



Volume 97 No. 5

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

September 30, 2026

Calling Men to Step Into Fatherhood



Micheal Alexander, Sr. Takes the Helm of Pathway Brothers United

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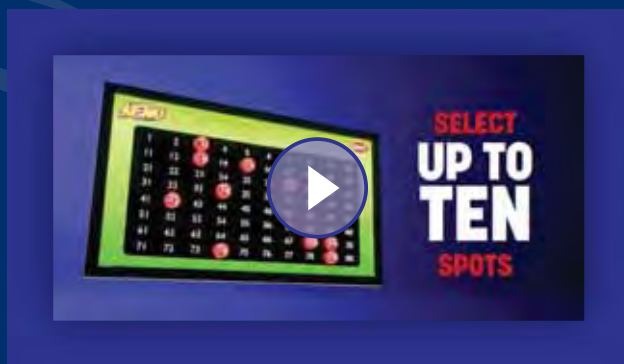


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The Hard Call

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, Ph.D.

The Truth Contributor

A time comes when silence is betrayal.

- Martin Luther King Jr.



Schuyler Beckwith could have said nothing about the new television ad from Marcy Kaptur, who has spent four decades bringing millions of federal dollars home to this community, and many in politics would have called that the expedient thing to do.

Kaptur is fighting for a seat in a district redrawn to favor Republicans by nine points, after winning her last race by less than one. Beckwith chairs the Democratic Party in Lucas County, the district's largest county. She spoke up anyway.

What a decision! And Beckwith made the right call.

The Call She Made

Congresswoman Kaptur has represented this area since 1983. She co-sponsored the Equality Act and voted against the Republican sports bill in 2023 and 2025. This month her campaign ran an ad saying she voted with Republicans to keep "transgender ideology" out of schools and that boys shouldn't play in girls' sports. Her campaign says parents and local coaches, not Washington, should make those calls.

On September 22, the Beckwith-led Lucas County Democratic Party responded definitively. Its statement said the Party was "disappointed and ashamed" and asked the Kaptur campaign to take the ad down.

In the same statement, it said it expects Kaptur to win. Our trans and LGBTQ neighbors were listening, and the party's own Stonewall club had already written to Kaptur. The Party chair's silence would have been noticed.

What Sat on the Scale

Beckwith was torn and had every reason to be. She told one reporter the ad "made me sick to my stomach" and told another it was an incredibly difficult decision.

Look at what sat on the scale. Kaptur has represented this area since 1983, in what one report calls the most pro-Trump district any Democrat

in Congress holds. Beckwith's mother worked for Kaptur for more than 30 years, and her father came from a community-organizing background. Against all that stood her neighbors in the trans and LGBTQ community, hearing their own Party's candidate borrow the far right's vocabulary.

Whichever way Beckwith went, somebody would be hurt, and if Kaptur loses in November, people will look for someone to blame.

I get Beckwith's trepidation.

Some Democrats will say a public rebuke six weeks before the election only helps Derek Merrin. She knows the ad may cost Kaptur some voters. But Kaptur's campaign put this subject on the air, not the Party.

Merrin was already running ads on her sports votes, so the statement gave him nothing new to say. What it did was tell trans and LGBTQ Democrats that their Party had noticed what was said about them. And Beckwith didn't pull the endorsement or tell anybody to stay home. She's still urging Democrats to vote for Kaptur.

Leadership Isn't Expedient

A Party that remains together only by staying silent doesn't have unity. It is a divided Party with unresolved toxic differences. So, rather than settling for political expediency as most politicians do, Beckwith did what she believed was right — in an election of this size — and she did it while still backing the candidate.

That is extraordinary leadership and deserves commendation.

The premise of the Dems' big tent brand is that its diversity enriches the entire Party. However, true unity never demands uniformity and works only when everybody in the tent can stand together without wondering whether they count.

The Young Democrats made that point in their own letter: trans people are neighbors and often fellow Democrats, not pawns. Nobody in a tent that size gets to be comfortable all the time.

Marcy Kaptur belongs in that tent too. Her record on this issue is not a straight line, and a Party can hold her to account for the ad while leaving her room to answer.

The truth is that Parties don't stay honest on their own. Somebody inside has to say so.

Tell every candidate on your ballot that you noticed what they said about the most vulnerable folks in this county when it was inconvenient.

Early voting starts October 6. Vote.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drldperryman@centerofhopebaptist.org

Community Calendar

September 30

Calvary MBC Roses of Calvary Flower Ministry Anniversary Celebration: 4 pm; Speaker Pastor Melvin Barnes of Greater Faith Fellowship Church

October 1

Kwanzaa Park Block Watch Meeting: At Padua Center; 6 to 7 pm; Guest speaker Traci Jaksetic, VP Lutheran Social Services of Northwestern Ohio; Also TPD stats on neighborhood crime

October 3

First Church of God Installation Service: For Bishop Robert S. Davis, Jr. and First Lady Robin Davis; Noon: 419-255-0097, ext 204 or fcoginstallation@fcogtoledo.com

October 5

Early Voting Starts

October 18

Toledo NAACP Youth Council Meeting: 3:00 pm @ Sanger Branch Library

October 20

Toledo NAACP report of the Nominating Committee and election of the Supervisory Committee; 5:00 pm; 3450 W. Central Ave, Suite 374

October 22

Scalp to Strand & Beyond: Hair and skin wellness discussion with Dr. Hope Mitchell; Noon to 1 pm; Perrysburg: 419-872-4673

November 17

Toledo NAACP election of officers and at-large members of the Executive Committee will be administered using our election voting platform. Voting from 3 pm to 7 pm.

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Sept. 30 Re-Opening of African American Civil War Museum to Feature 'From Slavery to the White House'

The Life of First Lady Michelle Obama, a Descendant of Black Civil War Heroes

Special to The Truth

During her speech at the 2016 Democratic National Convention, then First Lady Michelle Obama famously declared, "I wake up every morning in a house that was built by slaves."

Ten years later, an exhibit about to be unveiled for the first time on Sept. 30 at 10 am at the newly renovated African American Civil War Museum on historic U Street in Northwest Washington, D.C. will tell the rest of that story. "From Slavery to the White House" will tell how Michelle Obama's formerly enslaved forefathers fought in the Civil War for the freedom of all of America's enslaved.

And it will tell how America was transformed "from a slaveocracy to a democracy," as described by Frank Smith, PhD, executive director and founder of the Museum and the Memorial across the street. The Museum is located at 1925 Vermont Ave. NW in DC's Shaw neighborhood at 10th and U Streets.

"People will come in here. They will see the Michelle Obama feature exhibit. They will see freedom. And they will see enslavement," says Smith.

But that is not all they will see. The main exhibit, "Glorious March to Liberty: Civil War to Civil Rights," tells the triumphant story of enslaved Black people who took their own destiny into their hands by taking up arms to fight for their own freedom during the Civil War.

It is a refreshed exhibit in the museum, which has been visited by about 2 million people over 10-plus years, says Dawn Chitty, educational director at the Museum. "It will be seen in a light it has not been seen before." An additional 200 new artifacts have also been added, she said.

Smith, a former member of the D.C. City Council, describes the story behind his vision.

"When the Civil War started, African-Americans had no pathway to citizenship in the United States. We were defined in the Constitution as being chattel slaves. And every court decision from that point up to the Civil War reinforced our position and our status in society. We don't get a chance to fight for our freedom until Lincoln gets himself caught up in a war that he can't win without doing something about slavery," Smith told the audience at the groundbreaking seven years ago in 2019. "And so, he ended up enlisting two hundred thousand Blacks in the Union Army. The nation paid

no attention to these soldiers until we built a monument to them."

Smith sees the Michelle Obama exhibit as the perfect illustration to show just how far Blacks have come since they were brought to this country. Pointing to the lines on the floor near the front entrance of the building, he told a reporter, "These lines will take you to different parts of her life, starting here."

From her humble beginnings, growing up with her parents and brother on the South Side of Chicago, to her graduation from Harvard University Law School, to her marriage to and family with America's 44th President Barack Obama, the exhibit tells the story that started with freedom fighters Ceasar Cohen and Jerry Sutton.

Cohen, her great-great grandfather, served in the 128th Regiment of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) of the Union Army, and Sutton, the stepfather of her great grandmother, served in the USCT 55th Regiment.

"We have 209,000 names of soldiers on that wall out there," Smith said, gesturing toward the Memorial Wall across the street with names of the 209,145 former slaves and Black people who fought in the Union Army. "It's just a lot of names until you find one of them that tells the whole story. Those are probably the most famous names out there - her family. And it's a great story. It's exciting to people because everybody knows how this is going to end. It's going to end in the White House."

It is the ultimate vision of Smith, who founded the museum and memorial 34 years ago in a building next door to where it now stands.

"Our former Ward 1 Councilmember is making sure that we not only grow as a city, but that we grow together as a city and that we preserve the rich history that we've been blessed with. And this Memorial is certainly a testament and a commitment to how we do that for our city and for our nation," Mayor Muriel Bowser said at the 2019 groundbreaking of the \$8 million expansion and renovation.

Much has happened since that day; including muddy political waters, budget shortfalls and the COVID pandemic, all of which slowed down the construction. But gradually and consistently the project has progressed.

On Sept. 22 last year, as the development continued, hundreds gathered to witness the unveiling and dedication of a 600-pound, six-foot-tall bronze statue of President Abraham Lincoln seated and signing the Emancipation Proclamation outside the front steps of the museum. The Lincoln statue faces across the street where another bronze statue is located, featuring three Black soldiers standing guard, encircled by the Memorial Wall. The scene tells a victorious story of a people who literally fought their way out of enslavement.

The setting has brought hope to U Street, once a thriving business community, which became crime-ridden and dilapidated in the 1970s. Bordered by Howard University and anchored by restaurants, such as the historic Ben's Chili Bowl, Smith's vision; including the renovation of the museum, has drawn new development to the area.

As Howard students, school children from DC, local residents and tourists from across the country and around the world view the exhibits, Smith believes the museum will not only educate, but inspire.

"When we talk and think about slavery, we always think of a lot of suffering and a lot of crying, a lot of beatings and a lot of hard work, which it was indeed all of those things - no question about it," Smith says. "But America is full of all kinds. We don't have any control over where we were born and whether we are black or white. But of course, we have some control over our lives. And I think this, the Michelle Obama story, is about two [soldiers] who took control of their lives and did something great for themselves and for this country."



Frank Smith, PhD, founder and executive director of the African American Civil War Museum, stands at the entrance of the museum where a new exhibit on the life of former First Lady Michelle Obama is on display. The First Lady is the descendant of two members of the United States Colored Troops who fought in the Civil War. The exhibit officially opens Sept. 30 during a reopening ceremony of the Museum. PHOTO: Hazel Trice Edney/Trice Edney News Wire

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Micheal Alexander Takes the Helm of Pathway Brothers United, Calling Men to Step Into Fatherhood

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

For **Micheal Alexander Sr.**, fatherhood is bigger than a last name.

It is showing up. It is being a steady voice when a young person needs direction. It is having enough life experience to say, "I've been there," and enough humility to help somebody else avoid the same potholes.

Now, Alexander is bringing that philosophy to the helm of **Brothers United**, the **Pathway Inc.** program that has spent the past decade supporting fathers and strengthening families in Toledo.

He is not walking into an empty room.

Avis Files built the foundation for Brothers United in 2015, developing a program rooted in fatherhood, family and the real needs of the community. Alexander says Files has already become a friend and resource as he steps into the next chapter.

"She's left a phenomenal framework," he says.

His goal is not to tear down what has been built.

It is to keep building higher.

A New Chapter, Not a New Foundation

Alexander has been in his position for nearly four months, and he already sees room for Pathway Brothers United to stretch its reach.

The current FORGE fatherhood grant began in 2025 and is entering its second year of its five-year funding cycle. Because the program is not income-based, Alexander sees an opportunity to reach fathers across a much wider spectrum.

That includes fathers, grandfathers, uncles and foster fathers who have a child in their lives age 24 or younger.

"We have a lot of room for outreach," he explains.

That matters because fatherhood does not come in one package.

There is the dad working two jobs and trying to make it home before bedtime. The father rebuilding after a divorce. The grandfather raising grandchildren. The stepfather who chose to love a child who does not share his DNA. The uncle who became the dependable man in the room. The young father who is still figuring out what being a father actually means.

And sometimes, a man can be providing for everybody else while quietly needing somebody to pour back into him.

Brothers United wants to be that place.

The Only "Hood" They Claim

The organization's familiar message says it plainly:

The hood we claim is fatherhood.

For Alexander, that means fatherhood is not simply biological.

"It's being the support system," he says.



Micheal Alexander Sr

It means stepping into spaces where young people need guidance and being intentional about the impact a man leaves behind.

That last part is important.

A father does not have to be perfect to be present.

He just has to understand that somebody is watching.

A son may watch how his father handles pressure. A daughter may learn something about love from how her father treats people. A teenager may remember the uncle who answered the phone when nobody else did.

Sometimes fatherhood looks like a paycheck.

Sometimes it looks like a ride to school.

Sometimes it is a conversation in the driveway that lasts 10 minutes longer than expected.

Sometimes it is simply being there.

Alexander says the goal is to "leave fathers better than when they arrived."

That is a philosophy that reaches beyond parenting.

When Men Have a Place to Grow

Alexander is candid about some of the barriers fathers face.

Some are personal choices. Others are generational.

When a man grows up without a strong father figure or stable household, he may enter adulthood without having seen certain lessons modeled. Then those gaps can repeat themselves in the next generation.

Alexander says Pathway Brothers United works to help men break through those barriers by connecting them with education, GED opportunities, employment and other resources.

But there is another piece that can be harder to talk about.

Men need men.

Not men standing around judging each other.

Men sitting at the same table, sharing what they have learned.

The Pathway Brothers United four-week program gives fathers that kind of sounding board. Even a man who already has a good job can benefit from the fatherhood development, relationship and co-parenting tools offered through the program.

Alexander also wants fathers who have completed the training and found employment to return and encourage the men coming behind them.

That creates something bigger than a class.

It creates a brotherhood.



...continued on page 8

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Buffalo Soldiers Host Community Conversation

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

The Toledo Buffalo Soldiers hosted a community conversation on Wednesday, September 23, in order engage Toledo citizens with representatives of the Toledo Police Department. The event was designed to “foster positive relationships and feedback, while promoting police/community understanding and safety across our neighborhoods,” according to the information provided by the Buffalo Soldiers prior to the event.

The evening discussion was moderated by State Sen. Paula Hicks-Hudson, a Toledo Buffalo Soldier herself, and consisted of a panel including: Police Chief Mike Troendle; Darlene Sweeney-Newbern, president of the Toledo NAACP; Judge Ian English; Toledo City Councilman John Hobbs, III; Rev. John Jones, president and CEO of HOPE Toledo; Lt. Kelli Russell of the Toledo Police Department

“We are in partnership together,” said Hicks-Hudson as she opened the discussion about police/community relations. “This is one step to get to that partnership.”

The impetus for the community conversation, noted Hicks-Hudson, was the encounter that police officers had earlier this year with a group of teenagers which went viral.

The video of that May 20 stop of a group of teenagers on Sylvan Avenue while they were walking outside of a crosswalk revealed two police officers insulting the youngsters, particularly about the neighborhood in which they live and the impact of poverty on their behavior.

One of the officers was eventually suspended, the other reprimanded.

The panelists first had the opportunity to briefly explain why they were participating in the discussion.

“To try to improve our relations” with the community, said Chief Troendle, and to get “a little understanding from the police department and a little understanding from the community about why we do things.”

Sweeney-Newbern said she was present to serve as “a voice for the people ...

we want to see how we can collaborate with the officers to see how we can achieve equality.”

Judge English was in attendance “to listen and learn and get an idea of the issues from everyone.”

Councilman Hobbs noted that he was representing other members of council to “see how can we be of further assistance to the community and the police department and be a part of building trust between the two.”

Rev. Jones said he wanted “one, to listen; two, to learn and three, to shed light and insight so we can walk out of here with one step forward not two steps backwards.

After the panel members were introduced and briefly explained their concerns, Jennifer Pledger, the mother of one of the teenagers who had the encounter with police officers in May spoke about her concerns.

“Nothing about that interaction should have happened,” said Pledger. Nothing was given to the children except disrespect and raving, for nothing more than living in that area.”

“What is the baseline for police intervention when there is no probable cause,” asked Hicks-Hudson of Chief Troendle in reference to such incidents.

“They should always come from a position of respect,” he replied. The chief explained that officers have standards and undergo training to deal with community interactions. He also said that this particular incident is a topic which will be addressed in upcoming training sessions.

“Officers are human beings,” he added, “but there is no room for this behavior ... there is not another police officer in this department who thought that this was okay.”

The reaction from other panelists ranged from a continued indignity over the incident to personal reflections about uneasy interactions with law enforcement officials.

“People should be treated with respect and dignity,” said Sweeney-Newbern. “We the people should be speaking out always.”

Judge English spoke about how he is working with other judges to ensure that Judges’ behavior in courtrooms reflects respect to all parties, even the accused.

“in my experience my interactions with police officers have been polite and responsive,” he said.

Hobbs reflected on the conversations he and his fellow council members have had with Chief Troendle about such incidents. “It’s a tough place when you are a Black male,” said Hobbs. But he also noted that he is not for such extreme solutions as defunding the police.

For Rev. Jones ‘respect’ is the key. “Respect is a two-way street, if I want respect, I have to give respect. Wearing a badge cannot overlook actions if they are disrespectful ... out community takes steps forward by showing respect.”

The forum was opened up to audience questions and several attendees spoke of their experiences with police officers, local or otherwise. The reaction from Chief Troendle was frequently an explanation of both the way police officers are trained to handle interactions with residents and also the enormity of the task given the fact that about 300,000 such interactions occur annually.

Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz offered thoughts on the training cadets and veteran officers undergo noting that the state reimburses cities for the initial training of cadets but not necessarily of veteran officers. “The City pays, but we don’t stop training, he said.

One initial result of the flawed May interaction between officers and the teenagers was announced shortly after the community forum.

TPD is initiating a new program pairing social workers with officers on certain calls starting on October 5.



Councilman John Hobbs, III, Judge Ian English, Darlene Sweeney-Newbern, Chief Mike Trondle, State Sen. Paula Hicks-Hudson



State Sen. Paula Hicks-Hudson opens forum and introduces panel



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Vince and Pathy Davis Host Meet and Greet with Marcy Kaptur

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter

Longtime businessman Vince Davis and his wife, Pathy, held a meet and greet for Representative Marcy Kaptur at home on Thursday, September 24 in support of her re-election campaign. The evening served as night of fellowship for Black supporters of Kaptur in Toledo who were able to have an intimate discussion with the representative about important issues and have their voices heard.

Kaptur outlined current issues in politics and listened to concerns from community members about economic opportunity, access to healthy food sources, education, housing and more.

"I just want to thank you for caring, not just about yourselves, but about our community and our country," Kaptur commented to a group of supporters. "And for your patriotism at a very difficult time for our nation, where there's a lot of division, and there's a lot of interests that are promoting division. In a way that, frankly, in my lifetime...I've not seen it like this."

She continued, "And so this is a really important year for people to pay attention... this is a year when we don't have a presidential candidate on the ballot, but we have a Congress to be elected... The House of Representatives - we are the links of liberty. And there are 435 congressional districts, and we have to gain in the U.S. House a minimum of four seats. They have a majority. We want more than that. We want 234 or 35 seats. We need 218 for a majority." Kaptur expressed the importance of her lifetime of public service and her continued work to do.

Marcy Kaptur is the U.S. representative for Ohio's 9th



Vince Davis and Congresswoman Kaptur



Bishop Robert S. Davis (First Church of God), Vince Davis, Representative Kaptur and First Lady Robin Davis

congressional district and the longest-serving woman in the history of the United States

... continued on page 12

Kaptur at Indiana Avenue

Special to The Truth

On Sunday morning, September 20, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur was greeted with a packed Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church for the 78th annual Woman's Day celebration.

She was received with a thunderous applause from the congregation when she reminded them of their late pastor, Rev. John E. Roberts' famous saying: "No vote, no power!"

She reminded her listeners what's at stake in this election and the importance of engaging in their civic duty.

After worship, she greeted supporters who overwhelmingly remarked about their joy in seeing her doing so well, recovering from her terrible auto accident and happy that she is still in the race fighting for northwest Ohio.



Pastor Foster and Congresswoman Kaptur

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Gateside Goodbyes

When the Journey Begins With a Hug

By Ricky Tyus Owner of Tyus Tours & Travel
Travel Contributor

There is something special about saying goodbye at the airport. It isn't just a hug. It isn't just a wave. It is that final moment before someone you love walks toward the gate, boards an airplane, and disappears into the journey ahead.

For years, gate-side goodbyes were a familiar part of American air travel. Family members and friends could accompany travelers to the gate, share a meal, talk about the trip ahead, and stay until the final boarding announcement. After 9/11, tighter airport security largely ended that tradition in the United States. Now, something once considered a memory is beginning to return.

A Goodbye That Means More

Today, a growing number of airports are experimenting with programs that allow approved, non-ticketed visitors to enter secure terminal areas. The TSA's new "Gateside by TSA PreCheck" initiative is bringing back the possibility of walking a loved one to the gate or meeting someone arriving from a trip at the terminal. ([<https://www.azfamily.com>])

And perhaps the most important part isn't convenience. It's the "connection."

Imagine a mother walking her daughter to the gate before she leaves for college.

A husband hugging his wife before a long business trip. Grandparents waving goodbye to grandchildren heading off on vacation. Friends sharing one last laugh before the boarding announcement. Those moments

can become memories that last long after the flight itself.

Travel Is About People, Too

As travel professionals, we often focus on destinations—the resorts, cruises, hotels, excursions, and flights. Yet travel is also about **the people we leave behind and those waiting to welcome us home.** That is what makes a gate-side goodbye so meaningful.

A suitcase carries what we pack.

A passport records where we have been. A boarding pass guides us to the flight. But a goodbye carries the heart of the journey.

A New Chapter Is Waiting

So, here's to the hugs, the tears, the smiles, the waves—and all the journeys that begin with someone saying: Have a safe trip. I'll see you when you get back.

Current gate-access programs are limited to participating airports and require approval; travelers should check the specific airport rules before planning a gate-side visit.



GOOD LEADERS SPEAK... GREAT LEADERS LISTEN.



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BU Nation...continued from page 5

A Bigger Table

Perhaps one of the most significant parts of Alexander's vision is his desire to make Pathway Brothers United feel increasingly multicultural and inclusive.

He wants fathers from different income levels and nationalities to see themselves in the program.

That is more than a numbers game.

It is an opportunity for men who might never otherwise sit together to discover that they have more in common than they thought.

Race can shape a person's experiences. So can poverty, wealth, geography, religion and family history. Those differences are real.

But when communities become completely isolated from one another, assumptions can grow in the empty spaces.

One group hears stories about another group without ever meeting the people behind them. Bias can become comfortable. Fear can grow where familiarity is missing.

Bringing people together does not erase differences. It gives people a chance to understand them.

A father from one neighborhood may discover that the father across town worries about the same things: keeping his children safe, paying the bills, being respected and leaving something better behind.

Different backgrounds.

Same concerns.

Same children growing up in the same city.

Alexander wants Pathway Brothers United to help create those connections.

He also hopes to strengthen relationships with faith communities and men's ministries, while bringing established men into the program to share their experiences with participants.

Because sometimes a man does not need another lecture.

He needs to see somebody who made it.

Providing More Than a Paycheck

Alexander understands the dignity that comes

... continued on page 12

A Bus Full of Hope: Clara Petty and Savvy Seniors Take History on the Road

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

There are some bus rides where the snacks disappear before you reach the highway.

Then there are bus rides where the food becomes part of the story.

On this trip, **Clara Petty** brought fried chicken. Somebody brought pound cake. Other women packed their own favorites. Before long, food traveled up and down the aisle as 55 mature women shared what they had.

It was part road trip, part rolling family reunion.

And Chicago was waiting.

Petty recently led the Savvy Seniors on a day trip to the Obama Presidential Center, where the women explored the museum, visited the Chicago Public Library and took in the Center's public spaces.

Three travelers were in their 80s, including two women who were 88.

Petty will turn 70 next July, but she doesn't see age as a reason to stop discovering the world.

"Just because I'm getting older doesn't mean I stop wanting to experience life," she says. "I still want to go places, try new things and gain new knowledge."

From Wellness to Wanderlust

Savvy Seniors began as a wellness and exercise program when Petty served as executive director of Monroe Street Neighborhood Center.

Then came the trips.

Cleveland. Plays. Eventually, a longer trip to the Ark Encounter, in Williamstown Kentucky.

Petty thought retirement would mean leaving the trips behind.

"I was like, girl, I'm about to retire, about to go home and do my own thing," she recalls.

Instead, the travel continued.

Today, Petty describes her role a little differently.

"I'm curating experiences for those who still have a lot of life to live," she shares.

That was exactly the idea behind the day trip to Chicago. She wanted the women to enjoy themselves, but she also wanted them to encounter history and leave with something to talk about.

The Obama Presidential Center's museum tells the story of Barack and Michelle Obama, their White House years and the broader history surrounding their journey. The four-level museum includes campaign artifacts, films, historical exhibits, a full-scale Oval Office replica and Michelle Obama's clothing and other White House memorabilia.

For Petty, it was an uplifting classroom.

"There It Is!"

The excitement started before they entered the building.

As the bus turned onto Stony Island Avenue, the Center came into view.

"There it is!"

The women shouted it again.

And again.

Petty laughs remembering the moment.

"It was like a bus full of teenagers," she says, smiling.

Waiting outside was a young woman who had come to meet the group because she was Miss Gloria's niece.

"Are you from Toledo?" she asked.

She took the group's picture, then joined her aunt inside the museum.

A sweet Toledo connection, right in the middle of Chicago.



Clara Petty and her mother, Mary Conner



Savvy Seniors en route



A Library Card, Then History

Petty and her mother, Mary Connor, stopped first at the Chicago Public Library branch located on the Center's campus to get library cards. Several other women followed.

The campus also includes beautifully landscaped gardens and public spaces, giving the women plenty to explore.

And Petty had planned carefully.

She knew time mattered. The group had entered the museum at 2 p.m. and needed to leave later that evening for the long ride home.



...continued on page 10

• CEO of Black Star Network



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Catching Flights, Making Memories and Turning 56: My Puerto Vallarta Story

By *Rachelle Roy*

Seasoned Traveler and The Truth Contributor

When I boarded that airplane headed toward Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, my attitude was simple:

CATCHING FLIGHTS...NOT FEELINGS!

I was traveling solo to celebrate my 56th birthday, but this trip became about much more than another birthday. It became a celebration of freedom, adventure, people, culture, courage and LIFE.

And the adventure started before I even reached Mexico.

On my flight from Denver to Phoenix, I sat beside a woman who complimented the blue and purple colors in my hair. One conversation led to another, and before long we were discussing life, family and even politics. I later learned that my seatmate was former Minnesota State Senator Betsy Wergin. Imagine that! Two complete strangers sitting next to each other on an airplane, having a conversation that I would still be talking about days later.

That's exactly why I love traveling. You never know who you're going to meet.

Once I arrived in Puerto Vallarta, I decided I was going to EXPERIENCE everything I possibly could.

I spoiled myself with a full-body massage and got my nails done. I enjoyed the beach and probably had a little TOO much fun in the water. I danced. I played bingo. And somehow, in a lounge filled mostly with Spanish music, I ended up with a microphone in my hand singing! Once they let the Maillady have that



microphone, apparently nobody told them what they had gotten themselves into!

But solo travel also has moments that remind you that you're truly on your own.

One evening, I left my jacket and charger at my seat in the lobby bar while I went to the restroom. When I returned, everything was gone. I was angry, hurt and in tears when I learned my belongings had been moved to lost and found. Being alone in another country made an already upsetting situation feel even more unsettling. I spoke up for myself and told manage-

... continued on page 12

A Bus Full of Hope...continued from page 9

She had intentionally planned the excursion as a day trip to keep the experience more affordable.

So the women made the most of the hours they had.

And there was plenty to see.

Walking Through History

The museum brought back memories for many of the women.

The "Yes We Can" exhibit features artifacts and media from Obama's 2008

presidential campaign, including 440 campaign buttons.

For the Savvy Seniors, seeing that history was emotional.

On the bus, the women talked about the joy they felt when Obama won the 2008 election.

"The world was so hopeful," Petty remembers. "There was so much possibility in that moment."

She also remembered the powerful sense of belonging many in our country felt during that time.

"The United States belongs to all of us," she says.

That sentiment continued as the women moved through the museum.

They saw historical exhibits, watched videos and read statements that connected the Obamas' story to larger chapters in American history.

"Standing there, reading the statements and quotes, took me right back in time to so many amazing moments in American history," Petty explains.

Then came the Oval Office.

On Level 4, visitors can step into a full-scale replica of the Oval Office and sit behind the Resolute Desk for photographs.

The women also stopped to take in something else.

Michelle Obama's clothes.

The exhibit features several outfits from her years in the White House.

"Those boots were bad," Petty says with a playful, "Woo-wee!" while recalling the black, thigh-high suede boots displayed in the museum.

Then came another favorite: basketball.

Obama's love for the sport has its own place in the Center, including an NBA-regulation basketball court.

Every turn gave the women another reason to pause, look closer and take it all in. For Petty, that is exactly what travel should do.

Never Too Old to Learn

She wants the women to take their time when they need to, but she never wants them to stop exploring.

The museum also places the Obama story within a larger history, including the people and movements that helped make his presidency possible. The Foundation says its exhibits explore historical predecessors, the events and movements surrounding the Obamas, and the continuing work of democracy.

Petty knows her generation was not always taught the full story of American history. She encourages older adults to keep learning, to ask questions and to understand the ideals that shape the country.

"I look for places when I travel that offer us some history," she says. "We're never too old to learn."

For the women in their 80s, the trip also carried a powerful personal meaning.

They lived through eras when seeing a Black president was something they

... continued on page 13



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Savvy Seniors Take on the Gordie Howe Bridge

Thirteen Savvy Seniors, ages 60 to 80, recently traveled to Detroit for a memorable adventure – walking the Gordie Howe International Bridge to Canada!

What began as a travel experience became so much more. The group completed the walk in a little over an hour, encouraging one another every step of the way. Together, they turned exercise into an opportunity for laughter, conversation, encouragement and friendship.

For the Savvy Seniors, traveling is no longer just about seeing new places. It is about living life, staying alive, nurturing friendships and investing our physical and mental well-being as we continue to age.

Savvy Senior Travel has grown into more than a travel group – it has become a community of friends who believe that getting older should never mean slowing down in life. Whether we're exploring a new destination, sharing a meal, taking a walk or simply enjoying each other's company, we're creating memories while supporting one another along the way.

Thirteen seniors. One bridge. One unforgettable experience. And many more adventures ahead!!



The Chicago Legacy Experience™

More Than a Stay. It's Your Chicago Experience.

The Chicago Legacy Experience™ is more than a place to stay - it is a personalized way to experience Chicago. Created by Omni Entertainment and Design, Inc. x 134 Development Corp., the experience brings together a comfortable Chicago home base with customized transportation, sightseeing, culture, history, food, entertainment, celebrations and concierge-style planning.

Instead of simply giving guests a property key and leaving them to figure out Chicago on their own, The Chicago Legacy Experience™ helps cultivate the trip around why they came. Guests may be visiting for a cultural journey, family getaway, couples' weekend, girls' trip, birthday, reunion, special celebration or a visit centered around the Obama Presidential Center. From there, the experience can connect the pieces into one coordinated Chicago stay.

WHAT THE EXPERIENCE CAN INCLUDE

- THE LEGACY STAY™ - Private Bronzeville accommodations, including 2-bedroom/2-bath and 3-bedroom/3-bath residences that serve as the guest's Chicago home base.
- THE CHICAGO LEGACY RIDE™ - Customized private transportation through Bronzeville, Hyde Park, Kenwood, downtown Chicago, the lakefront and other destinations. The concept is simple: Your City. Your Route. Your Experience.
- CHICAGO HISTORY & CULTURE - Opportunities to explore Bronzeville, Chicago's Black cultural history, neighborhood landmarks, architecture, museums, galleries and sites connected to the Great Migration.
- THE OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER EXPERIENCE - A featured destination that can

become the starting point for a larger South Side experience incorporating nearby cultural attractions, parks, dining and neighborhood history.

- FOOD & DINING EXPERIENCES - Neighborhood favorites, Black-owned restaurants, brunch, seafood, soul food, contemporary dining and other Chicago food experiences in Bronzeville, Hyde Park and beyond.
- THE CHICAGO LEGACY TABLE™ - Private chefs, catered meals, bartenders, signature cocktails, tablescapes, florals and styled private dinners that can bring the Chicago experience directly into the residence.
- LIVE MUSIC, SHOWS & CHICAGO AFTER DARK - Customized evenings built around jazz, blues, concerts, theater, comedy, lounges, restaurants and other entertainment.
- DOWNTOWN CHICAGO - Experiences may incorporate the Riverwalk, Millennium Park, Navy Pier, museums, architecture, shopping, the lakefront and other signature Chicago destinations.
- THE CHICAGO LEGACY CELEBRATION™ - Birthdays, anniversaries, girls' trips, graduations, family milestones and other occasions enhanced with decor, dining, transportation, entertainment, desserts, flowers and special touches.
- THE CHICAGO LEGACY CONCIERGE™ - Planning assistance that helps connect accommodations, transportation, dining, activities and special requests into one seamless itinerary.

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT

The question is not simply, "Where are you staying in Chicago?" The question becomes, "What do you want to experience while you're

here?" The Chicago Legacy Experience™ then helps cultivate the stay around that answer.

A guest might begin the day with breakfast in Hyde Park, visit the Obama Presidential Center, explore historic Bronzeville, stop at a museum or gallery, dine at a neighborhood restaurant and enjoy live music in the evening - with transportation and planning coordinated around the day. Another guest may return to the residence for a private chef dinner, cocktails and a beautifully prepared table without having to go back out.

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BU Nation...continued from page 8

from being able to provide.

He describes employment and financial stability as empowering for fathers.

A decent job can change how a man sees himself. It can give him the ability to buy what his children need, plan beyond Friday and stand a little taller because he knows he is contributing to his family's well-being.

But Pathway Brothers United is not simply a workforce program.

If a father already has a good job, he can still benefit.

If he needs a college degree, there are resources.

If he needs help navigating child support, there are resources.

If he needs another organization, Pathway Brothers United can make the connection.

If he needs to talk about something he has never felt comfortable saying out loud, Alexander says there are people who can help him find the next step.

That is what makes the work human.

You don't have to arrive with everything figured out.

You just have to be willing to start.

For the Father Who Is Still Trying

Alexander has already seen fathers come through the program, graduate, earn certificates and secure jobs.

His message to a struggling father is simple:

Reach out.

Talk to somebody.

Find out what help is available.

Then do your part.

"We're putting in the work and the effort as well," he says.

There is no promise that fatherhood will be easy.

There is no perfect manual.

But there is power in a man deciding that whatever happened before today does not have to write the rest of his story.

Alexander is taking the wheel at Brothers United with a foundation behind him, a broader table in mind and a simple belief at the center of it all:

Men can grow.

Fathers can become more intentional.

And when fathers have the support to become stronger, the impact does not stop with them.

It reaches their children.

Then their families.

Then the community.

That may be the real work of Pathway Brothers United's next chapter: reminding men that fatherhood is not about having all the answers.

It is about being willing to show up, learn, grow and leave something better behind.

Interested in Brothers United? Fathers and father figures can learn more about the program, available resources and ways to get connected through Brothers United at Pathway Inc.

**Vince and Pathy...continued from page 7**

Congress. She has served in Congress since 1983. Kaptur is re-facing Republican opponent Derek Merrin whom she narrowly defeated in the 2024 election. To learn more about her campaign visit marcykaptur.com.

**Puerto Vallarta...continued from page 10**

ment exactly how the experience made me feel. Later, a manager promised to take care of me—and he kept his word.

Then came the ADVENTURES.

I took an ATV ride through River Park Puerto Vallarta that included hills, waterfalls, sharp turns and the incredible Jorullo Suspension Bridge. I have ridden ATVs before, but THIS ONE topped them all! There were moments that were scary, moments that were beautiful and plenty that were just plain FUN.

Then I went even further with an extreme outdoor adventure excursion. Cameras weren't allowed during portions of it for safety reasons—and I was actually GLAD! It pushed me outside my comfort zone, and I loved it.

I also experienced Mexico during its Independence celebrations, enjoyed a tequila experience, ate some delicious food and had a beautiful birthday dinner at the resort's French restaurant. To make it even better, I met another woman celebrating her birthday, and soon I discovered Virgos everywhere—September 15, September 16 and September 17.

THE BIRTHDAY SQUAD!

People who started as strangers became part of my birthday story.

My final excursion, Rhythms of the Night, was the perfect ending: performers, dancing, dinner and a beautiful island setting. After all the excitement, I could sit there and appreciate where I was and everything I had experienced.

But there was another emotion following me through Puerto Vallarta.

I was saying goodbye to 55.

And THAT was hard.

Year 55 had been something special. It brought blessings, recognition, community service, travel, unforgettable experiences and moments I know may only happen once in a lifetime. As midnight approached on September 15, I wasn't sad because I feared getting older.

I was emotional because 55 had been THAT GOOD to me.

Then the sun rose.

And so did I.

TODAY I RISE...AT THE AGE OF 56. I realized something in Puerto Vallarta: growing older doesn't mean becoming less adventurous. If anything, I am becoming MORE determined to experience this world.

I'm going to ride the ATV. I'm going across the bridge. I'm getting in the water. I'm going to sing—even if everybody else is singing in Spanish. I'm going to talk to the stranger sitting beside me. I'm going to eat the food, dance the dance, take the excursion and celebrate the birthday.

And when something doesn't feel right, I'm going to speak up for myself.

Because at 56, I understand something that maybe I didn't fully understand when I was younger:

Tomorrow isn't promised, and I'm not saving LIFE for later.

Puerto Vallarta gave me beautiful scenery, adventures, laughter and new friends. But the greatest souvenir I brought home wasn't something that could fit inside my luggage.

It was the reminder that I am still HERE.

Still curious. Still courageous. Still serving. Still traveling. Still laughing. Still meeting strangers who become memories. Still thanking God for every blessing.

Year 55, you were AMAZING. But 56?

Baby...WE ARE JUST GETTING STARTED

And 2026 isn't finished with me yet.

I've still got one more title to add to my name.

But THAT story?

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The American Way of Killing: The Invention of an Epidemic by Malcolm Gladwellan Epidemic by Malcolm Gladwell

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

Lately, you're almost afraid to check the news.

You can't bear to see footage of another mass shooting. You can't stand to read about another young man losing his health, limbs or his life. It's all too much, and you feel helpless. So read *The American Way of Killing* by Malcolm Gladwell. Maybe we're looking at gun control the wrong way.

Abdullah Pratt had always had "a passion for science."

He grew up in a Black community, went to museums, attended college and medical school and he works where he was raised, in Chicago. Recently, Gladwell asked him how many of the people he knew growing up have died of gun violence.

"... it'd probably be like in the thirties, forties," Pratt said, including his brother and at least 14 other close friends.

The stats, says Gladwell, don't show the whole picture about gun violence because we're looking at things all wrong and we're having "dishonest" conversations. First of all, he believes, we should remember that "robbery and homicide are not siblings." We should not lump all gun crimes into a category that includes gun deaths. Before we talk about public safety, we need to specifically define it. We must know exactly what is, and what is not, in gun control bills that Congress passes or doesn't.

"Assault-rifle bans are gun control theater," Gladwell says, "they pretend to be something they are not."

As for the Second Amendment, we have to look at the era in which it was written and grammar used to understand what it means. And when it comes to reporting, we must ask the police to separate the level and degree of gun violence in their official reports. Was someone killed, or did the victim survive?

Without that information it's easy for medical professionals' expertise to save a life, but which hides the facts and makes "it easier for Americans to live with their gun violence."

Is there any American left who doesn't have an opinion one way or another about gun ownership or control? Probably not – which is why *The American Way of Killing* is essential reading today, now.

c. 2026
Little, Brown
\$34.00
304 pages



American Way of Killing author, courtesy Shannon Greer 2024

that could flip your understanding of the facts.

The American Way of Killing may not change minds, but it may loosen them considerably. It's a book for both sides, and for anyone who wants to save lives. Gun violence, as Gladwell shows, isn't new news, but our attitudes and our work to end it might start here.

A Bus Full of Hope...continued from page 10

never expected.

Now they were standing inside a presidential center dedicated to that history. Petty was especially glad her mother and longtime Savvy Seniors elders were there to experience it.

"Don't Miss Out on Life"

By the time the women returned to the bus, everyone had something to discuss.

"Did you see this?"

"Did you see that?"

"Did you make it to the garden?"

Each woman had taken away something different.

Petty says that is part of the beauty of traveling together.

Her longtime bus driver, Eric Featherland, has driven for Savvy Seniors for about five years and has become part of the family.

Petty made sure he had a ticket.

"He truly makes our travel special," she says. "He takes good care of us."

That same care shows up among the women.

She wants people who are nervous about traveling, or who think they are too old, to remember what is still possible.

Her message is simple.

"Don't miss out on life," Petty says. "Don't let your age or your health deter you from seeing this world because there's so much to see."

A Rolling Family Reunion

That is what Clara Petty hopes people understand about Savvy Seniors. The trips are not about being a certain age or moving at a certain pace. They are about continuing to experience life.

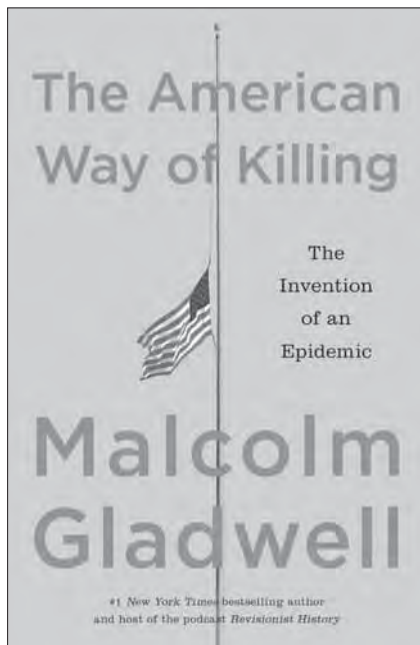
And so they keep going.

From wellness programs to Chicago, Petty has watched Savvy Seniors grow into something bigger than she ever imagined.

A group of women became a community.

A bus became a gathering place.

And a day in Chicago became another memory they could carry home.



The one thing you need to know before you start is this: author Malcolm Gladwell's work here is calm, considerate and balanced. You may notice nuances, but this book isn't overtly pro-gun control, nor does Gladwell seem against it. Instead, he methodically shows readers the mistakes we make in our thought-processes, how we misunderstand laws, and where collective thinking can be more effective in an overall argument.

In many ways, the two sides, pro- and against, aren't as divergent as we might think we are, especially when presented with commonsensical, important and shocking statistics

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NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Electronic proposals will be received by the Board of County Commissioners of Lucas County, Ohio, by the Purchasing Department, One Government Center, Suite 480, Toledo, Ohio 43604-2247 until 2:00 P.M. (local time), September 15, 2026 and opened immediately thereafter for **#2184-Request for Proposals for Centralized Record Storage** for the Lucas County Clerk of Courts Records Center, according to specifications available for examination, or download the proposal by going to the site, <http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/bids.asp>. Suppliers interested in doing business with Lucas County must register in the Supplier Portal. To access the Lucas County Oracle Supplier Portal, please visit: https://eieb.fa.us6.oraclecloud.com/fscmUI/faces/NegotiationAbstracts?prcBuld=300000007278812&_adf.ctrlstate=l5ps8sau3_1&_af_rLoop=7126760101772357&_afrWindow-Mode=0&_afrWindowid=avudlxmca&_afrFS=16&_afrMT=screen&_afrMFW=1920&_afrMFH=932&_afrMFDW=1920&_afrMFDH=1080&_afrMFC=8&_afrMFCI=0&_afrMFM=0&_afrMFR=96&_afrMFG=0&_afrMFS=0&_afrMFO=0

Prior to 2:00 P.M. (local time), September 15, 2026 each proposal shall contain the full name of each person submitting the proposal and the name of every person or company interested in same. The right is reserved to reject any and all bids.

By order of the Board of County Commissioners, Lucas County, Ohio.
Lisa A. Sobecki – President
Pete Gerken – Commissioner
Anita Lopez – Commissioner

AFTER SCHOOL TUTORING DIRECTOR

The Padua Center is seeking an After School Tutoring Director, the Nia Program. The successful applicant will have experience in an educational field as either a teacher or classroom aide. The main responsibilities of the Director are to provide tutoring and educational enrichment to about 15 elementary school children from 2:30-5:30 Monday through Thursday, beginning September 8, 2026 and will continue until the end of the school year. Volunteer helpers are available. Transportation and meals are managed by other employees. Pay range is \$17-\$20 an hour. Approximately 12 hours a week.

Please submit resume to thepaduacenter@gmail.com

For more information call: The Padua Center, 419 241 6465

CSU DAY IN TOLEDO

Central State University will host **CSU Day in Toledo** on **September 26-27, 2026, at Third Baptist Church, 402 Pinewood Ave., Toledo**. Students and families from Northwest Ohio are invited to meet with university representatives, learn about admissions, scholarships, financial aid, academic programs, and student life.

OFFICE SPACES FOR RENT

Several to choose from in the heart of the Warren Sherman area – corner of Franklin and Bancroft and close to the Wayman Palmer YMCA. Contact 419-509-0492 for more information

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FULL UNIT TURN, TURNKEY MAKE-READY, AND COMPREHENSIVE UNIT READINESS SERVICES RFP26-R004

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Full Unit Turn, Turnkey Make-Ready, and Comprehensive Unit Readiness Services in accordance with RFP26-R004**. Received in accordance with law until **October 19, 2026, at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS RESIDENTIAL UNIT TRADE, MAKE-READY, AND BUNDLED CORRECTIVE SERVICES RFP26-R005

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Residential Unit Trade, Make-Ready, and Bundled Corrective Services in accordance with RFP26-R005**. Received in accordance with law until **October 19, 2026, at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS SNOW REMOVAL SERVICES – ALL AMPS COMMUNITIES AND SCATTERED SITES RFP26-R007

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Snow Removal Services – All AMPS Communities and Scattered Sites in accordance with RFP26-R007**. Received in accordance with law until **October 16, 2026, at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9452 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.





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From Restoration to Elevation: St. Paul Women's Day Encourages Women to "Take the Shot"

By Valerie Simmons-Walston

Special to The Truth

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church celebrated its 2026 Women's Day on Sunday, September 20, under the inspiring theme "From Restoration to Elevation." The service was a celebration of faith, healing, perseverance and the power of women moving forward in purpose.

The morning opened with Praise and Worship led by Sister Daisy Fisher and the St. Paul Deaconesses, followed by the processional featuring the Women's Day Choir. Sister Katrina Barry, Worship Leader of the Walk the Word Ministry, delivered the Call to Worship and Sister Elaine Vonner welcomed the congregation.

Sister Cherine Mitchell led the Women's Day Litany, while the Women's Day Choir provided music throughout the service. Prayer was an important part of the celebration. Rev. Barbie Harrison of United Missionary Baptist Church offered the Altar and Offertory Prayer. The service also included a Candlelight Memorial led by Sister Kimberly Cunningham, providing a sacred moment to remember and honor those who are no longer physically present.

One of the most moving moments of the day came through a surprise tribute presented by First Lady Linnie Willis to Sandra R. Ezell. Ezell was presented with the Restoration to Elevation Award, recognizing her courage, bravery and perseverance.

First Lady Willis shared Ezell's remarkable journey of healing after suffering a stroke at only 38 years old. Her Story served as a living representation of the Women's Day theme. What could have been the end of one chapter instead became a testament to restoration, resilience and continued elevation. Her presence reminded the congregation that healing does not always happen overnight, but faith and perseverance can carry us through seasons we never could have imagined we would face.

The celebration continued with the introduction of the Women's Day speaker, Minister Tierra Armstrong of Canaan Manifested Word Church. Minister Armstrong delivered a charismatic and extraordinary message using the imagery of basketball to challenge everyone in the room: "Take your shot!"

She asked a simple but piercing question: "What are you waiting on?" Her basketball analogy spoke directly to the seeds of greatness God has

planted within each of us. Sometimes fear, disappointment, uncertainty or the memory of what we have already endured can cause us to hesitate.

Minister Armstrong reminded the congregation that the enemy cannot hold down what God has destined to rise.

You cannot make a shot you never take.

Her message encouraged women to stop standing on the sidelines of their own purpose. Whatever God has placed in your heart – a ministry, business, education, dream, relationship, new beginning or calling – there comes a moment when faith requires action. Take the shot and trust God with the outcome.

The service also recognized new ministry opportunities and guests with Bishop Marcia Dinkins participating in this portion of the program and Sister Debbie Dean offering remarks.

As Women's Day Chair, I was honored to share closing remarks on a theme that God placed in my heart: From Restoration to Elevation. Restoration means more than returning to where we once were. Sometimes God restores us so that He can take us somewhere we have never been.

The celebration concluded with remarks from Pastor James H. Willis, Sr. From Sandra Ezell's testimony of surviving a stroke at 38, to Minister Tierra Armstrong's challenge to "take your shot," the message of the day was unmistakable: we are not restored simply to remain where we are. We are restored so that we can rise.

The question now is: What are you waiting on?"

Take your shot. It may be the very next step that moves on from restoration to elevation.



A few treats for the early arrivals



Praise and Worship



First Lady Linnie Willis, Pastor James Willis, Sr., Min. Tierra Armstrong



First Lady Linnie Willis and Valerie Simmons-Walston, ThD

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Founder
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