SOAR

What’s Human Trafficking?
Did You Know The Jones’ Are Broke?
Origins of Halloween
No Santa For Us
THE ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN

Trick or Treat, Smell my Feet, Give me something good to eat! Wow that takes me back to my childhood. I remember going to the store to pick out a costume. Sometimes I’d even make my own costume, hoping that my friends would not be able to recognize me. Then there was bobbing for apples, cutting pumpkins, and placing candles in them to create the spooky shadows on the ceiling and walls. The highlight of the celebration was knocking on doors in the neighborhood to collect candy. I tell you, all we wanted was a treat to fill our bags and bellies. As little boys, we were so competitive and wanted to see who collected the most candy. By night’s end we would meet in my mother’s apartment and count our spoils. For us, Halloween was all about the costume and the collection of candy. We did not give any thought to the real meaning behind the activities of the day.

Today things are different for me as a born-again believer, I am concerned about the true meaning behind Halloween. Many years ago, as a new Christian, I did not allow my children to participate in Halloween. Not because I conducted an elaborate study, more because it just did not sound right to me. To add, some people questioned should Christians participate in Halloween, or not? I took Halloween as an opportunity to do bad things so, it made it easy for me to decide not to participate. Nevertheless, I always questioned should Christians participate in Halloween, or not? I also struggled with knowing whether or not it was right or wrong for the church to provide alternatives for kids that were tailored more to Christian beliefs during this time of celebration. Well, before we can answer those questions, first we must understand the origins of Halloween.

For most people, Halloween is a holiday that’s celebrated annually on October 31st. Kids get to dress in costumes and collect candy. It runs a little deeper than that! It turns out that Halloween started with one intent and has and transitioned over centuries. Samhain, All Hallows, All Saints, Hallow’s Eve or the Season of the Crone are all facets of what we know today as Halloween. Let’s take a closer look at Halloween! Celebrated on November 1st, Halloween began over 2,000 years ago in Ireland as a Celtic festival called “Samhain” the “Feast of Mongfind” or also known as the “Festival of Death”. The “Yellow Book of Lecan” tells the tale of a legendary witch-queen who married the King of Tara in old Ireland. This legend was central to Samhain celebrations and festivals. Pagan celebrations would last several days and nights and included ceremonies, feast and gatherings with family.

I remember our daughters’ first Christmas. The twins were just three days old, we were still at the hospital, and the babies were fresh out of their brief stint in the NICU. It was there at the hospital that we began our tradition of watching Home Alone and Home Alone II on Christmas Eve. Now fast forward two very quick years later, things were quite different. The girls were able to give us their unsolicited Christmas wish lists. They even had two separate lists of expectations, one for us and one for Santa Claus. Wait—Santa Claus?! How did they hear about him? They were not in school yet, did not watch much TV, but they somehow heard about the fat man with a white beard dressed in a red suit. We weren’t expecting this so soon.

Fortunately, my wife and I had the ‘Santa or No Santa’ conversation just after their birth. This was not an easy conversation. I grew up in a family where I enjoyed gifts from Santa, the Easter Bunny, and the Tooth Fairy; but Alexius grew up in a house where the only one that brought gifts and blessings was Jesus Christ Himself! Both of us wanted to stick to the way we were each raised. Alexius was riding a hard line against Santa and I did not agree. Yes, this elder in the Lord’s apostolic Church wanted to do the whole Santa production with his kids. Which way was right? Which way was wrong?

I couldn’t find any scriptural evidence that going along with the Santa urban myth would send us to a burning Hell. And, in my research of why our culture gives gifts to each other for Christmas, I found that we were already taking what some called a paganistic approach to the celebration of this high holy holiday; so, how could Santa make it any worse? Then it finally hit me. I remembered a covenant we made with God when Alexius was pregnant. We recognized that our children were gifts from God and that we would always need to treat them as His children. This means that we recognize that we do not own them; we are merely stewards of His precious gifts. In exchange for this blessing, we committed to using our influence to disciple them and raise women of God that would make significant advancements for His Kingdom. We promised to use this as the lens through which we would make decisions in rearing them. Once I applied that lens to this decision, the right answer for us became quite clear.

I realized that how we choose to celebrate Christmas, the day that recognizes the birth of the Savior, is an opportunity to disciple our children. Rather than teaching our children to have faith that a fluffy man...
B-more Informed!

What’s Happening In Baltimore?

- Nov. 23rd 9am-11am – Bea Gaddy Thanksgiving Day Volunteering
- Nov. 25th-Dec. 31st – Miracle on 34th Street Christmas Light Show
- Dec. 1st-Dec. 9th - The Nutcracker at Baltimore School of the Arts

Health Awareness

As parents we all want to provide nothing but the best for our children. And it is no different when our kids have special needs. Actually, the pressure is even greater. We want to provide them with happy memories to at least partly make up for the tough times they experience at a very young age. October is Down syndrome Awareness month, so what a great month to celebrate people with Down syndrome and make people aware of their abilities and accomplishments. According to an article written by Amy Juia Becker, Down syndrome occurs in one of 691 births, or 6,000 births per year in the U.S., as a result of the presence of an extra chromosome 21 at conception. The genetic disorder usually results in slower learning, impulsive behavior and short attention span. With all of the research and medical advances, parents of children with Down syndrome now have access to greater therapeutic and educational supports. Let’s take music for instance. Music can be very beneficial to a child with Down syndrome because they learn best with activities that are repetitive and engaging. The rhythms and repetitiveness will help them remember something more easily than simply telling them. Speech-language pathologist Rachel Arntson says that music stimulates the whole brain, making it an excellent learning tool for children with Down syndrome.

And now they even have Apps for children with Down syndrome that will be very beneficial. Below are just a few of those apps:

**Special Numbers** – app for teaching kids all about numbers.

**Write My Name** - app that shows how to practice writing letters.

Friends and the spiritual community. Some celebrated by bobbing for apples and carving pumpkins (these traditions are attributed to the Samhain celebrations and continue today). Others celebrated with rituals to guide the dead home by opening western facing doors or windows and placing a candle by the opening. It was their belief that on the night before Samhain, the dead returned as ghost. Some would leave food and wine on their steps to keep roaming spirits at bay; and they wore mask, so they would be mistaken as one of the ghost when they left the house. The ancient idea behind Samhain was, at night the veil between the realm of the living and of the dead was/is thin and the celebrations would facilitate contact by communication and spiritual communion with the dead. Most people would seek comfort, guidance or proof of life beyond physical death.

If you are like me, I always wondered why are we cutting pumpkins. Pumpkins were originated as part of the Season of Crone. Crone denotes an elder priestess or malevolent witch. This underworld deity was known as one who cares for the dead. During the Samhain festival “death’s head at the feast”, the Celts were known for having the actual skulls of their ancestors set at the table to share in the harvest feast and receive offerings. A candle would be placed in the skull to simulate warmth, life and vision. Who would have thought?! This was the origination of the jack-o-lantern which is also known today as the carved pumpkin. I will never carve another pumpkin, place a candle in it and set it on my table.

Samhain was and is still popular and celebrated among many pagan groups. However, the Catholic church adopted something similar to Samhain. By the beginning of the 8th century, the Catholic Church decided to institute All Saints Day or All Hallows. The night before All Saints Day became known as Hollows Eve which was later shortened to Halloween! The original date was May 1st; however, approximately 100 years later Pope Gregory III changed the day to November 1st. Some believe it was to compete with the celebrations of Samhain. All Saints Day was given to celebrate perfect holy apostles and all the saints, martyrs and confessors that were dead throughout the world. A day given to honoring all Saints who did not have a feast associated with them. Interestingly, the dates of the celebrations were changed to coincide with other festivals geared towards feast that solicited interactions with the dead.

Written by: Willie J. Miller

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would come down our non-existent chimney and bring their hearts’ desires, we decided to use this holiday to point them toward the Messiah. However, we wanted to be very careful to deliver this in a way that would not cause our children to kill Santa for other children whose families choose to include him in their Christmas celebration (because I am still recovering from the trauma of my classmate, Stephen Jones, killing the Tooth Fairy when we were in 1st Grade!). So, when the girls ran down their wish list for Santa when they were three, we simply told them that Santa gives gifts to those whose families believe in him; and thankfully, we don’t need to believe in Santa because God has always blessed us with more than enough. This created an opportunity to introduce our children to God as our family’s provider and portion.

This was a tough decision for us because we could not find a clear answer in Scripture that explicitly stated whether Santa is right or wrong. Moreover, there are so many Christian parents, to whom we look up, on each side of the fence. It was ultimately our personal covenant with God and the understanding of the Apostle Paul’s teaching that all things which are lawful are not necessarily expedient that guided us in the decision making process. (1 Corinthians 6:12) Whether or not you choose to include Santa in your family’s Christmas celebration, remember to ultimately point your children to the King. “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)

Written by: Derryck Fletcher

Soar Beyond in Financial Freedom
written by Kisha Wright, Chief Editor

The influence of people, places and things that come with the love of money is so contaminating and deceiving. In fact; it’s very contagious and it can negatively cause persistence in us to keep up with the Jones’ but Guess, what? Did you hear?! Well sadly… The Jones’ are really Broke!!! Yup…they are broke, busted and disgusted. They’re privately struggling with debt and negative bank account balances. YIKES!!! The Word of God emphasizes to us in many ways not to be enslaved financially and it gives us preventive tools to follow. Sometimes it’s hard for most of us to follow at times, BUT because there’s nothing too hard for God… Keeping our minds stayed on Him can certainly make it easier to accomplish. Debt is one of the #1 causes of broken relationships. Imagine the blessing you could be, not only to your family, but to other families, churches, strangers, disaster victims and the less fortunate. Serving without financial hindrance promotes Cheerful Giving. One of the best parts about becoming debt free is that you get to share and help someone else to also become debt free. Now that’s Soaring!!


Continuation of Health Awareness

There are some marvelous organizations out there as well that want to help. Even though we cannot provide a complete comprehensive list, here is a few:

Icing Smiles: Volunteers around the US are willing to bake cakes for special needs kids when they reach special milestones like birthdays.

Camp Boggy Creek: This holiday camp offers “serious fun” for special needs kids and their families.

Deliver the Dream: Offers free family trips that will occur in a special place every time just to make your child experience amazing and fun things. Each retreat is made for a specific illness such as autism, spina bifida, Down syndrome and cancer.

Feel Better Friends: Caring volunteers produce beautiful handmade cuddly dolls to provide comfort to children with medical problems.

The Buddy Walk: Established in 1995 by the National Down Syndrome Society to celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness in October & to promote acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome. There is a Buddy Walk this month in MD.

Caring for a child with Down syndrome teaches you patience, perseverance, and how to be a child advocate. They will upgrade your sense of humor and will teach you to appreciate and focus on just how unique they really are.

Having a child with Down syndrome is like taking the scenic route. You still get where you are going. It may take a little longer but it will be well worth the trip!
What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking, also known as ‘modern day slavery’ is when a person is forced, coerced, or tricked into doing work against their will. There are many forms of human trafficking. According to More.com, two main categories of trafficking are forced labor, as in the making of goods or working in agriculture fields against your will. Traffickers use many of Maryland’s highways, especially Interstate-95 to connect victims to major east coast cities such as New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. With major highways come numerous primary locations such rest, truck and bus stations to exploit their victims. Data suggests that approximately 70 percent of human trafficking incidents occur in our nation’s truck stops. Similarly, there are three major bus terminals in the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area and surveillance and contacts have exposed significant indications of human trafficking incidents at these terminals. Further, victims commonly arrive from all over the country and the world through airports like the Thurgood Marshall Baltimore Washington International Airport (BWI). Traffickers used schemes to lure people into captivity. Common victims of Human Trafficking are homeless youths (males, females, and transgender) According to More.com, traffickers use the lure of paying jobs and education to separate their victims from their money and family. Traffickers worldwide are increasingly using social media to contact vulnerable teenagers and sell them into sex work. At one time, traffickers were limited to luring victims in the street, but now, they can message thousands of people through Social Media. Parents, be aware of who your child is spending time with. Traffickers use the “lover boy” recruitment method whereby a trafficker invests time in a relationship with a victim to get close to her and pretends to become her boyfriend. He convinces her to trust him and demands conditional love. (For example, “If you love me, you’ll do this.”) After a long time of courting the victim, he moves fast when he knows he has her trust and affection. Traffickers will even go as far as enrolling a boy in a victim’s school to pose as a love interest and build a relationship that he can later exploit. Stay Alert! Make your profiles private. If you’re involved in a group or activity and need to have a public profile, be careful of what you share (e.g. photos of your family and house). Never share your private information or traveling publicly! Traffickers can use information like your address, birth date, and class schedule to find you! Don’t help them by giving your information away. Disable geo tagging (cell phone camera settings) and use free apps to review metadata from posted photos. Do not use check in features on social media and Don’t tell people you’re traveling alone!

USE COMMON SENSE AND OBEY YOUR INSTINCTS

if you feel like something is dangerous it probably is! Resources: Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, Polaris National Human Trafficking Hotline – 1-888-373-7888, Teens on Trafficking - http://www.teensontrafficking.org, Runaway switchboard- 1-800-Runaway, Children of The Night – Rescues children from prostitution 1.800.551.1300

Gospel music recording artist, songwriter, worship leader, and human trafficking educator Naomi B. released a music video for her single “Break Free,” which seeks to promote increased awareness of the rising human trafficking epidemic. You can find the video on her Web site at www.naomibmusic.com and on her youtube page at www.youtube.com/

Written By: Naomi B.
CRL Connect

@crlministries

November
32nd Pastoral & Church Anniversary
Nov. 8th-Nov. 12th
Nov. 8th- Pastor Kenneth Moales @ 7:30pm
Nov. 9th- Bishop Neil Ellis @ 7:30pm
Nov. 10th- Bishop Paul Morton @ 7:30pm
Nov. 12th- Bishop Liston Page @ 10am

December
Music & Worship Arts Christmas Program
Date TBD

Happy Holidays

Hope you enjoyed this edition of Soar.
As always, my goal for this newsletter is to help and encourage our readers with a variety of insight to live a well-balanced life of abundance in Christ. Knowing is learning, Sharing is giving, Soaring is reaching to love beyond measures and when we extend this, together we can make a difference.

Thanks to our Newsletter Team and to all of our participants for your hard work and submissions for this third edition of Soar.

Kisha Wright, Chief Editor

Holiday D.I.Y

Written by: Angelia Wilson

If you are like me then you absolutely LOVE the holidays. What’s more exciting than giving and bringing great joy to someone’s life even if just for that moment! Well of course, gift giving, decorating, traveling & eating can add up to some pretty serious expenses. A gift does not have to be expensive to be enjoyed and appreciated, so here are a few amazingly cute, cool & inexpensive Christmas gift ideas. Get ready to bust out your craft supplies so that you can create one of a kind gifts your loved ones will treasure. DIY gift ideas:

Heart Shaped Candle Holder

Purchase a candleholder and a small thing of chalkboard paint or any paint of your choice from your nearest dollar store. Get some tape and tape off half the candleholder. Place any sticker such as a heart in the center and paint away (several coats). Once dry peel everything off and stick a scented candle inside, and there you have it a beautiful candleholder made by you! Find more information at www.maybeshemadeit.com

Color Dipped Kitchen Utensils

For this gift, you will need some wooden kitchen utensils that can be found at any discount store, some acrylic paint and modge-podge which can be found at the dollar store. Tape off the part of the utensil u want to paint, paint a coat, let it dry and paint another coat. After it dries add a coat of modge-podge and allow to dry. Tie the utensils in your favorite ribbon and wah-lah! Find more information www.cleverlysimple.com.

You’ve been jingled is a fun holiday tradition that the entire family can get in on! I mean really, who doesn’t love getting to make a few special gifts for some of their oh so amazing friends, neighbors & family all while sneaking around and delivering them without getting caught. I just love the whole idea. It’s a fun tradition. You’re making memories. The kids will love it. And you’re sure to love it too. Enjoy! And get to giving! It’s almost December!!!
The CRL Ministries App
Available in App Stores
ENGAGE IN MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION ABOUT RELATABLE TOPICS WHILE YOUR FOOD IS DELIVERED TO YOUR TABLE.

Learning What God Says!

THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GRAB-2-GO BREAKFAST CREW AND THE PAGES II KNIGHTS MENTORING PROGRAM WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE KINGDOM CAFE'

A Church Committed to the Word and Ways of God.

KINGDOM CAFE' SINCE 2016

ORDER YOUR BREAKFAST

GRAB A SEAT...

Enjoy the food and fellowship while sharing and learning with your peers, mentors and Christian Educators.

GENERAL DETAILS

8:30 AM EVERY SUNDAY IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

Covering multiple topics & open discussion.

ENGAGE

IN MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION ABOUT RELATABLE TOPICS WHILE YOUR FOOD IS DELIVERED TO YOUR TABLE.

LEARNING WHAT GOD SAYS!