

Bethlehem Baptist Church
Worship Service and Deaconesses Consecration
Sunday, April 12, 2026
10:00 AM



**“Equipping Forgiving Disciples courageously
RECONCILING our Calling,
RE-IMAGINING the Church, and
RECLAIMING our Advocacy in the community.”
(Hebrews 10:22-25 MSG)**

Season: Eastertide
April 5 - May 23, 2026

Rev. Dr. Dylon T. Young, Interim Pastor
7836 Fordson Road
Alexandria (Gum Springs), Virginia 22306
www.bethlehemofalexandria.org
703-360-4170

Celebrating 163 Years of Ministry 1863-2026

Order of Worship

Video Prelude and Virtual Intro

*Call to Worship

Rev. Dr. Dylon T. Young

Leader Have you not known? Have you not heard?

People The Lord is the everlasting God,

Leader The Lord is the Creator of the ends of the earth.

People The Lord does not faint or grow weary;

Leader His understanding is unsearchable.

**All O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in
all the earth!**

*Lighting of Worship Candles

Deaconesses Crystal Foxx and Venisa McCormick

Praise and Worship Selection

{Worshippers May Enter}

Invocation

Deaconess Marjorie Dennery

*Scripture

Romans 16:1-2 (KJV)

Deaconess Mary Alice Smith

{Worshippers May Enter}

*Congregational Hymn #552 "I Am Thine, O Lord"

{Worshippers May Enter}

Welcome and Statement of Purpose

Sister Kim Young

Video and Leadership Announcements

{Worshippers May Enter}

Introduction of the Guest Preacher

Pastor Young

{Worshippers May Enter}

Worship & Fine Arts Selection(s)

{Worshippers May Enter}

Sermon

Reverend Dr. Shelia R. Graves
First Baptist Church-Merrifield
Falls Church, VA

Invitation to Christian Discipleship

Giving Appeal and Virtual Giving Video

*Offering, *Offertory Prayer and *Doxology

The Act of Consecration and Commissioning

Pastor Young and Ministry Leaders

The Charge

Pastor Young

Adorning of Ministry Apparel

Deaconesses McClerklin, Dennery, and Smith

Consecration Prayer and Laying on of Hands

Pastor Young

(Ordained and Consecrated Servant Leaders are invited to participate)

Closing Remarks

Pastor Young

*Altar Call

*Benediction and Closing Song

(*Congregation please stand.)

Biography of Reverend Dr. Shelia R. Graves



Shelia R. Graves was licensed to preach on February 18, 2001 and ordained October 2008, at the First Baptist Church Merrifield, where she is an Associate Minister, Leads ministerial staff, Chaired COVID Taskforce and Tutoring Ministry. She continues to teach the Adult Church class (35+ years); Director of Outreach and General Ministries for 10 years, and partnered with her late husband in establishing the Mentoring Ministry for youth (11-17 years old) at the church and at Luther Jackson Middle School, Fairfax, Virginia. She tutors public school students in Math,

English, and Reading; volunteered at the Fairfax County General District Court, ministered and taught women prisoners, and served as a Christian counselor. She continues serving the community as an IRS-certified tax-aide counselor with AARP. She chaired the Nomination Committee for OAR Fairfax, a non-profit organization engaged in activities to reduce adult recidivism. She directs the Coates-Terry Scholarship fund, a 501c3 organization providing financial support to college students and some seminary and divinity students.

Her goal in the ministry is to improve the human condition through preaching, teaching, and spreading the gospel through evangelism. Her fearless uncompromising work in the community has led many souls to Christ. She mentors and supports their Christian fellowship and growth and directs them to needed social service agencies. She has led mission trips to Zimbabwe, West Africa (2006); Trinidad & Tobago, West Indies (2009 & 2010); Brazil (2012), and Cuba (2018) and has travelled with KTT International to West Africa.

Her evangelism in the greater community has led men, women, boys and girls to a closer, more assured walk with God. The sermon, “Born to Be a Blessing” epitomizes her brainchild, “**Paying It Forward Ministries.**” This ministry reaches, teaches and tutors disadvantaged African American males so that they complete high school and college, while learning to give back to the communities. Each young man, after relevant spiritual teaching from the Word of God, discovers his spiritual gifts and are expected to serve three other people, then challenging them to go do likewise. Through this ministry, she hopes that positive male, family, and spiritual role-modeling, will instill the esteem, character, and discipline needed to keep young black males drug-free, gang-free, crime and violence-free, and major contributors of society.

Prior to her retirement as a civil servant, Rev. Dr. Graves held a political appointment under the Clinton Administration, as the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Personnel (September 1992 – July 1996). She served in several Human Resource Leadership roles for US Army for thirty years and was D.C. Public Schools Human Resources Director for two years. She is CEO of King-Graves, Limited, a Human Resource Consulting Business in Vienna, Virginia.

She holds Doctor of Ministry Degree, Howard University; Masters of Arts in Religion Degree (Church Growth) and Masters of Divinity 2001 from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary; US Army War College degree in strategic warfare and undergraduate degrees in Math and Business Administration.

Biography of Deaconess-Elect Renee Gore



Deaconess-Elect Renee Gore, was born in Riverside, California, on July 23rd to Mr. Humphrey and Mrs. Quvator Phelps. She and her husband, Berkley Gore, have been married for 12 years and reside in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. God has blessed their family with five children: Jasmine Prejean, Justin Gore, Courtney Stewart, Tyler Gore, and Berkleyvan Gore, and three grandchildren, Shawn Prejean, Jayla Prejean, and Luca Gore. Mrs. Phelps, Justin, Berkleyvan, and Shawn were baptized and are members of Bethlehem Baptist Church.

Deaconess-Elect Gore accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior in 1978 at the Church of God in Christ in Andalusia, Alabama, under the leadership of Elder Neal. She joined Bethlehem Baptist Church in Alexandria (Gum Springs), Virginia, in 2002 under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Darrell K. White. During her time at Bethlehem, she has faithfully served in several ministries, including the Missions Ministry, Welcoming Lights, Ushers Ministry, Christian Education Ministry, and the Pulpit Search Committee. Her favorite scripture is Psalm 46:10 (NIV): *“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”*

Deaconess-Elect Gore retired as a Colonel in December 2022 after 36 years of distinguished service in the U.S. Army, Army Reserve, and DC Army National Guard, where she served as a Logistics Officer and completed numerous assignments across the United States and internationally. In December 2025, she retired after a 24-year federal civilian career in Information Technology (IT), serving at the Office of Personnel Management and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Her final federal position was Chief Information Officer for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services, USDA. In January 2026, she began a new chapter by founding RG Consulting Service, where she advises organizations on aligning technology strategy with mission outcomes, driving enterprise transformation, and governing complex IT ecosystems at scale.

Deaconess-Elect Gore holds a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College, a Master of Science in Information Technology Systems from Johns Hopkins University, and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Columbus State University. She is a graduate of the USDA Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program and the Leadership for a Democratic Society program at the Federal Executive Institute. She also holds Project Management Professional (PMP) and Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Foundations certifications.



Biography of Deaconess-Elect Kathi Hallums



Deaconess-Elect Kathi Hallums was born on December 16th in Washington, D.C., at the historic Freedman’s Hospital which is now Howard University. The sixth of ten children of the late Oliver and Inez Eason, she was raised in Arlington’s Green Valley community. She accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized at St. John Baptist Church. Her family later moved to Alexandria in 1972.

More than 25 years ago, God led her to Bethlehem Baptist Church, where she found a spiritual home. She has faithfully served in the Security Ministry, the Worship & Fine Arts (W&FA) Ministry, the food distribution program, and many other areas, always offering her gifts wherever needed.

She is the proud mother of two daughters, Latrice Hallums Lewis (deceased) and Adrienne Hallums, and the loving grandmother of Deonte (Bethany), LaNia, and Cortez, as well as great-grandsons Emilio and Kyrie. In January 2024, she retired from St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital after years of meaningful service.

In her spare time, Deaconess-Elect Hallums enjoys concerts, traveling, helping others, planning events, and cooking, activities that reflect her generous heart and vibrant spirit.

Reflecting on her journey, she shares: *“My walk with Jesus hasn’t always been easy. I still face trials, must deny myself things I love, and learn qualities that don’t come naturally—like forgiveness, humility, and loving others. But I am never alone. He strengthens and comforts me. I am growing, and my story is still unfolding.”*

Biography of Deaconess-Elect Denise E. Young



Deaconess-Elect Denise E. Young was born on September 17th in Alexandria, Virginia to Thomas Jeffrey Jr. and Mary Alice Jeffrey. She is the second of three children.

Denise accepted Jesus the Christ as her Lord and Savior at the age of 8 years old. She attended and was baptized at Woodlawn United Methodist Church in Alexandria, Virginia where she was active in the following areas of ministry:

- Choirs
- Church School and Bible Study
- Communion Stewardess
- Usher
- Vacation Bible School

During her marriage the Spirit of the Lord led her to join Bethlehem Baptist Church in September 1995. Denise is the mother of three children Bishop Young IV (deceased), Michael Young (deceased), and Joshua Young. She also has one grandson, Dwyane Young, and one great-grandson.

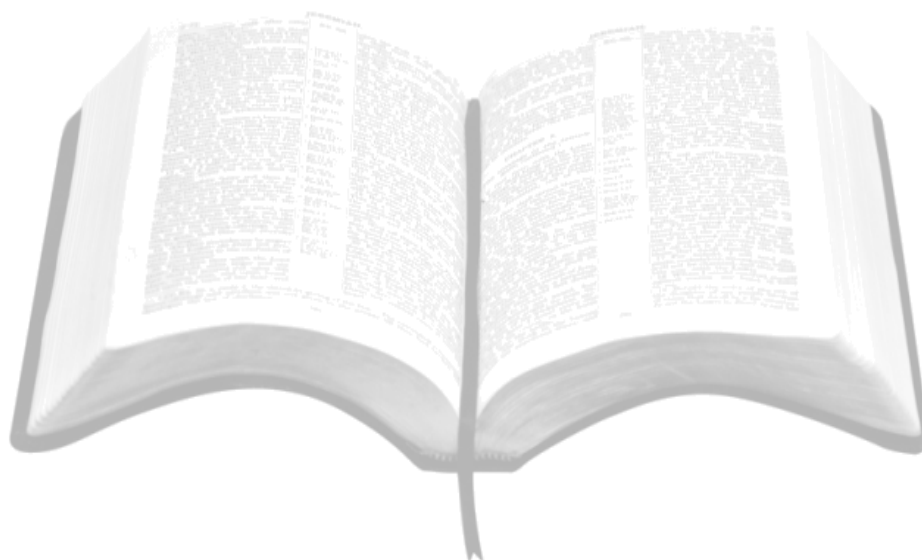
In keeping with God's Spirit of service from Woodlawn United Methodist Church, she has served in the following Ministries at Bethlehem Baptist Church:

- Banner Ministry (former)
- Christian Education Ministry (Teaching and Director of Vacation Bible School)
- Children, Tweens and Teens (CTT) Ministry (current)
- Elements of Praise (Worship and Fine Arts Ministry) (current)
- Media Ministry (current)
- Missions Ministry (current)
- Usher Ministry (former)

Deaconess-Elect Young, has God's gift of love for children, so she obtained an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. She has been working in this profession for the past 32 years. When she is not engaging in community and church ministries Denise loves to spend her time in the following areas:

- Going to Virginia Beach
- Reading God's Word
- Serving others
- Spending time with family and friends
- Walking
- Working word puzzles

Deaconess-Elect Young finds spiritual inspiration from Psalms 23, Psalms 21:1 and Psalms 121.



“I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.” Romans 16:1-2 {KJV}

The Act of Consecration and Commissioning

Deacon Benjamin Warren:

Scripture: Romans 12:1-9 (KJV)

Deaconess McClerklin: Pastor Young, we present unto you and the congregation these servants to be consecrated as Deaconesses of Bethlehem Baptist Church. We believe they have demonstrated the gifts and abilities necessary to their spiritual office within the body.

Pastor Young: Take heed Deaconess McClerklin that the persons your ministry presents unto us are proficient and possess humility to exercise their ministry duty to the glory of God, and the edifying of the Body of Christ.

Deaconess McClerklin: Our ministry team has prayerfully inquired of the Lord concerning them. We have undergirded them with prayer and the spiritual wherewithal to see that justice is done, to make mercy their first concern and to walk humbly with the Lord.

Pastor Young: Disciples of Bethlehem, you have given your consent by vote to allow these persons whose hands will take hold to the ministry plough to lead and serve you on Christ's behalf. Do you covenant at this time to give them your full support; to pray for them and their families, and to follow them as they follow Christ?

Congregation: We do, as God is our Helper. We beseech Thee, Bridegroom of the Church that Thou would pour Thy grace upon these your servants, being set apart, that their walk, work, witness, and worship become an example to other believers.



The Charge

Pastor Young: Are you inwardly moved and so led by the Holy Spirit to take upon you your ministry mantle and serve God with the gifts and abilities He has entrusted in your care?

Candidates: I do.

Pastor Young: Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine necessary for eternal salvation and spiritual formation through Jesus Christ?

Candidates: I am so persuaded.

Pastor Young: Will you purpose with all your heart to study to show yourselves approved unto God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth?

Candidates: I will do so, the Lord being my Helper.

Pastor Young: Will you reverently and with a spirit of encouragement serve with your Pastor, who according to the doctrine of the Church has charge over you?

Candidates: I will endeavor to do so, the Lord being my Helper.

Worship Service Notes

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