Be Like Jesus* was also one of his 100+ books, he became to me a highly-profiled VIP intersecting the Bible and winning NBA basketball. Therefore, I stepped outside my possible intimidation "comfort zone" and leaned on God's promises.

I then emailed him and to my surprise, he responded "yes" later that same day! He even asked me to rough-draft a testimonial statement for him.

Williams' endorsement "If you are a person of faith or passionate about sports, Tim Allston's book will speak to you" is now featured on my book's front cover!

Once published, I sent him two "thank-you" print copies for his VIP support.

He not only endorsed but gave me a basketball lingo -

*"And 1, . . ."*

Last week, his office called and scheduled me for a book interview for WTLN Radio's "The Pat Williams Show" for his "Saturday Power Hour" broadcast on January 6.

**And 1, . . . again**

Afterward, Pat not only thanked me for our 30-minute interview but also offered to help me in any way he could to promote my Bible-NBA book.

Don't be intimidated by perceived obstacles. Instead, Jesus mandated that you need to pursue "for My sake."

Hopefully, Pat Williams proved to you and me the Bible's James 4:2: "You do not have because you have chosen not to ask."

**Tim Allston**

Leadership Player-Coach & Four-time Amazon Best-Selling Author  
*Where Jump Shots Meet Jesus*,  
www.timallston.com  
(256) 212-0949

### NAAACC Meetings

The North Alabama African American Chamber of Commerce (Huntsville) meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday at 12 noon.

The meeting location varies. Call (256) 564-7574.

SHARE YOUR VIRTUAL FREE COPIES of The Valley Weekly Each Week! Visit [ValleyWeeklyllc.com](http://ValleyWeeklyllc.com)

*"... No woman can love a weak man hard enough to make him strong."*  
- Pearl Cleage

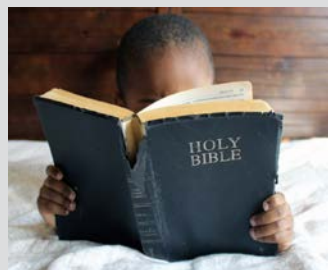
### ON THIS DAY



On January 12, 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court rules that qualified Black students in Oklahoma are to be admitted into all-white state law schools. Also, the University of Tennessee begins admitting Black students.

- bet.com

## This Sunday's Lectionary



Sunday, January 14, 2024  
Second Sunday after the Epiphany

(Track 2, Year B)  
First Lesson:  
1 Samuel 3:1-10, [11-20]  
Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17  
Second Lesson:  
1 Corinthians 6:12-20  
GOSPEL:  
John 1:43-51

*"To go wrong in one's own way is better than to go right in someone else's."*

- Fyodor Dostoevsky



Rosetta James Foundation "Spotlight on Our Elders" ... Featuring

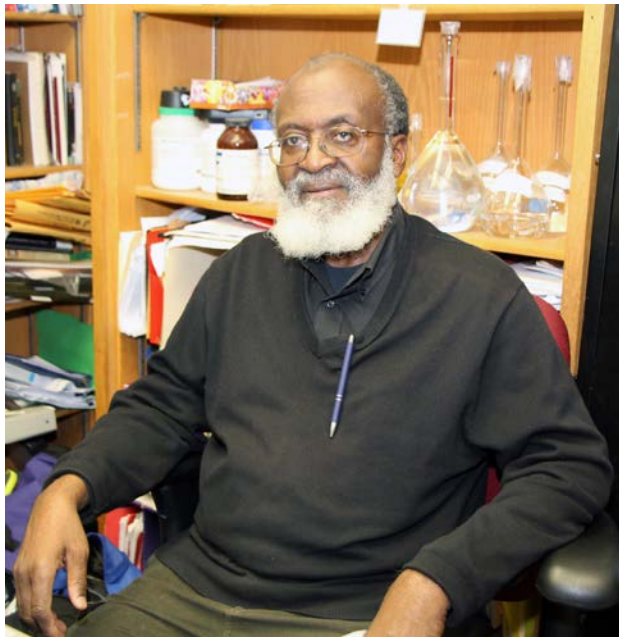
## Dr. Razi Hassan

Dr. Razi (Bobby Blockum) Hassan is a native of Birmingham, Ala., where he was educated in the public school system before pursuing his postsecondary education in chemistry and mathematics at Knoxville College (Tenn.). He studied physical chemistry at Princeton University before eventually settling at New York University, where he earned the Ph.D. degree in theoretical chemistry.

Hassan devoted some 25 years as community organizer with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), registering African-American voters in Arkansas and Mississippi in the mid-1960s.

During those eventful years, he also helped to organize a credit union and school for dropouts in Trenton, N.J. At the onset of the 1970s, Hassan organized food co-ops, a community literacy program and another school for high school dropouts as part of his service at the Harlem Mosque in New York.

Moreover, from 1990-97, he was counselor, GED instructor and Imam (minister) at Limestone Correctional Facility in Alabama. Hassan concurrently directed a tutorial center for mathematics and chemistry in Huntsville,



Ala., from 1993-98. The educator was affiliated with Alabama A&M University for over 25 years, primarily as an associate professor of chemistry at Alabama A&M University and director of the chemistry and mathematics tutorial center.

In 2004, Hassan led a team of AAMU students on a NASA-sponsored rocket launch competition in Manchester, Tenn. However, the goal at that time was two miles (more than 10,000 feet). A Proteus rocket, fondly named "Butch" after the school mascot, reached 1.8 miles, falling short of rival UAH, which achieved 1.9 miles. However, the UAH rocket was not successfully re-

trieved. This led toward an overall win by the AAMU team.

Additionally, Hassan has managed numerous government programs with aggregate budgets exceeding \$12 million in his capacity as a project director or co-director, coordinator, budget manager or principal investigator.

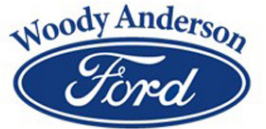
His numerous affiliations include American Chemical Society; an advocate for the homeless through the First Stop organization; National Conference For Community Justice (NCCJ); Board Member; Interfaith Mission Service (IMS); leader of a local mosque; Assistant Iman, W.D. Muhammad Muslim Center; and many others.

"Spotlight on Our Elders" is a weekly feature sponsored by the Rosetta James Foundation to promote **volunteerism** and **activism** in our community among those who are 70-plus. The Foundation also provides scholarships. Learn more about us at [www.rosettajamesfoundation.org](http://www.rosettajamesfoundation.org). Know an outstanding elder (70+) that you would like to see featured? Send us a photo and 250-word write-up to [info@valleyweeklyllc.com](mailto:info@valleyweeklyllc.com).



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# American Spiritual Ensemble to Be Hosted by Huntsville Chamber Music Guild

The Huntsville Chamber Music Guild will host the American Spiritual Ensemble on Saturday, January 27, at Trinity United Methodist Church at 5p.m.

The American Spiritual Ensemble (ASE) began as a dream of Alabamian and founder Dr. Everett McCorvey, a native of Montgomery. McCorvey believed that the music of the American enslaved should be preserved and began efforts to the spiritual tradition alive.

Thus, ASE preserves the music of a culture that was enslaved and forced to come to America over 400 years ago. It also celebrates the many forms that this music has taken since its creation. Enslaved people were not permitted to speak their native language, sing their traditional songs, or play their instruments. Often times, individuals were separated from their families and stripped of their ways of life, forcing them to create new ways of communication in order to survive.

As these people adjusted and incorporated some of their culture into their lives, spirituals were born.

These songs became sources of comfort, hopes, and communication; songs of direction and faith. Today, there are over 6,000 negro melodies; around 3,000 of said melodies have been documented, while many more were passed down through oral tradition, according to McCorvey.

Four centuries have passed since the first enslaved African person



set foot on American soil. ASE considers it a privilege to perform these songs, tell their stories, and share the love for the beautiful creations with the world.

Performing these spirituals serves as a tribute to the many lives lost or destroyed during slavery in the United States; a horrible time for human kind. These songs, a combination of African, American, and European traditions, create a new type of melody in which a sense of identification was created within the enslaved community. These songs now stand as a testament of the strength found through faith during times of hardship as well as a unifying force among all peoples. These songs are beloved all around the world.

ASE commits to aiding in the preservation of these beautiful melodies through performances worldwide as well as through education

in the form of: lectures, master classes and vocal instruction for educational, religious, and community institutions worldwide.

Founded in 1995, ASE is a critically-acclaimed ensemble that is dedicated to performing provocative, dynamic concerts around

the world celebrating the American Negro spiritual.

Additionally, ASE frequently visits educational institutions in order to teach students about the history and traditions of enslaved people in America and their spirituals. ASE

also presents master classes, television performances, radio performance, and interviews on the music of the American negro slave. ASE participates in a wide range of concert formats, allowing both performers and listeners to experience

the beautiful melodies of our past as well as the history of African Americans in different ways. ASE has had the opportunity to perform in the following formats:

- Spirituals: Classical arrangements of traditional American negro spirituals in choral and solo format
- Broadway: Selections of Broadway pieces that highlight the African-American experience as well as celebrate human perseverance through faith
- Jazz: Jazz music that was composed, arranged, or written by African-American artists.

Tenor Dr. Everett McCorvey founded the group in 1995, and many of its members have performed in such venues as the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Atlanta Civic Opera. They have also performed abroad in England, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain and others.





## Park Updates Nearly Complete in N. Huntsville

Renovations at James Crawford Park are almost complete, and details about a celebratory ribbon-cutting will be announced soon.

Earlier this year, the

park added a pavilion and reconstructed basketball court.

Last month, the park's flume, walking area and picnic pad were completed. Topsoil, grading and sod

were installed to cover the construction area. This will be a significant asset for the North Huntsville community for years to come.

## ART-N-SOUL Schedules Poetry Event

Once again ArtNSoul will hosts its most vintage event in its repertoire, the MLK Poetry 2024 edition.

Organizers are looking forward to a fun evening of music, expression (poetry), refreshments, and reflections.

Come, join planners in the poetic celebration of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,

on Sunday, January 14, at the Hermitage Clubhouse, 111 Daniel Smith Drive in Madison, Ala.

Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and the show begins at 7 p.m.

The theme is: "No Turning Back on Freedom." The recommended donation is \$15 (via Cashapp \$Joneia for Earlybird).

Partial proceeds will go

toward ArtNSoul Community Anchor Fund.

FEATURE POET: The Renowned Glennwood Urbz

COLORS: Green/Black/Red (Casual)

This is a limited open mic (please sign up early).

- Grown Folks Only  
- Seating is first come, first served.

E-mail avodj@usa.net.

## Business License Renewals by Jan. 31

Attention, Huntsville business owners – it's once again time to renew operating licenses for 2024. The deadline for renewal without penalty is Jan. 31.

Through the City of Huntsville's user-friendly online portal, a streamlined renewal process

makes it easier than ever to do business in Huntsville.

"Since the onset of the pandemic, our online portal has helped thousands renew their licenses at their desk – no stamps or envelopes necessary" said Penny Smith, the City's Director of Finance.

"Just follow the steps on your renewal form or the website."

New businesses can apply for a license through the portal or in person at City Hall, 308 Fountain Circle. Existing businesses must reapply online.

- [Huntsvilleal.gov](http://Huntsvilleal.gov)

## THE VALLEY WEEKLY ALL FOR THE FAMILY Family Inspiration for 2024

Here are some "Inspiring Ideas to Give Your Family Roots and Wings as You Usher into 2024":

1. Say goodbye to 2023 with love and appreciation. Take time to identify your most grateful experience in 2023.
2. Leave the past behind as you greet the future. Too many of us drag baggage of guilt, unforgiveness, exhaustion, patterns of fear or emotional pain or plain old clutter. Ask each family member to write on a piece of paper what they plan to leave behind as they enter 2024. Then trash or burn it.

3. Ask family members what one thing they look forward to in 2024, such as, to spend more quality time with loved ones.
4. Identify ways to incorporate the Fruit of the Spirit into your daily lives (e.g., love, joy, patience and self-control).
5. Take family photos to remind each other of the ways they have changed over the years.



Dr. Margaret J. Kelly

6. Listen to each other with full attention.
7. Share thoughts and feelings without criticizing each other.
8. Chat while driving to activities.
9. Exercise together, such as taking daily walks.
10. Be there for each other and support each other.

May the new year be filled with bountiful blessings for you and your beloved family. I send you love and appreciation for all the love and joy you create in the world, just by being YOU!

### Sources:

[helpfulprofessor.com](http://helpfulprofessor.com)  
[lovetoknow.com](http://lovetoknow.com)  
[purdue.edu](http://purdue.edu)

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