

ALLEN TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Jacqueline A. Thompson, Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Sr., Pastor Emeritus



31 DAYS OF
PRAYING
THE PSALMS

JANUARY 1 - 31, 2025

GREETINGS FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

Happy New Year!

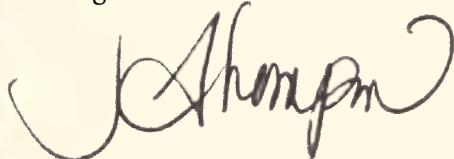
2024 has come and gone leaving many of us reeling in its wake. Yet, with this new year we have another opportunity to grow in the grace and the knowledge of God individually and as a church family.

For some the new year means new resolutions, new goals and new beginnings. For others, it evokes disappointment because of unrealized aspirations. My hope is that we all have a desire to strengthen our relationship with God in 2025. The daily disciplines of our faith are critical in deepening our roots and producing lasting change in our lives.

The Psalms are full of theological richness and life lessons born from the length and breadth of our human experience. The Prayer Warriors Ministry has curated this wonderful journal to guide our daily devotion as a congregation.

As we endeavor in 2025 to be *"Ambassadors For Christ: Agents of Reconciliation"*, let us begin reminded by the truth of Psalm 24:1 - "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and those that dwell therein."

Blessings to You!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jacqueline A. Thompson".

Rev. Dr. Jacqueline A. Thompson
Senior Pastor
Allen Temple Baptist Church



31 DAY CONSECRATION SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

How to Participate

- Follow the daily devotional readings and scriptures in the guide to inform your prayers.
- Consecrate yourself by fasting and/or giving up a cherished hobby, favorite food, or activity.

Guiding Scriptures for Fasting (not exhaustive):

- Daniel: Fasted to receive a vision (Daniel 9:3; 10:2-3).
- Acts: Church leaders fasted to seek God's direction (Acts 13:2-3, 14:23).
- Jesus: Fasted before starting His ministry (Matthew 4:2; Luke 4:1-2).

Fasting Options

Participate in the 31-Day Prayer Consecration with one or more of these fasting methods:

- Daniel Fast
 - Eat: Fruits, vegetables, water, or pure fruit juice.
 - Avoid: Meat, sweets, and bread.
- Sacrificial Fast
 - Ideal if you're new to fasting or have health restrictions.
 - Give up activities like television, social media, unnecessary spending, or hobbies.
- Partial Fast
 - Refrain from food during specific times, such as 6:00 AM–3:00 PM or from sunup to sundown.

Note: If fasting is not possible for any reason, you are still encouraged to pray daily with us!

31 DAY CONSECRATION SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

Tips for a Successful Consecration

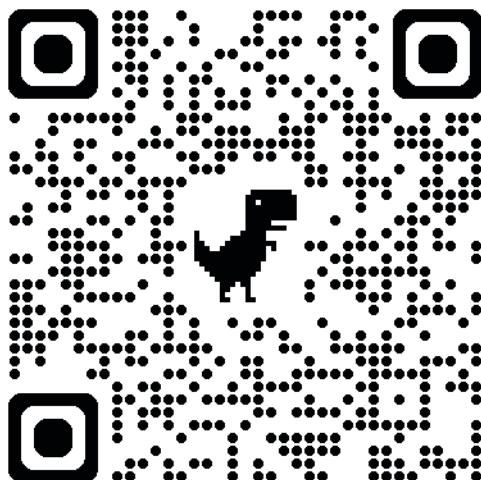
- Pray about Your Fast: Seek God's guidance on what to give up.
- Plan Your Prayer Time: Choose a daily time for dedicated prayer, beyond your regular devotions, and set a reminder.
- Stay Connected: Join our Wednesday Evening Prayer Call for encouragement and strength (check your Allen Temple email for details).
- Partner Up: Find a friend to join you for accountability and support.
- Follow God's Leading: If God places something different on your heart to pray about, go with it!

Share on Social Media

- Follow Allen Temple Baptist Church on Facebook and Instagram for daily devotional posts throughout the 31-Day Consecration.
- Share the posts to your networks and invite others to participate.

Set the Atmosphere

- Enhance your consecration time with worship music!
- Access our free YouTube Playlist to support and inspire you on this journey. Use the link (<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmbIoPl3X-QjYNkpJob-Bklst7DuanCHoc&si=MkmJ3JooYM-EwffR>) or scan the QR code below.



JANUARY 1, 2025 - PSALM 103

SONG OF MEDITATION: BLESS THOU THE LORD, O MY SOUL
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 103:1;13

Psalm 103 is just one of the many Psalms written by David, the poet king, to put it mildly. This is one of thanksgiving and it is familiar to a lot of Bible readers and students.

The Psalmist starts by acknowledging the wonderfulness of our Heavenly Father: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name." Verse 1, NRSVUE. These opening words have been put to music and sung by numerous choirs through the years. Singing this myself, in choruses, it rings as a personal testimony for me, just as David went on in subsequent Verses to detail a testimony for himself.

When I think about how good God has been to me... How He has brought me through so many things... How He has been gracious to me... How He has been merciful to me... Again and again and again... My Lord has been oh so good to me!

The Psalmist goes on (in Verse 13) to speak of God as a loving and compassionate Father. I am truly a witness. I am truly a recipient. I am truly a beneficiary. Hallelujah!

This Psalm by David, as with others, is both inspirational and instructional. It is a clear reminder to recognize, remember and acknowledge the goodness of God. Also, it is a fine example of giving God praise – some thing we all should do continuously. Therefore, just as the Lord has blessed me and continues to do so, I am compelled to likewise "bless His Holy Name!"

Prayer: O Lord, please help me to never forget your goodness and your grace and your mercy.



Ralph Gordon has taught adult Sunday School at Allen Temple for almost twenty years and he is now the Co-Superintendent of the Sunday School Department.

JANUARY 2, 2025 - PSALM 139

SONG OF MEDITATION: SEARCH ME, LORD BY THOMAS DORSEY
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 139:19-24

Because David loved God so much, because he revered God, anything or anybody who came against the knowledge and the Word of God, he considered an enemy of God. Therefore, his enemy as well. David prayed a prayer against the wicked for the judgment of God to fall upon them. In verse 21, he said, "Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord, and abhor those who rise up against you?" 22. I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them as enemies.

I am sure that at this time many of us may have some of those same feelings. But we must remember that God created all people, the good and the bad. In the last verse, David had to acknowledge that his own motives were not pure. We hear what people say, see how people look and what they do but only God knows the intent of the heart.

David prays, 23. Search me, (we must look at self), O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. When God reveals the stuff still in us it gives us the opportunity to repent. In other words, you know what I am concerned about. 24. See if there is offensive way in me, my own sin, and lead me in the way everlasting, eternal life.

The song writer said it like this. Search me Lord, Search me Lord, Shine the light from heaven on my soul. If you find anything that shouldn't be take it out and strengthen me. I want to be right; I want to be saved; I want to be whole.

Micah 6:8, The Lord requires us to act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly before our God.

Prayer: As we enter the new year of 2025, by your mercy, your goodness, and your grace, help us O God to improve our own heart attitude. In Jesus name. Amen.



Rev. Brenda J. Lewis, Allen Temple Clergy Ministry
President of the Women's Mission Society
One of New Member's Team Instructor

JANUARY 3, 2025 - PSALM 73

SONG OF MEDITATION: I NEVER LOST MY PRAISE BY TREMAINE HAWKINS
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 73:1-17

When I survey the contemporary landscape and try to deal with the profundity of life, my mind goes to Psalm 73, verses 1-17.

Verse 3 sums up my problem. From high school through working for corporate America and my personal life. Verse 2 sums up feeling and I was about ready to give up Verse 13 was my question. But, I finally found my answer in verse 17!

I entered into the sanctuary of God! Storm clouds may come, strong winds may blow, but I have found a Savior and he is sweet I know.

Being passed over for promotion, losing assets in a corporate merger, suffering a stroke and my ability to effectively verbally communicate, and being written off by some friends, I never lost my faith.

Remember God never takes all you have, He always leaves you with something, and we learn how to manage with what's left! God bless you and keep the faith.

Prayer: Lord, help me to put my trust in You, especially when life doesn't feel fair and those who have mistreated me seem to be getting away with it.



Deacon Olen C. Grant, Sr., has served at Allen Temple Baptist Church in various capacities, including as a Sunday School Teacher and member of the Deacons Ministry.

JANUARY 4, 2025 - PSALM 42

SONG OF MEDITATION: TRUST ME BY RICHARD SMALLWOOD
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 42:1; 5-7

Psalm 42:1 held a challenge for me, when my husband and I were both diagnosed with cancer. Today, the realization of our journeys proved to be a powerful expression of our deep longing for God, particularly during times of hardship and spiritual thirst. I was able to relate to the psalmist's yearning for God's presence and find comfort in knowing that even in difficult situations, there is hope. Praising God with the imagery of a deer panting for water symbolizes this intense desire for connection with the divine. Richard Smallwood's, Trust Me was our song of saving grace.

When we reach the summit of despair in our lives, we tend to wonder how long we wait for God answer us (Psalm 13; Isaiah 40:31, Isaiah 30:18; Ps 37:7 and Lamentations 3:25). Yet, deep within ourselves we know that God is omnipotent, all powerful; God is omnipresent, always around; God is omniscience, all knowing, infinite awareness. Yet, we know this about God and we still struggle with our own free will actions (Romans 10:9, Romans 6:17-20; John 7:17; Deuteronomy 30:19-20). On our journey we find revelation in hope and faith (Hebrews 11:1; Isaiah 41:10; Philippians 4:6-7; Jeremiah 29:11; John 3:16).

Psalms 42:5-7 we find the psalmist pouring out his heart to the Lord. He is letting God know that multiple struggles are happening in his life. In our lives where do we see ourselves? Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Prayer: Lord, continue to grant us your mercy and patience; so that we, your children, continue to show your grace to others



Rev. Dr. Bonita A. Kitt holds two Masters degrees and a Doctorate of Ministry from Union Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities; her expertise focus is in Human Sex Trafficking and Grief.

JANUARY 5, 2025 - REFLECT & REJOICE

For Reflection

Read Psalm 139:23-24. Pause and invite the Lord to reveal any attitudes, mindsets, or “anxious thoughts” that need to be surrendered. Ask for His strength to release them and trust Him with your concerns.

For Rejoicing

Reflect on a challenging season you faced last year. Can you see now how God guided you through it? Praise God for God’s faithfulness then and for the assurance that He will lead you through any challenges in 2025.

JANUARY 6, 2025 - PSALM 117

SONG OF MEDITATION: Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory by Sunday Service
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 117:1-2

Psalm 117 (MSG) - Praise God, everybody! Applaud God, all people! His love has taken over our lives; God's faithful ways are eternal. Hallelujah!

Be Present

Psalm 117 is part of the Egyptian Hallel, that expresses faith in, and gratitude for Divine Providence. I have to admit there have been times when I am distracted by the hustle and bustle of life, and knowing that God loves me causes me to praise God in the middle of the chaos and the mayhem.

This Psalm of praise is a reminder that no matter what is going on in your immediate life know that God is with you. To be present is to see the love of God in your life and acknowledge that God's faithful ways are eternal.

So, praise God, everybody! Applaud God, all people! God's love has taken over our lives; God's faithful ways are eternal. Hallelujah

Prayer: Eternal God, thank you for your love. Heighten our senses so that we can see, hear, feel, smell and taste your love in our lives.



Rev. Lana C. Rice, MDiv is a dedicated facilitator and leader, who uses her voice to inspire, to encourage, and to spread compassion and understanding.

JANUARY 7, 2025 - PSALM 25

SONG OF MEDITATION: TRUST IN YOU BY ANTHONY BROWN
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 25:1-6

Have you ever felt like there was no way out of a hopeless situation? In such a case, "Keep living" is what my beloved grandma would tell you. I began my college journey more than 36 years ago. Although I consider it a blessing, I am grateful for the degrees I earned. However, my student loan debt reached about \$250,000 due to interest rates and deferments. The COVID pandemic granted me a temporary reprieve from payments. Even with this ease, I prayed nonstop to God to alleviate my debt suffering. I was prepared to accept that this debt would last my entire life.

In Psalm 25, David laments his trust in God. David compels God to protect and guide during this time of distress. This Psalm teaches me that no matter how awful things seem to get, I should keep believing in God and doing things God's way. I kept serving, paying my bills, and paying my tithes. My goal was to stay humble in order to receive instruction from the good and upright God. I prayed for obedience and for God to continually reveal Himself to me. In the meantime, I am gradually reducing the size of my quarter-million-dollar debt.

Earlier this year, in 2024, God answered my prayers. I received a letter stating, "Congratulations! Your student loans have been canceled." I immediately rushed to my online student loan portal to ensure that I was reading this letter correctly. I sat stunned. I then began to reflect on the years I had spent praying to God to remove this debt. I was patient and trusted God. I had no idea how or when He would answer my prayers. All I knew was to be patient and to trust Him.

Prayer: Today, lead us on the right path, show us your ways, and instruct us in your ways. Lord, our hope is in your guidance. We beg for your grace and protection.



Nanette Gray is an active member of the Allen Temple Baptist Church as a trustee and the co-chair of the Adult Family Life ministry. She has worked in public education for over 30 years. She is currently an employee of the Pleasanton Unified School District in charge of state and federal special education compliance. She oversees the special education programs of 5 school districts in the Tri-Valley area and the Alameda County Office of Education.

JANUARY 8, 2025 - PSALM 40

SONG OF MEDITATION: THERE IS A BALM IN GILEAD BY KAREN CLARK SHEARD
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 40:1-5; 11-15

In these verses the psalmist expresses the anguish I have felt in my season of troubles and loss. The immense pain of losing a loved one whether a help meet/spouse/significant other, parent, sibling, relative, friend, or a child can make one's heart stop for a time. Troubles such as a loss of a job, health challenges, or just difficulty in life can cause us shame, anger, and anxiety. When we cry out to our God he is faithful to hear us in His time.

“I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.” (verses 1-2)

In His time he is faithful to hear our cries and to steady us. It is then that we can find moments of peace, joy and happiness.

“He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him. Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare.” (verses 3-5)

In our times of troubles He faithfully heals our hearts, clears our mind, and steadies our soul. All we have to do is to continue to pray, praise, and watch what He can do.

Prayer: Lord we come to you with our sin sick souls. You are worthy of our praise everyday. Continue to show us your ways. Heal us and strengthen so that we may walk in your will.



Deaconess S. Jamila Buckner is a long time member of Allen Temple Baptist Church and currently serves as the Chair of the Deaconess Ministry.

JANUARY 9, 2025 - PSALM 37

SONG OF MEDITATION: SUCCESS IN YOUR HAND BY FRED HAMMOND
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 37:4-5

Psalm 37:4-5 begins with an inspiring call: “Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.” Yet, this verse is often misunderstood. To “delight in the Lord” means finding true joy and satisfaction in who God is—His character, promises, and presence.

When we delight in Him, our desires are transformed to reflect His will, aligning us with His perfect purposes. This isn’t about getting whatever we want; it’s about receiving what is best according to His plan. By committing our plans, goals, and struggles to God, we surrender control and place our trust in His guidance. Trusting God involves confidently relying on His faithfulness to act for our good and His glory—even when the outcome is unclear.

Delighting in God brings peace and fulfillment as He aligns our desires with His will. Trusting Him alleviates the burden of worry, and committing our ways to Him assures His guidance and blessings in His perfect timing.

We can deepen our relationship with God by immersing ourselves in prayer, worship, and Scripture, drawing closer to His heart. As we surrender our plans to Him each day, we place our trust in His faithfulness, reflecting on His past works as a reminder of His unwavering goodness.

Prayer: Lord, Thank You for Your Word and the promise that delighting in You brings fulfillment. Teach us to find joy in Your unchanging character, steadfast promises, and constant presence. Align our desires with Your will and help us surrender fully to Your guidance. Amen.



Minister Michael Perrilliat is an Associate Minister at Allen Temple. He previously served as a Deacon and held leadership roles as the President of the United Men's Ministry and the Chair of the Deacon's Ministry.

JANUARY 10, 2025 - PSALM 105

SONGS OF MEDITATION:

MY SOUL HAS BEEN ANCHORED IN THE LORD, GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS
WHEN I LOOK BACK I WONDER HOW I GOT OVER
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 105:1-8

Kept Promises

We don't have to look back very far in our lives to recognize the faithfulness of our God.

While this Psalm looks at the history of Israel, it shows us that despite the failure of the people, God kept His promises.

We look back through our family trees and are amazed at the accomplishments that have been made...despite the odds we faced, despite a government that stills seeks to erase our footprint in this country's history, and our own shortcomings to embrace a heritage that bred kings and queens, we have made it to this point because of a God that kept His promise to us. To never leave us or forsake us.

I continually try and live a life that serves Him with my whole heart, but fall short. But in spite of all that I am and all that I am not, He is still faithful to me for He cannot fail. He promised to make my enemies a footstool for me if I would just trust Him. He has proven His love for me over and over again. I vow that I will continue to strive to and please Him in the hope that I can become worthy of His love for me.

O give thanks unto the Lord for He is worthy. I thank God for His faithfulness to me.

Prayer: My Father and my God. Creator and Sustainer of all that was, is and ever shall be, I come to say thank you for your continual presence in my life. I bless your name because you are Righteous, Just, Sovereign and Holy. I surrender myself to you and ask that you take charge of all of me so that I might live my life holy, pleasing and acceptable unto you.

*Deacon Leslie Allison, daughter of Bill and Edie Allison,
sister of Cartier Allison, child of God*

JANUARY 11, 2025 - PSALM 23

READ FOCAL VERSE PSALM 23:2

God, you are my Chaperone. When I examine the word, Chaperone, I extract the French root word meaning “head covering, one delegated to ensure proper behavior.” A Chaperone is one who knows the complete itinerary of the event, stays a distance to allow the participants to have their experiences and is watchful that the person is displaying appropriate behavior.

My life's journey has taken me through many unusual, unpredictable, non-traditional experiences. For example, as a teen, I was shocked to learn that I was identified to participate in the school district's Open Enrollment “experiment”; to attend a high school outside of my neighborhood. I certainly had not volunteered. At the time, it seemed like cruel and unusual punishment: having to get up real early, take two and sometimes three buses, walking up the hill when the bus didn't make it; not feeling a sense of belonging, but rather a sense of having to prove that I belonged. God, my Chaperone was always with me, guiding me along the path He created just for me. In many ways, it turned out to be a good experience.

Talking about an unpredictable experience, I was 24 years old when my mom died. I was devastated and boldly told God that it was not fair. How could I trust God? Both my mom's teaching and my Heavenly Chaperone tag teamed to help me internalize the words of the song “His eye Is on the sparrow, And I know, He watches me”

I learned that God, my Chaperone knows the complete plan and purpose ordained just for me. So, in times of what seems to be unusual, unpredictable, non-traditional experiences, yes, you can trust God and rest on His goodness and draw closer to Him.

Prayer: Thank you Jesus for being my Chaperone and my constant friend. Help me to accept that the destiny of my life is in your hands and where you lead I want to follow.



Charlotte Harrell has been a member of Allen Temple for 42 years. She coined the word “Balcony Buddies” to support and encourage all members; babies, teens, seniors and all who choose to sit in the balcony.

JANUARY 12, 2025 - REFLECT & REJOICE

For Reflection

Read Psalm 37:4-5. Is there an area of your life where you feel discontent? What steps can you take to shift your focus and begin “delighting in the Lord?”

For Rejoicing

Recall a time when an insurmountable challenge was met with God’s miraculous provision or intervention. Share this testimony with someone who needs encouragement, and pray with them to see God’s power in their own situation.

JANUARY 13, 2025 - PSALM 8

READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 8:3-6

Our role as people of God, as the Church, is to partner with God to care for, heal, and transform the world.

The church's ability to continue fulfilling this obligation will be profoundly diminished unless we pick up the mantle of our ancestors who tilled the soil, cared for the animals, and fought for freedom.

There is still much work for the people of God to do; the world needs healing. Global warming is devastating our planet, and empire is continuing to enslave and oppress people throughout the world.

Indeed, the present situation in America is one of environmental catastrophes and an enduring system of oppression resulting in a widening economic gap, as well as increasing social injustice, poverty, gang violence, imprisonment and death.

We may not know why God thinks so highly of us, but since God does, we should rise to meet God's expectations and our responsibilities.

God wants us to remember that we have been given strength, glory, honor, and power. The same God who created the heavens and the earth has entrusted us with the responsibility to exert control over all creation. Let us rise to the occasion.

*Prayer: "May God bless us
with enough foolishness
to believe that we can
make a difference in the world,
so that we can do
what others claim cannot be done, . . ."*



*Rev. Theophous Reagans is the Minister of Global
Ministries at Allen Temple Baptist Church*

JANUARY 14, 2025 - PSALM 34

SONG OF MEDITATION: TRUST IN GOD BY ELEVATION WORSHIP
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 103:1;13

This Psalm speaks to the profound human need for connection, particularly when we are experiencing fear, anxiety, or deep distress. The feeling of being unheard, even by those closest to us, can amplify our loneliness and struggles. Yet, as you point out, God's response to our cries is different. When we seek Him with sincerity, especially in times of trouble, He not only hears us but responds with compassion, love, and action.

David's experience in Psalm 34 is a powerful reminder that God is always listening—His ears are attentive to our hearts, especially when we are broken or burdened. The context of David's escape from Saul and his flight into the caves illustrates the depths of human suffering, but also the beauty of seeking refuge in God. David's act of seeking the Lord in the midst of adversity is not passive but an intentional pursuit of solace, guidance, and support.

Just as David was heard and delivered from his fears, we too can find comfort in knowing that our cries are never ignored by God. When we feel unseen or unheard by the world, we can rest in the assurance that He listens with a heart full of empathy. His responses are not just words; they come with action—He intervenes in our lives, offering peace, protection, and sometimes, deliverance from the very situations that threaten to overwhelm us.

This passage encourages us to actively seek God in our struggles, knowing that He is faithful to hear and answer. The invitation is clear: when we feel troubled, we are called to turn our hearts to the One who listens with loving attention and whose answers bring peace.

Prayer: God give me the strength to see you, especially in moments of overwhelm and worry. May my heart be open to your voice.



Kendra Roberts-McClure loves God and God's people.

JANUARY 15, 2025 - PSALM 125

SONG OF MEDITATION: TRUST ME BY BENJAMIN DUBE
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 125:1-2 (AMPLIFIED)

Psalm 125 is an affirmation of security when trusting in God. The overarching point in this Psalm is 'Trust'.

In your trusting relationship with God, do you feel secure, and confident in God, do you have assurance that God is with you no matter what? The Psalmist reminded the people, the worshipers that they/ us are like Mount Zion. Mount Zion has multiple meanings. The dwelling place of God, The Kingdom of God, A spiritual location for God. Our place in His love, His new life, His grace and His purpose lasts forever and cannot be moved.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem: As the people of God went up to worship at the temple in the Holy City, they could see the mountains surrounding Jerusalem. Just as Mount Zion is secure by the mountains, God surrounds Us with His divine protection, His grace, His provision, His mercy, His love, and His salvation from all the wickedness and evil around us.

From this time forth and forever: God has promised us that He will never leave us nor forsake us. He promised his disciples in Matthew 28:20, He would be with them/us even to the end of the age/time.

When I was in the Navy during the Viet Nam war 1969-72, I was assigned to an Amphibious fleet. We were surrounded by a squadron of ships of Air Craft carriers, Destroyers, and Mine Sweepers. This gave us the security we needed to insure we would be safe from would be attacks. God continues to surround me and provide His security and protection in and for my life.

Prayer: Heavenly parent, it is my prayer that we your divine creation, stand on your promise that you are always abiding with us and protecting us as we live and confront the issues of life that sometimes leaves us vulnerable.

Remind us that we are like Mount Zion which cannot be moved.



Deacon Michael Johnson serves as the Chaplain of the Deacon's ministry.

JANUARY 16, 2025 - PSALM 11

SONGS OF MEDITATION: MY SOUL IS ANCHORED IN THE LORD BY DOUGLAS MILLER
AND HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS BY MAHALIA JACKSON

As we embark upon a new year, challenges and uncertainties there is always a constant in a believer's life – Hope in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In Psalm 11, David reminds us of who God is and what He is capable of. Absolutely nothing can stop God's plan...A nation whose idea of democracy is questionable, lack of strong leadership, war, famine or unrest.

God is concerned about us and wants us to place our hope and trust in Him. God is aware of all things! His love is constant irrespective of the world and its negativity. God will cause those who practice violence to account for their actions.

Therein lies the beauty of our Savior, it's not our concern but his. That truth should anchor you and provide you with an inner peace so that everything will be alright. God will recognize the righteous and he will reward the upright.

Trust God, place your hope in Him and allow your steps to be directed by the ultimate creator. God's purpose shall prevail. God's got Us!

Prayer: Lord help us to trust you without question despite the clamoring of the world and remember, you hold the future in your hand. Amen

Deaconess René Mastin is trusting God in all things!

JANUARY 17, 2025 - PSALM 138

SONG OF MEDITATION: WE EXALT THEE

In verse seven, the Psalmist reminds us that the Lord is with us and is our protection during trouble.

This reminder resounds saliently during this particularly troubling time in history as we struggle to make sense of foolishness and evil.

On January 20, 2025 (MLK Day), our minds should be focused on the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Instead, we are dreading a presidential inauguration that is certain to usher in an era of unprecedented trouble.

But do not despair, God will preserve us “in the midst of trouble.” These are times that will cause us to lean on our faith and lean into God. Take 6 sings: “If we ever needed the Lord before, we sure do need him now...” And do we ever!

The good news is that amidst everything we will still be able to praise God with our WHOLE hearts because He is sovereign.

Prayer: Eternal God, we pause to glorify and exalt you. You are worthy of all praise and honor. We thank you that we can count it all joy, and that even amidst trouble and uncertainty we need not fear because you are sovereign. Prop us up, Lord, on any leaning side. Thank you for your loving kindness, thank you for protection, and thank you for peace.



Rev. Warren Long has served in various capacities at Allen Temple Baptist Church and currently serves as a part of the New Members Ministry

JANUARY 18, 2025 - PSALM 141

SONG OF MEDITATION: TRUST IN GOD BY AWARE WORSHIP

There are seasons in life when it seems like the wicked...are winning. Times like these can cause fear, confusion, rage, and even desperation. It can also cause us to focus, deepen our resolve, and inspire collective action toward liberation. Regardless of where we are from day to day, Psalm 141 reminds us that in prayer, especially when we need God the most, we can be honest with our needs and get straight to the point..."O LORD, I am calling you. Please hurry!" (v. 1, NLT)

For those of us pursuing God's call to justice and liberation, January 2025 marks a time where it may seem like the wicked are winning, and we need psalms like this to teach us how to pray and what to do. Psalm 141 is a prayer for help and protection, and...it also stands out to me as an admonishment to guide us.

In the wicked's "winning" season, Psalm 141 admonishes us to:

- Ask and trust the Lord to help you. We do not overcome by our own power, strength, or even discipline. We need God's help. (v. 1-2)
- Be mindful of your character, demonstrated in word and action, and refined by Godly community. (v. 3-5)
- Trust God's sovereignty. God will take care of the outcome for the wicked, and the outcome for you. (v. 6-10)

As we consecrate 2025 to the Lord, in context of all our personal and communal transitions, may we find comfort, strength, and wise council in this psalm.

Prayer: O Lord, we need You. As we step into this new season of our lives and history, please protect us. Help us rely on You like we never have before to speak and live according to Your Will. Help us discern the path You are guiding us on so that we don't fall into the traps of the enemy. Teach us to trust You, that we may live in peace, free from anxiety and fear, and walk together in action toward Your vision of our collective freedom.



Rev. Demitrius Burnett serves as an Associate Minister and a youth ministry leader at Allen Temple.

JANUARY 19, 2025 - REFLECT & REJOICE

For Reflection

Read Psalm 141:8-10. Are you feeling anxious about changes in local, state, or national leadership? Write down your concerns and surrender them to the Lord. Intentionally “fix your eyes” on Him and take refuge in His promises.

For Rejoicing

Think of a hero from our history who overcame great odds. Reflect on their journey and remember that the same God who empowered them is empowering you today.

JANUARY 20, 2025 - PSALM 145

SONGS OF MEDITATION: "PRAISE HIM" (JESUS BLESSED SAVIOR), "PRAISE IS WHAT I DO", "EVERY PRAISE" AND "I WILL BLESS THE LORD"

"Life be lifin" as the young people say. Life is filled with challenges – heartache, disappointment, trouble, sickness, despair, depression, lack, grief, sorrow, racism, sexism, injustice, and the list goes on and on. The circumstances of life may seem too heavy to bear, but we get to decide how we respond.

In Psalm 145, David rendered a song of praise to God. David had gone through many trials and tribulations, and throughout all the Psalms he poured out his heart, pain, and sorrow to God. Yet, he always praised the Lord. In this Psalm, David tells the beauty of God – his compassion, his grace, his faithfulness, his righteousness, his splendor. David shares that we can be bowed down, broken, and burdened, but God is the lifter. God works mightily for you, watches you, cares for you, provides for you, and covers you.

Through every experience in your life's journey, let praise come from your mouth. Praise God for his faithfulness – he will never leave you nor forsake you. Praise God for his compassion – he is a comforter in pain and sorrow. Praise God for his righteousness – he keeps his promises. Praise God for his love – he is always near, hears every cry, and shows his majesty every day. Praising God will keep you, deliver you, encourage you, and strengthen you to lean and depend on God. At this moment, meditate on Psalm 145. Choose how you will respond to the ups and downs of life. I choose PRAISE, will you?

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, I exalt you, loving God. God, you are great and greatly to be praised! I will lift my voice to praise and glorify you at all times. Praise will continually be in my mouth. There is nothing in this life that is too hard for you God. So, right now, in the name of Jesus, I surrender sickness, pain, heartache, confusion, grief, frustration, and despair to you. I praise you for hope, joy, peace, kindness, gentleness, justice, love and victory in Jesus Christ. I praise your holy name forever and ever.



Deacon Vangeria Harvey loves God and serves the Lord with gladness, and she is daily encouraged by her favorite scripture, Romans 8:28.

JANUARY 21, 2025 - PSALM 27

**SONG OF MEDITATION: "MY HELP, BY THE BROOKLYN TABERNACLE CHOIR
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 27:1-5**

The powerful words David speaks in Psalms 27, verses 1-5 serve simultaneously as a declaration and question. "Whom shall I fear? Of whom shall I be afraid?"

This is the ultimate confidence and assurance of victory we must live by daily, knowing that God is in control of all things in heaven and earth.

Focus Point: In verse four, we see a sound reminder of what our hearts desire should be: Vs.4 One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. (NIV)

Personal reflection: Can you testify: "All of my life God has been faithful"? My purpose and praise unto God is driven by his unfailing love, grace and mercy. When life changed suddenly, sickness, sorrow, danger and death came knocking, When the trials and tests of life shook our faith, God never failed. This is why we boldly praise God forever, and desire to dwell in his temple eternally.

Words of Encouragement: Whenever you face a hard challenge, do not give up. Wait on the Lord, and be of Good Courage. Our God is not an awesome god, He is GOD ALMIGHTY.

***Prayer:** Thank you for being our eternal protection, we love you Lord and long to be in your holy presence.*



Michael McCants is a servant of God, Bible teacher and minister with a mission to positively impact lives by leading them into a relationship with Christ. He is a member of the Men's chorus, and currently serves as the Co-Superintendent of the Allen Temple Sunday School Department.

JANUARY 22, 2025 - PSALM 91

SONG OF MEDITATION: "JEHOVAH SABAOTH (GOD OF ANGEL ARMIES)" BY
DONALD LAWRENCE AND THE TRI-CITY SINGERS

Psalm 91 is a powerful reminder that God's protection, power, and presence are always with us. It speaks directly to our fears and uncertainties, calling us to trust in the Most High as our refuge and fortress. From the opening verses to the closing promise of long life and salvation, this psalm assures us that we can live courageously because God is ever present.

In times of uncertainty, Psalm 91 has been my lifeline. When fear and worry seemed overwhelming, I turned to verses 5-6: "You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday." These words reminded me that no danger—visible or invisible—is greater than God's power to protect and deliver.

Fear has no place when we dwell in the shelter of the Almighty. His faithfulness is our shield, His angels guard us, and His promise to rescue and honor those who love Him (v. 14-16) is a source of hope and peace. This psalm doesn't simply offer protection; it invites us to abide in God's presence, trusting Him to guide us through every storm.

Beloved, take courage today. Whatever you're facing, remember that you are covered under the wings of the Almighty. His shadow is your safety, and His love drives out fear. Trust Him, rest in Him, and find peace in His promises.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for the promises of Psalm 91. When life feels overwhelming, remind me to rest in Your shadow. Strengthen my faith to face each day with courage. Help me to release my fears and dwell in Your presence. Remind me that Your protection is constant, Your angels guard me, and Your love is my refuge. Teach me to trust in You daily, resting in the assurance of Your care.



Reverend Charlotte Williams serves as Allen Temple's Minister and Director of Communications

JANUARY 23, 2025 - PSALM 1

MEDITATIVE MOMENT

As we prepare ourselves for this meditative moment of prayer through psalm, allow some time for calmness and re-focus. Choose to come to God and relax in His loving presence.

FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS

Mouth these words “There is a sweet anointing in the sanctuary (my sanctuary). There is a stillness in the atmosphere. For in this sanctuary (my sanctuary), God is here.”

(Pause ...)

In regard to the Psalms, the Life Application Study Bible posits these thoughts:

- Psalms are songs of praise to God as our Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer.
- Focusing our thoughts on God moves us to praise Him.
- The more we know Him, the more we can appreciate what he has done for us.

In spotlighting Psalm 1, verse 2, the psalmist is “delighting in the law of the Lord”. And “meditating on his law day and night”. Meditation encompasses focusing, reading, thinking, praying, praising, and studying. Another psalmist writes “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11).

While there are many treasures (pearls) in this psalm, let's consider just a few of the benefits of ‘meditating on the word’. This spiritual activity helps us to deeply reflect on God's word so that we can understand Him better. It helps us to understand His will for our lives. And it helps us to be mindful of the trappings of the ungodly (Psalm 1:1, 1:4-6).

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, As we read, pray, and reflect on the entirety of Psalm 1, please manifest to each of us what You (God) desire for us to glean from your Holy word.



Deacon T. Wayne serves in the ATBC Deacons' Ministry and as a teacher of Sunday school Class #7.

JANUARY 24, 2025 - PSALM 150

SONG OF MEDITATION: "A LIFE OF PRAISE" BY CYNTHIA CARTER HILL (PERRILLIAT)
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 150:1-2;6

In the final poetic proclamation, Psalm 150 declares that we as God's creation are called to Praise God for His Greatness!

Psalm 150:1-2, and verse 6 invites us to embrace a life of praise, recognizing God's might and majesty. As we honor Him with our Praise, we can expect to grow in faith, joy, and purpose.

Psalm 150 serves as a powerful anthem. It begins by directing our hearts to the places where God's glory is manifested—the sanctuary on earth and the magnificent heavens above. In both the intimacy of His earthly dwelling and the vastness of the universe, we witness His power and presence. This invitation reminds us that God is ever-present and deserving of worship in every space.

The psalmist encourages us to praise God for two significant reasons: His mighty deeds and His excellent greatness. I can testify that praises to God also serve as a weapon! In the face of our greatest trials and in the face of the enemy, praises to God can fortify and strengthen our very soul.

Finally, the psalm concludes in a magnificent call: "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!" Every living being is invited to join this symphony of praise! As we ponder this, we find that praising God strengthens our faith, shifts our focus from troubles to His greatness, and deepens our joy. Life itself is an opportunity to glorify Him. So, with great intentionality, let us breathe and Praise Ye the Lord!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to agree that every day, in every circumstance I will Praise You forever and ever.



Rev. Cynthia Carter Perrilliat is an Associate Minister of the Allen Temple Baptist Church, serving as Minister of Civic Engagement and Executive Director of the AC Care Alliance.

JANUARY 25, 2025 - PSALM 121

READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 121:1-8

As I read Psalm 121 it is a song of ascents. I divided the eight verses as follows:

- Verses 1&2 shows that the Lord is our helper. Our help comes from the Lord who is the maker of heaven and earth
- Verses 3&4 shows that the Lord is our keeper. He watches over us and will not slumber
- Verses 5&6 shows that the Lord is our protector. God is our shade and protects us from all harm and danger
- Verses 7&8 show that the Lord is our preserver; the Lord will watch over our coming and going for now and forevermore.

The last 24 months have been very challenging after the passing of the love of my life (Gaynell). During those 24 months the Lord has been and still is my helper, keeper, protector and preserver.

Without Him my grief process would have been very difficult. I am so glad that I know the Lord because He is good.



I am Walter L. Johnson, Sr. I have been a member of Allen Temple since 2011. I became a deacon in 2016 and I am a member of the church personnel committee, budget committee, men choir and president of the Unity Choir.

JANUARY 26, 2025 - REFLECT & REJOICE

For Reflection

Read Psalm 1:1-3. Ask God to reveal areas where you may be unintentionally “walking in the counsel of the ungodly” by following worldly advice or examples. Commit to meditating on Scripture in that area to realign your heart and perspective.

For Rejoicing

As this time of consecration comes to a close, reflect on the ways God has met you during this season. Praise Him for His work in your life, and commit to continuing the devotional practices you’ve embraced this month.

JANUARY 27, 2025 - PSALM 66

SONG OF MEDITATION: "GLORIOUS" BY MARTHA MUNIZZI
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 66:1-12

A CALL TO THANKS, TRUST & TESTIMONY!

In this psalm of thanksgiving, verses 1-12 provide a community perspective whereas verses 13-20 are individual testimony. God is worthy of universal and personal praise!

Part 1 encourages all the earth to give glorious praise and shares what God has done. Verses 10 and 12 say "For you, God, tested us; you refined us like silver" and "...we went through fire and water, but you brought us to a place of abundance." How amazing that God cares enough to polish and reshape us like brilliant, malleable, durable silver. He makes us strong enough to withstand fire and come out on the other side with abundance and testimony that encourages others!

Part 2 centers personal sacrifice, testimony, and prayer. Verses 19-20 say: "but God has surely listened and has heard my prayer. Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!" This world can leave us feeling rejected but God always answers.

Questions this psalm asks of us are:

- Even through tests, what testimony will we share?
- What vows have we promised God in times of trouble that we've yet to deliver upon?
- What sacrifice will we offer God, what sin will we let go of, so the Lord will listen to our cries?

This psalm calls us to "shout for joy;" trust Him and testify through tests; and cry out to Him. No matter what we face, His greatness is worth declaring, His refining is worth enduring, and His presence is worth seeking!

*Prayer: Lord, Thank you for listening and refining me, like silver, into a new shape.
Turn my tests into testimony and make my praise glorious!*



Deacon Jeannine N. Walker, an Allen Temple member for over 15 years, is the loving daughter of Deacon Eddie and Sister Connie Walker and is the President & CEO of Walker & Associates Consulting, a strategic management consulting and executive search firm supporting mission-driven clients

JANUARY 28, 2025 - PSALM 139

READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 139:7-12

Little Boy: Big Mama, you scared to walk the dirt road in the dark?

Big Mama: no, cause I trust God.

Little Boy: can God see us on the dark road?

Big Mama: there is no darkness to God, I don't worry cause he sees us, he's always with me and you.

What we learn from our elders can guide us to have a life of trust, assurance, and comfort, even in our darkest moments. Knowing that we are not alone in life's journey makes a difference in how we face each difficult moment and how we move beyond each challenging situation.

Little Boy now a man: I remember as a little boy looking at Big Mama's face, I saw concern for being on that dark dirt road heading home, concern for protecting herself and her little great-grand son. I also saw her confidence, a kind of knowing that we would make it home safely.

I saw how she developed her faith; her trust came from the many days and nights that she prayed in desperation that God would never abandon her. She had faith that God was with her and would guide her no matter the darkness, no matter the location, no matter how hard the times.

Those of us who are the beneficiaries of David's song and Big Mama's faith are truly blessed to see trust in action that we might emulate their example. David sang "Where can I go from your Spirit?" Big Mama said "blessing upon blessing knowing that the spirit is always at my side".

Prayer: Ashe. Amen.



Reverend Adumasa Adeyemi is an associate minister at Allen Temple Baptist Church.

JANUARY 29, 2025 - PSALM 127

SONG OF MEDITATION: HOW MUCH MORE BY JORDAN G. WELCH
READ FOCAL VERSES PSALM 127:1-2

All of 2024, I was in a constant state of motion... going to bed late, working on last minute projects and waking up early to hop on meetings to get more projects assigned to me.

And in all of that, I always felt the pressure to do more, take on more, and accomplish more.

I used to think that the pressure was coming primarily from outside – work, family, church – but when I am quiet, I must admit the pressure is coming from inside the house! Inside of my own heart...the part of me that is still measuring my value in what I can produce.

In Psalm 127, King Solomon one of the ancient world's wisest rulers, comes to me (and us) to correct and invite.

It is vain for you to rise early,
To retire late,
To eat the bread of anxious labors—
For He gives [blessings] to His beloved even in his sleep. (Verse 2 AMP)

All the hustle and bustle we engage in, attempting to control uncontrollable outcomes, exhausting ourselves with fear-based productivity – is futile. We must choose to TRUST and REST in God knowing that our ultimate security is in Him alone. And as we choose to rest in God, we will be refreshed and blessed.

Prayer: Lord! Help me to recognize when I am doing too much! Give me the wisdom to know when to work and when to rest. And help me remember that YOU are my source and strength...now and always! In Jesus' name, Amen.



A member of Allen Temple Baptist Church since October 2011, and an ordained Deacon since April 2023, Tiye Scott has served in various ministries of the church, including the Adult Family Life Ministry, LYFE Choir, and Prayer Warriors Ministry.

JANUARY 30, 2025 - PSALM 23

SONG OF MEDITATION: THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD BY CISSY HOUSTON
READ FOCAL VERSES: PSALM 23:2-3

Psalms 23 is one of the first scriptures I learned. As I got older and experienced life's tests and trials, I understood why this scripture is so beloved. There are several themes that magnify the ways God shows up both in the life of David but also in our lives. The Lord is our Shepherd; He provides for us; He restores us; God leads and sustains us. Ultimately, God is our eternal companion and comforter. Isn't it good to know that we can always depend upon God.

Psalms 23:2-3: He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness, for His name's sake. This pericope reminds me not to worship at the altar of busyness. The Lord as Shepherd knows how to make us rest when we need it, just as a shepherd would care for his sheep. We all occupy multiple roles and don't always know when to slow down or simply stop. That is often when The Lord steps in.

Recently I struggled with when and how to step away from work I love. I tried to do so while maintaining all my obligations. It wasn't until I was obedient and earnestly prayed for The Lord to guide me to the decision He would have me make. The Word I received was to step away...to rest, reflect and wait for the answer. I saw The Lord work. He gave me clear direction and made His will known. He restored my soul! Psalms 23 reminds us that God cares for us no matter what we're going through. Know that God's got it covered. Trust The Good Shepherd.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank You for being my Good and Faithful Shepherd. Thank You for the times that You call me to step away from life's hustle and bustle. Thank You that no matter what I do, You will restore me and lead me along life's path in times of during times of challenge and doubt. Remind me that You are the God of grace and mercy. You are The Good Shepherd who provides, leads, sustains, and restores me all the days of my life.



Carla Gilbert Keener is a member of the Deacons, Health Education and Grief Ministries.

JANUARY 31, 2025
A CLOSING PRAYER OF CONSECRATION
offered by Sister Delois Deloney, Prayer Warriors Ministry

“God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way; Thou who hast by Thou might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray.” Glory, honor, and praise, belong to you. From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the Lord’s name is to be praised (Ps. 113:3). Lord, we come before your throne of grace in this time of Consecration – to thank you for your rod and staff that comfort me. Thank you for your grace and mercy that follows me (us) all the days of my (our) life. Thank you for being our dwelling place in all generations – before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. We praise you now Lord for who you are and what you have done, and what you are doing, even now, and what you are going to do. In the name of Jesus - Glory to your name, the name that is above every name – that at the name JESUS every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that You are God. Hallelujah!

We exalt you O God (Ps. 29:1-2). Your greatness is illuminated, and your faithfulness affirmed in times of trouble. You are our refuge and strength. Your mighty hand, oh God is upon this New Year. Thank you that you promised that “No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me,” says the Lord. We have faith, hope, and confidence in the plan you have for us – to prosper us, to see us through the demanding times, weary days, doubts, despair, and brokenness; and not to harm us, but give us hope and a future in the name of Jesus.

Lord God as we greet the new year, we greet what the new year holds in the name of Jesus. So, we stand unified in the One who has been our dwelling place in all generations; and the One who dwells in the secret place of the Most High God, Jesus. It is to you we surrender all. Our newly elected leaders, continuing leaders, in our city, state, our nation, and our world; and all issues affecting the lives of our people on every level (law and order, truth and justice, honesty and integrity, social justice, educational system, and more). We need you God who is full of grace and mercy. Increase and strengthen our faith in the name of Jesus. Pour your anointing on those called to declare your word, your truth to the people, the body of believers here in Allen Temple and beyond. In the name of Jesus. Strengthen us O God, as we come to the end of 31 days of consecration to continue to study

the Psalms that teach us how to talk to God, how to share our deepest fears, and seek help. You brought us through 2024, a year packed with challenges that touched the lives of your people on every level, and yet amidst it all, you showered us with miracles among us beyond our understanding.

Thank you, Lord, for your blessings in 2025. In Jesus name.



We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.” - 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

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