



**E-Newsletter
JUNE 2026**

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Trust in the Lord and Do Good

Many people today are carrying heavy burdens. Some are facing emotional exhaustion, physical challenges, medical concerns, financial uncertainty, or spiritual struggles. The constant flow of troubling news and the pressures of daily life can leave us feeling overwhelmed and discouraged.

Yet Scripture offers a timeless word of encouragement: "Trust in the Lord and do good" (Psalm 37:3).

Trusting God does not mean ignoring our circumstances. It means believing that God's presence is greater than our fears and that God's faithfulness remains constant even when life feels uncertain. While we may not control every situation around us, we can choose how we respond. We can continue to show kindness, extend grace, seek justice, serve others, and remain faithful to our calling.

God invites us to place our worries in divine hands while continuing to live with purpose and hope. Even small acts of goodness can become powerful witnesses to God's love in a hurting world.

Whatever challenges you may be facing today, remember that you are not alone. Trust in the Lord, do good, and allow God's peace to guide your path.

"Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture." — Psalm 37:3



June: A Month of Memory, Healing, Heritage, and Hope

June is a month rich with opportunities to learn, reflect, celebrate, and care for one another. This year, June brings attention to several important observances: LGBTQ+ Pride Month, Black Music Month, Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, PTSD Awareness Month, and Men's Health Month.

At first glance, these observances may seem unrelated. Yet each one reminds us of a fundamental truth: every person deserves dignity, every story deserves to be heard, and every life has value. Together, these observances invite us to cultivate compassion, understanding, and a deeper appreciation for the diverse experiences that make up our communities.

Celebrating Black Music Month

Black Music Month honors the profound contributions of African Americans to the musical landscape of the United States and the world. From spirituals sung in the face of unimaginable hardship to gospel, blues, jazz, rhythm and blues, soul, hip-hop, and contemporary genres, Black music has shaped cultures, inspired movements, and given voice to generations.

Music has long been more than entertainment within the Black community. It has been a source of resistance, healing, worship, storytelling, and hope. Through songs of sorrow and songs of triumph, Black artists have chronicled the struggles and victories of a people while enriching the cultural fabric of this nation.

As we celebrate Black Music Month, let us honor the musicians, composers, songwriters, and communities whose creativity continues to influence the world. Let us also remember that music has the power to unite us, comfort us, and remind us of our shared humanity.

LGBTQ+ Pride Month

Pride Month is a time when many members of the LGBTQ+ community celebrate their identities, honor those who paved the way for greater equality, and reflect on the ongoing journey toward acceptance and inclusion.

Pride reminds us that every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. While experiences and perspectives may differ, compassion remains a value that transcends our differences. By listening to one another's stories and affirming one another's humanity, we help build communities where people can live authentically and without fear.

Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia affect millions of individuals and families around the world. The impact extends beyond the person diagnosed, touching spouses, children, caregivers, friends, and entire communities.

This month encourages us to learn more about brain health, support those living with cognitive challenges, and extend grace to caregivers who often shoulder tremendous emotional and physical responsibilities. Small acts of kindness—a visit, a conversation, a shared memory—can make a meaningful difference.

As we honor those affected by Alzheimer's disease, we are reminded that a person's worth is never diminished by illness. Every individual deserves patience, respect, and love.

PTSD Awareness Month

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) affects people from every walk of life. Veterans, survivors of abuse, victims of violence, first responders, and individuals who have experienced loss, accidents, or other traumatic events may all carry invisible wounds.

PTSD Awareness Month challenges us to replace stigma with understanding. Many people suffer silently because they fear judgment or misunderstanding. By creating supportive environments where people can seek help and share their experiences, we contribute to healing and restoration.

Recovery is not always a straight path, but hope remains possible. Compassionate support, professional care, faith, and community can all play important roles in the healing journey.

Men's Health Month

Men's Health Month highlights the importance of physical, mental, and emotional well-being among men and boys. Too often, cultural expectations discourage men from discussing health concerns or seeking preventive care.

This month serves as a reminder that caring for one's health is not a sign of weakness but an act of wisdom and responsibility. Regular checkups, healthy habits, mental health support, and honest conversations can improve quality of life and save lives.

We encourage the men in our community to prioritize their health and to know that seeking help is a sign of strength.

A Shared Call to Community

Whether we are celebrating cultural heritage through music, honoring the dignity of our LGBTQ+ neighbors, supporting families affected by Alzheimer's disease, standing alongside those healing from trauma, or encouraging healthier lives for men and boys, we are participating in the same sacred work: caring for one another.

June reminds us that our lives are interconnected. We are strengthened when we celebrate diversity, support those who are struggling, preserve the stories that shape us, and invest in the well-being of our communities.

May this month inspire us to listen more carefully, love more deeply, and extend grace more freely. In doing so, we help create a community where every person is valued, every voice matters, and every life is treated with dignity.



To all our Faculty, Staff, Alumni & Donors - A JUBILANT June Birthday with many more to come!

SEEKING PASTOR

Cherry Grove Missionary Baptist Church

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Pastor Search Committee of Cherry Grove Missionary Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking qualified candidates for the position of Pastor of our church. We respectfully request your assistance in sharing this pastoral vacancy announcement with interested and qualified individuals within your network, congregation, institution, or ministerial body.

Cherry Grove Missionary Baptist Church is a Bible-believing, Christ-centered congregation committed to preaching, teaching, discipleship, community outreach, and spiritual growth. We are seeking a pastor who is called by God, spiritually mature, and equipped to provide visionary leadership, sound biblical preaching, and compassionate pastoral care.

Applications and supporting documents must be submitted no later than:

Thursday, June 11, 2026

Interested applicants may request an application packet or submit materials by contacting:

Cherry Grove Missionary Baptist Church
Pastor Search Committee Attention Deacon Curtis Hill
409 Bitmore Road Whiteville NC 28472
919-332-9157
cherrygrovembc@yahoo.com

Please share this announcement with pastors, ministers, seminary students, theological institutions, and others who may be interested.

Thank you for your prayers and assistance as we seek God's direction for the future leadership of Cherry Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

Blessings,

Cherry Grove Missionary Baptist Church
Pastor Search Committee.

New Calvary Church

New Calvary Church is prayerfully seeking qualified candidates to serve as its next Pastor. The congregation is looking for an experienced, spiritually grounded leader who is committed to biblical teaching, faithful shepherding, and meeting the spiritual needs of the church community.

Ideal candidates will demonstrate sound theological understanding, strong leadership skills, and a passion for preaching and teaching God's Word with clarity, conviction, and compassion.

Interested applicants are invited to submit a current résumé for consideration to:

New Calvary Church Pulpit Search Committee

P.O. Box 1562
Durham, NC 27702

Please submit all application materials by mail.



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- ~ Do you have an IRA?
- ~ Are you at least 70 1/2 years of age?
- ~ Would you like to help HTS in its mission to prepare women and men for bold and creative leadership for the Christian church for a diverse world?

If you answered "Yes" to all three questions, please consider an IRA Charitable Rollover.

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Contact:

John Everett

Director, Institutional Advancement & Enrollment Management

704.636.6545 jeverett@hoodseminary.edu

Visit our [Planned Giving](#) website for lots of helpful information.



Faculty/Staff News

Dr. Vergel L. Lattimore



Dr. Vergel Lattimore, President and Professor, of Hood Theological Seminary

will engage with the community in the following activities:

Attend the 136th Annual Western North Carolina Annual Conference, A.M.E. Zion Piedmont District, Greensboro, NC (6/3 - 6/6/26)

Dr. Lattimore will facilitate a workshop - "Sustaining the Shepherd: Coping Mentally, Physically and Emotionally Post-Pandemic," the Gift Collaborative Retreat, Ridgecrest Conference Center, Black Mountain, NC (6/18 -6/20/26).

He will offer the Luncheon Prayer at the Salisbury Rotary (6/30/26).



Shepherds Collective – June Gathering

FaithLearnThrive at Hood Theological Seminary

FaithLearnThrive invites pastors and ministry leaders to join the next gathering of the **Shepherds Collective**, a Christ-centered coaching community designed to strengthen leaders spiritually, emotionally, and practically as they serve.

☐ **Monday, June 15, 2026**

☐ **7:00 PM EST**

☐ *The Shepherds Collective meets every third Monday of the month.*

June Topic:

Smarter Sermon Preparation

Saving Time Without Losing Depth

Preparing meaningful, biblically grounded messages week after week can be one of the greatest joys—and greatest challenges—of pastoral leadership. Join **Bishop John McCullough, Hood Theological Seminary alumnus and FaithLearnThrive Pastors' Coach**, as he leads a practical conversation designed to help pastors strengthen their sermon preparation process without sacrificing spiritual depth.

Participants will explore strategies for saving time while developing a healthy weekly sermon rhythm, planning sermon series more effectively, and using research tools wisely while remaining grounded in Scripture and sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Beyond the monthly gatherings, Shepherds Collective members receive access to leadership coaching conversations, ChurchFuel ministry resources, Christianity Today content, FaithLearnThrive's Innovation Lab, and a trusted community of pastors and leaders. Together, these resources provide significant value and practical support for pastors serving in today's ministry environment—all for just **\$19 per month**. Join today!

☐ We encourage Hood alumni, faculty, staff, and pastors to not only champion this initiative by sharing it with ministry leaders they know, but also to participate themselves. The Shepherd's Collective is one of the many ways FaithLearnThrive extends Hood's commitment to equipping leaders and strengthening the Church beyond the classroom.

To stay connected with upcoming gatherings, leadership resources, and opportunities through FaithLearnThrive, follow the **FaithLearnThrive Facebook page**.

Strengthening the Shepherds Who Strengthen the Church.

Dr. Rona Williams, Director of FaithLearnThrive, served as a presenter during the Virtual Women's Conference of the 7th Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church on May 15. Her presentation, *Guarding the Atmosphere of the Soul*, encouraged participants to cultivate spiritual & emotional health as a foundation for faithful leadership.

FaithLearnThrive will partner with Rev. Kevin McGill and the Greensboro District of the A.M.E. Zion Church on June 13 during their Organizational Meeting Day. The session will focus on thriving congregations, equipping church leaders with practical tools and strategies for strengthening congregational vitality and mission effectiveness. Interested in bringing the FaithLearnThrive Roadshow Experience to your district, conference, or ministry network? Contact [FaithLearnThrive](#) to learn more about available workshops, facilitators, and leadership development opportunities.

FaithLearnThrive Heading to the CME Quadrennial

FaithLearnThrive will be represented at the upcoming Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church Quadrennial Assembly in Dallas, Texas. The Quadrennial gathers clergy and lay leaders from across the denomination for worship, learning, fellowship, and strategic planning for the future of the church. FaithLearnThrive looks forward to connecting with leaders, sharing resources, and exploring opportunities to support thriving congregations throughout the CME connection.



Building Momentum – Driving

Participation – Sustaining the

Foundation

The Institute for Rural & Small-Town Ministry & Leadership held our 2026 first quarter workshop on Saturday, April 18th in the Aymer Center the campus of Hood Theological Seminary.

We want to thank our presenters:

Pastor James Harley from Second Presbyterian Church and Salem Presbyterian Church, who presented on Building Community Partnerships

Pastor Derrick Hawkins from Promise City Church, who spoke on Jesus and Mental Health

Pastor Bradley Taylor from The Reach Church, who presented on Rural and Small-Town Community Development

Toi Degree, from the NC Dept. Of Agriculture and Human Services, who presented on Nutritional Foods and their impact on ministry

All of these presentations were well done and very informative.

We also want to thank Dr. Vergel Lattimore for welcoming our guests, and Chef Brown and his staff for the wonderful food!

It was a fabulous event, and the attendees were super responsive and engaged.

Our next workshop will be on July 18th.

We have started accepting grant requests for 2026 and this will remain open for people to apply until May 26th, at 11:59 pm.

Don't forget to check out our website for other updates and our new "Monthly Spotlight" section.



The Center for Bold Leadership: Equipping Leaders for Such a Time as This

In every generation, God raises up leaders capable of meeting the challenges of their day. Today's ministry leaders face unprecedented realities: political division, economic uncertainty, increasing social isolation, attacks on marginalized communities, and growing demands upon faith communities to respond with both compassion and courage.

The Center for Bold Leadership exists to help leaders navigate these realities with wisdom, resilience, and faithfulness.

Hosted through Hood Theological Seminary, the Center for Bold Leadership supports clergy and lay leaders through leadership development, continuing education, spiritual formation, and transformational learning experiences. Its mission is simple yet profound: to cultivate bold, sustainable ministry that strengthens both leaders and the communities they serve.

The Center's programs recognize a truth many ministry leaders know well: effective leadership requires more than knowledge. It requires spiritual grounding, emotional wellness, practical skills, and a supportive community. Through its Leadership Development Cohort, Continuing Education opportunities, the School of Spiritual Direction Beyond Borders, and transformational retreats, participants are equipped to lead faithfully while avoiding burnout and maintaining personal wellness.

One of the Center's most anticipated gatherings is the **Tribe of RUTH Conference**, coming August 28. This powerful gathering creates sacred space for women in ministry to connect, learn, heal, and be renewed for the work to which God has called them. In a time when many women—particularly women of color—continue to navigate unique challenges in ministry and society, Tribe of RUTH offers encouragement, affirmation, spiritual renewal, and the strength that comes from authentic community.

The need for bold leadership has never been greater. As communities grapple with issues of justice, equity, poverty, violence, discrimination, and spiritual disconnection, people of faith are called to embody the words of the prophet Micah:

"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

Bold leadership is not about seeking power. It is about seeking purpose. It is about speaking truth when silence is easier, extending compassion when fear divides, and building communities where every person is treated with dignity as a beloved child of God.

The Center for Bold Leadership continues to provide opportunities for clergy and laity alike to grow in their calling and strengthen their capacity to serve. Through educational programs, leadership formation initiatives, and gatherings such as the Tribe of RUTH Summit, the Center remains committed to preparing leaders who can meet the demands of this moment with wisdom, courage, and faith.

In a world that often rewards fear and division, the Church must continue to produce leaders who embody courage, justice, mercy, and hope. The Center for Bold Leadership remains committed to that sacred work.

As the prophet Amos reminds us:

"But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos 5:24)

May we answer the call to lead boldly, serve faithfully, and pursue God's justice in every sphere of life.

For more information, readers can visit [The Center for Bold Leadership](#).

The Dates for the Tribe of RUTH Summit are August 28 and 29th. To purchase tickets, the link is:

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/tribe-of-ruth--2026>

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In Memoriam

We hold in prayer all within our community who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Grief is a sacred and complex journey, and there is no fixed timeline for sorrow or healing. In moments of loss, may you know that you are not alone and that your pain is seen and honored.

As a community of faith, we remain committed to walking alongside you with compassion, patience, and care. May the presence of God bring comfort in the midst of sorrow, and may hope quietly emerge as a sustaining gift, even in the hardest days.

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