



# The Cluster Chronicles

*Newsletter of the Cluster Ministry of St John Baptist Church*

Columbia, Maryland

Volume 1 No: 2

October  
2011

## The Massie Message:

Welcome to the second issue of *the Cluster Chronicles* Newsletter. The main purpose of the newsletter is for the cluster members to be informed on what is going on within the clusters. Another purpose is for clusters to find something else that they may want to do when they see a good idea. Also we will be able to communicate with one another as one ministry in the church.

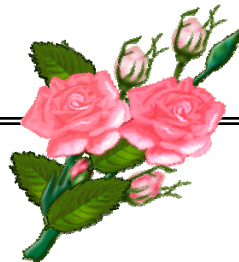
In clusters we are "growing smaller as we grow larger". Our church membership is certainly growing fast. Clusters will help our members feel at home working in small groups, studying the Bible and having prayer in small groups.

As an example of a good practice, one of the clusters I visited reviews the church bulletin as part of their cluster meeting. This is a great idea as it helps the cluster focus on the church's mission. As I get items like this, I plan to pass them on to the other clusters.

Exciting news: We are having a Shepherd Leaders Workshop on November 19 from 9 to noon. We are asking Shepherd Leaders to bring one other member of their cluster. Ann Ward and I look forward to seeing you at the workshop. We plan to show a T.D. Jakes video on Combustible Passion about Leadership. Let's use your passion to recruit new members.

Your humble servant,

*Herbert W. Massie, Jr.*



## Roses of Sharon Cluster

The Roses of Sharon Cluster, as in Song of Solomon 2:1, is the lily of the valley that have great love for each other and the church. A group of God fearing women, enjoying the spiritual journey to become better disciples for Jesus Christ, through study, fellowship, community service and evangelism.

The Cluster meets Monday mornings at 10 a.m. in the

comfort of a home setting, where we are able to share ideas, opinions and concerns and grow in our faith journey. We are presently reading *Journey to the Well* by Bishop Vashti M. McKenzie. The cluster enjoys a monthly fellowship to celebrate birthdays and other joys. The cluster has an annual community service project, and provides support to those in need in our community with clothing and food. The cluster recently provided pink ribbons

to each person attending St John, Sunday October 16, 2011, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month".

**JOIN US ON THE  
JOURNEY!!!**

**Sis. Gloria R. Stills,  
Shepherd Leader**

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Cluster Workshop on November 19, 2011 from 9 a.m. to Noon.
- Theatre cluster plans trip to Kennedy Center
- Laborers in the Vineyard take Master Life study.
- Heritage Cluster and Laborers in the Vineyard plan a trip to MLKing Memorial in Washington, DC

The Cluster Chronicles is the newsletter of the Cluster Ministry of St. John Baptist Church of Columbia, Maryland 9055 Tamar Drive

**Herbert Massie  
Ministry Coordinator**



Join us to explore and enjoy theatre together next season.  
January 2012  
Through  
May, 2012

## THE THEATRE CLUSTER 2012 EVENTS

The SJBC Theatre Cluster thanks the members of St. John for their participation and support over the past years. The members encourage others to join them during 2012. Their plans include discussions about

theatre productions during their monthly meetings. They will continue to provide assistance to Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen and to the Suits to Succeed Collections.

**PLANS FOR  
2012**

**TBA**

## THE SOUL CLUSTER

**Seekers of Understanding and Love**

The SOUL Cluster held its first meeting after its summer recess on September 12, 2011. Last year they began using a series of workbooks published by RBC Ministry, the distributors of Our Daily Bread. The version we are currently using is "Jesus' Blueprint for Prayer". Joe Williams discovered this excellent series. It provides a narrative, questions and a relevant Daily Bread excerpt. Additionally, we have revised cluster members duties and pledged to assist the church in its community outreach programs.



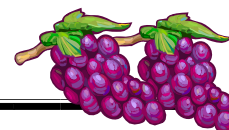
## SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS FOR CHRIST (SEC)

The Scientists and Engineers for Christ Cluster has been studying the book of Revelation for the past several months. As we conclude our study, the Cluster will continue to study the Word of God by looking at the Minor Prophets in the Old Testament. The Cluster also plans to read *The Language of Science and Faith* by Francis Collins to continue to look at the relationship between faith and science and how they come together.

SEC meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday at 7:30 @ SJBC

## LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

Twelve members of Laborers in the Vineyard partnered with the Wisdom Seekers to study *The Disciples Cross* in the Master Life Series. When Shepherd Leader Mae Beale had surgery, Marilyn Davis readily took over and completed the study group sessions. As the fall season enters, the cluster held an October Fest with refreshments, biblical games, and prizes to foster Christian fellowship. It plans to decorate the church for the Christmas Season as it has done for many years in the past. During 2011, it will plan, purchase and serve dinner during the Cold Weather shelter; and provide canned goods for Fort Meade's USO. At its regular meetings the group sings a hymn, has intercessory prayer for its members and reviews the Sunday sermon. These discussions generate lively discussions and considers the various perspectives that surface.



## PROSPERITY PARTNERS

The Prosperity Partners Cluster is excited to have members serving as coordinators for the Fall/Winter session of Financial Peace University (FPU) which began on Tuesday October 18, 2011 and will run until January 17, 2012 in the Fellowship Hall from 7 to 9 pm. Cluster Coordinators Marie Hamilton, Debbie Joyner, Annette Olney, Lauren Penn, and Melanie White Terry will join fellow class members Rev. Todd Givens and Lia Tutt in leading discussions on finances including “debt snowballs”, “real estate and mortgages”, “insurance planning”, and “budgeting, saving and investing”.

Having graduated from the Spring session of FPU, the coordinators have first hand knowledge of the effort and biblical discipline required to be good overseers of four gifts from the Lord.

***At the conclusion of the Spring FPU session, a collective debt of \$20,000 had been paid by class participants in just 13 weeks! .***

FPU is an excellent vehicle for those of all ages (the first session had participants ranging from 21 to 75) who would like to learn biblical based financial management principles and embrace the philosophy of living life debt free. For additional information contact Sis. Debbie Joyner at 410-236-8751.



## EXODUS NEW MEMBERS CLUSTER

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! The Exodus Cluster is a group of young adults that are dedicated to Christian growth through studying the word of God. We are the second new members cluster at St John, and we are focused on giving the young adult community within the church an opportunity to meet and worship with other young adults. At each meeting we review the previous week’s sermon and discuss how we have been able to apply it to our lives. We also share joys, personal testimonies, successes, and prayer requests. Currently, our cluster is studying *Meditative Prayer, Entering God’s Presence* which has allowed us to further our prayer life by learning various ways to come to God other than with prayers of intercession. We would love to see you at our meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 PM. Please come and join our cluster as we move from complaining to praising. Sis. Ann Ward is the Shepherd Leader.

## Spirit of Love

The Spirit of Love Cluster started meeting in the Spring of 2000. There are 17 members, 4 of whom are inactive. The cluster engages in monthly service projects. Recent projects include a card shower for one of their “shut-in” members, donation of items for babies to Grass Roots, Food Pantry Contributions, and participation in SJBC’s 5th Saturday Route 1 Resource

Center Breakfast Outreach Ministry. While the book *Holy Adventure* by Bruce Epperly might be out of the comfort zone, for some, the cluster read and discussed it. In contrast to Rick Warren’s (*The Purpose Driven Life*) view of God, Epperly states, “*I do not believe that God determines everything in advance, but that we are invited to be God’s companions in creating a future that is, to some degree, open and unfinished.*” In its quest for biblical knowledge and spiritual enrichment, this cluster has read books about women in the Bible, Proverbs and understanding Psalms.

In addition to studies, the cluster discusses the week’s sermon, supports each member in their joys and concerns and infuses prayer into all aspects of fellowship.

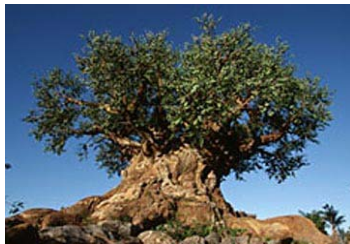
Earlier this year, the cluster was blessed with a new member who brought musical talent on the piano. Audrey Smith, the Shepherd Leader, reports that this was an additional blessing for the fellowship.

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Editor’s Note: We send apologies to the *Spirit of Love Cluster* for omitting its article in the last issue of the newsletter.

## The Wisdom Seekers Cluster

The cluster continues to support a number of Church programs such as Master Life, Financial Peace Class, "All about Kids", the church picnic, and Supplies for Back to School. Cluster Members continue to be active in the community outreach and church services such as the food pantry, usher board, pastor support ministry, Sunday school and Golden Hearts. We continue to solicit prayer requests from others and establish a prayer request with cluster members. Cluster members share personal praise reports; for we believe "The greatest gift we can give each other is caring and sharing." Among the sharing are joys relating to their children and grandchildren. Marilyn Davis, whose daughter is a producer of the new TV program "Whitney", (it aired on September 29), is the Shepherd Leader.



ST JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH  
9055 TAMAR DRIVE  
COLUMBIA, MD 21045



**The Heritage Cluster** continues to explore family research and our African heritage. During our first two and one-half years, we have taken trips to the National Archives, Maryland State Archives, the Library and Archives of Virginia and Virginia Baptist Historical Society. We find these sojourns an excellent method for getting to know each other. Our worship leader, begins each meeting with a reading, usually from *Our Daily Bread*, and The Holy Scriptures. This sets the stage for our discussions which are related to the readings and the sermon of the previous Sunday. We close with prayer thanking God for our many gifts and heritage. On November 29, we will sponsor a trip to the USCT Civil War Museum and Memorial and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Washington DC. This trip is open to all members and friends of St. John; we hope to promote outreach to those in the community as we count the blessings associated with our heritage. Several members of this cluster have joined the St John family. Currently, the group consists of 24 members, four of whom are not members of SJBC. Sylvia Cooke Martin is the Shepherd Leader.

