

# SAINT JAMES A.M.E. CHURCH

*One Church, Two Locations*

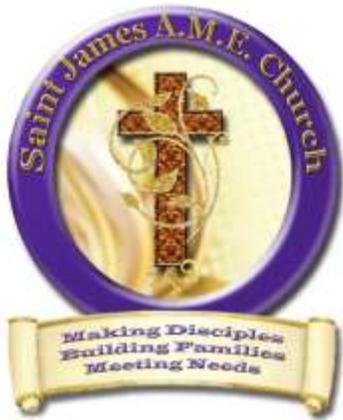
Newark Campus:

588 Martin Luther King, Jr., Blvd. • Newark, NJ 07102

South Orange Campus:

SOPAC • One SOPAC Way • South Orange, NJ 07079

www.experiencesaintjames.com • Phone: 973 622-1344 • Fax: 973 622-6912



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Pastor Ronald L. Slaughter, Senior Pastor

January 31, 2018

## "State of the Church Address"

In the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 1:3-5 (NIV), "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

I begin this address in the same spirit as my past six addresses using the Apostle Paul's salutation to the church of Philippi! I praise God from whom all blessings flow for Saint James Church. One Church, Two Locations. My life and ministry have both been blessed beyond my wildest dreams because of this marriage between pastor and people. Every morning that I wake up, I thank God for another day, my family, and for Saint James. The amazing things that God has done through this marriage borders on a miracle. Since June 12, 2011, over one thousand three hundred persons have walked down the aisles of our worship facilities to make a decision for Christ and to join our family. Every one of you are helping this church to "Make Disciples, Build Families, and Meet Needs."

God was incredibly good to Saint James in 2017. Over one hundred and seventy souls made a decision for Christ. Our South Orange Campus at SOPAC is constantly running over. Our campus minister, The Rev. Theresa Andrews, is in the process of organizing and implementing new ministry opportunities that will meet the spiritual needs of our members at SOPAC, as well as foster growth for that campus. The "Dirt to Destiny" Capital Campaign is responsible for the acquisition of four properties across the street from our Newark Campus. The acquisitions have added over \$800,000 to our assets. In seven years, Saint James' assets have grown by 1.2 million dollars. I am pleased to report that the fiscal State of our Church is GREAT! In 2017, Saint James liquidated over \$100,000 worth of debt. By August 2018, aside from the loan on the school, Saint James will finally be debt free. God has been better than GOOD to Saint James Church. In seven years, nearly one million dollars in debt will be liquidated. "To God be the Glory for the great things God has done."

On June 10, 2018, I will officially complete my seventh year as pastor of this great church and begin my eighth year! Seven is the number of completion and eight is the number of "New Beginnings." Thus, the theme, for 2018 -- "A Season of New Beginnings." I am hopeful that Saint James will embrace it. In 2018, I am expecting God to do some NEW THINGS in our church spiritually, financially, and internally. I am also expecting God to do some NEW THINGS in your life, career, body, relationships, economically, and in your family. Beloved, get ready to receive NEW THINGS! (Isaiah 43:19)

Some of the NEW THINGS I am looking forward to creating are:

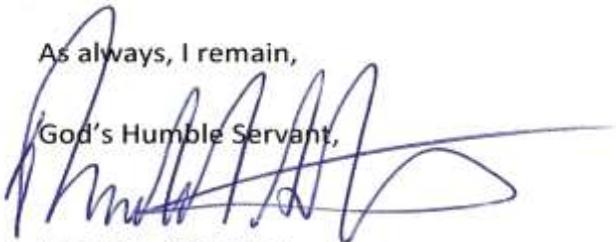
- An Entrepreneurs Ministry/Think Tank. This ministry will bring together members of our church family, and community, to share ideas, resources, and stories about their own journey. Prayerfully, this ministry will birth more entrepreneurs, while also supporting and assisting current entrepreneurs with their dreams. Ultimately, the goal is to also get members of the Saint James Family to support our own.
- An Educators/Education Ministry. Saint James is fortunate and blessed to have retired and current educators as a part of our family. At one time, the “church” was responsible for educating, training, and providing a moral foundation for our children. That time has arrived again. I am praying and hoping that God will convince former and current educators to create a Tutorial Ministry to serve the youth (and some adults) of our family.

The theme “New Beginnings” is not only about establishing NEW THINGS, it is also about reviving, revitalizing, and resetting things such as ministries that already exist. I am praying for a rebirth to occur in many of our ministries. In theological circles, there is a term rarely used named reflexivity. Reflexivity is the willingness to change the tradition through engagement. It also involves using tradition and history as a launching pad into the future. I believe by faith, when the ministries of our church are vibrant, relevant, and inspiring, the needs of the members of our family will be met. And when people’s needs are being met, there is no limit to their contribution to this ministry spiritually or financially.

In conclusion, this year will indeed be a year of “New Beginnings.” I am fervently praying that the non-tithers of our family will faithfully trust God with 10% of their income. I am praying that those who are not involved in a ministry will become involved in one. I am praying that those who are leaders will lead with integrity, passion, and commitment. Lastly, I am praying that I can count on you to expect God to do some NEW THINGS in our church, community, and in your life. Remember, If it is of God, It will not Fail! (Acts 5:39)

As always, I remain,

God’s Humble Servant,



Ronald L. Slaughter,  
Senior Pastor