

# THE *Anchor* NEWS

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## KILLEEN EDUCATOR HONORED AS TEACHER OF THE YEAR

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

In the city of Killeen, Texas, one classroom actively shapes the future through compassion, consistency, and a deep belief in every child's potential. Precious Berard, a third grade teacher at Maxdale Elementary School, has earned the title of Teacher of the Year, an honor that highlights both her dedication and the strong relationships she builds within her school community.

Berard began her journey in education in 2009 at Head Start, where she worked as an aide before stepping into the classroom as a teacher. Her mother-in-law encouraged her to pursue teaching after recognizing her natural ability to connect with children. That encouragement helped launch a calling that continues to grow. Today, Berard brings both knowledge and heart to her classroom, supported by a bachelor's degree in biolo-



PRECIOUS BERARD

gy with a minor in chemistry and a master's degree in early childhood education.

For Berard, the Teacher of the Year recognition represents both humility and purpose. She shares the honor with her colleagues, administration, and the families she

serves. She believes strong partnerships between teachers and families create a foundation where students thrive.

She learned about the award in the middle of a science lesson, a moment she will always remember. As her students surrounded her with hugs and congratulations and her administration presented the award, emotion filled the room. She paused to take in the significance of the moment, deeply moved by the love and support around her.

Berard sets herself apart through her intentional focus on meeting students where they are. She builds strong relationships, seeks collaboration, and remains open to learning from multiple sources. Her teaching philosophy centers on helping students grow academically, socially, and emotionally. She be-

SEE **BERARD**, PG. 2

## ROBERTSON FUNERAL HOME: BUILT ON DIGNITY AND TRUST

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

Robertson Funeral Home, owned and operated by Rev. F. A. Green, has served Falls County and particularly Marlin, Texas and surrounding areas for the past ninety-seven years. Robertson Funeral Home is built on a foundation of dignity and a deep respect for lives entrusted to their care.

Rev. Green was motivated and became interested in the funeral business as a young boy when E. B. Anderson of Boykins Funeral Home in Waco introduced him to the industry. From the onset, he viewed the funeral business as



REV. F. A. GREEN

a ministry.

While building his career in the business, Rev. Green's focus has been for every service to reflect the unique story of the person being honored because every life deserves to be celebrated. Maintaining a powerful impact is also important and often goes far beyond the services because it reaches into emotional, cultural, and social fabrics of the people served.

One challenge Robertson Funeral Home has faced as a community based and fami-

SEE **GREEN**, PG. 2

## SERVICE IS IN THE HEART—WHY I FIGHT FOR DISTRICT 1

BY MAYOR PRO TEM  
ANDREA BAREFIELD

*Special to Anchor News*

When I was four years old, I wasn't just playing with dolls—I was shouting, "Run, Jesse, Run!" right alongside fellow Wacoans when Jesse Jackson came to TSTC (then TSTI).

Folks around here didn't know what to make of me. I was that "little old person"—always in the room, always listening, always watching. Sitting in meetings and conferences where decisions were being made and history was unfolding.

I didn't just grow up in Waco—I grew up at the feet of giants.

I watched my Mama, Mayor Mae Jackson, lead with a kind of grace that didn't ask permission. I was in rooms with Mickey Leland, Barbara Jordan, and Ann Richards—women and men who didn't just talk about change, they carried it on their backs. And yes, my first "job" was holding purses for five dollars so those women could keep their hands free to do the work.

But I was paying attention.

They taught me something that has never left me: leadership isn't about the title you hold—it's about the people you're willing to stand up for. Service isn't a strategy. It's heart.

And over time, I came to understand something about myself—I am a problem solver.

I don't accept that the same challenges should exist in the same communities, year after year. I ask why—and then I stay



ANDREA BAREFIELD

in the room until we find a way forward. Because I want to see East Waco grow, but more importantly, I want the people who built this community to be able to stay and thrive in it.

So today, when I walk down the streets of District 1, I don't see line items or project lists.

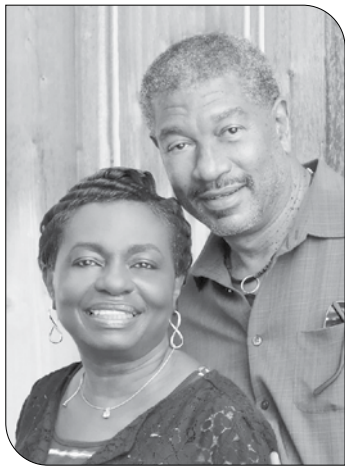
I see people.

I see the grandmother who can finally walk her grandbabies safely around J.H. Hines because we made sure those sidewalks got done. I see the business owner who made it through COVID because we fought—intentionally—to make sure 70% of those ARPA relief dollars reached minority and women-owned businesses.

That didn't happen by accident. That happened because I was in the room asking the right questions and refusing to accept less.

And then there's the Bledsoe-Miller STEAM Center.

SEE **HEART**, PG. 5

**J.L. & LINDA CRAWFORD**

J.L. and Linda Crawford are co-owners of *The Anchor News*. J.L. Crawford serves as Director of Operations and is a Bible teacher and columnist writing on faith, family, and men's issues. Linda Crawford serves as Publisher and Editor, is a motivational speaker, and is the owner of Enjoy the Journey Life Coaching Services.

ENJOY THE JOURNEY: A LIFE COACHING Q&amp;A WITH LINDA CRAWFORD—

## TURNING LACK INTO STRENGTH

**LINDA CRAWFORD**  
BY LINDA CRAWFORD**QUESTION:** I often feel like

I'm behind in life. Other people seem to have more money, more confidence, more support, and more opportunities. I work hard, but I still feel like I'm lacking something. How do I move forward when it feels like I'm starting with less than everyone else?

**ANSWER:** Many people quietly carry the feeling that they are starting life with fewer advantages than others. Sometimes the lack is financial. Sometimes it is emotional support, connections, education, or confidence. The truth is that lack can make us feel smaller than we are.

But lack does not define your future. In fact, many of the strongest leaders, entrepreneurs, and

changemakers began their journeys from places of limitation. What they eventually discovered is that lack often develops something powerful inside of us—resilience, creativity, discipline, and faith.

Instead of focusing on what you do not have, begin identifying what you do have. Your experiences have taught you lessons that others may never learn. Your struggles have built muscles that comfort has never developed.

Growth begins when we shift the conversation we have with ourselves. When we repeatedly say, "I don't have enough," our minds begin to search for proof of that statement. But when

we begin saying, "I am learning, growing, and building," our minds begin to look for opportunities.

The goal is not to ignore challenges. The goal is to refuse to let them become your identity.

Sometimes what looks like lack is actually preparation.

The right opportunity, relationship, or breakthrough often meets people who have already developed the strength to handle it. Keep moving forward, keep building your skills, and keep speaking life over your future. What feels like a disadvantage today may become the very story that inspires others tomorrow.

—Coach Crawford

FROM THE EDITOR...

## MRS. PIERCE HIGHLIGHTS LEGACY & SUCCESS

Mrs. Jocelyn G. Pierce, a gifted writer and retired English teacher and administrator, graciously lends her voice once again to *The Anchor News*. In this April issue, she highlights remarkable businesses honored at the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club Black History Celebration, each thriving for over 20 years. We sincerely appreciate her contributions and invite our readers to enjoy this inspiring edition celebrating legacy, resilience, and enduring success.

**JOCELYN G. PIERCE**

believes every student can succeed when given the right support and opportunities. In her classroom, students work as a team and take ownership of their learning.

She continues to meet the challenge of diverse student needs by learning new strategies, collaborating with colleagues, and adjusting her instruction to support every learner. She finds motivation in watching her students grow in confidence and recognize their own success.

Beyond academics, Berard wants her students to leave her classroom with confidence, resilience, and a love for learning. She builds strong connections with families through communication, school events, and consistent relationship building that supports student success.

Outside the classroom, Berard enjoys spending time with her family, reading, and creating new ideas to enhance her lessons. She credits her family, colleagues, and mentors for supporting her growth throughout her career.

As she reflects on her jour-

ney, Berard aims to leave a legacy of meaningful impact on her students, their families, and her colleagues. In Killeen, she shapes lives every day through each lesson she teaches, each relationship she builds, and each student she inspires

## BERARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

## GREEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ly-owned business is earning trust in a competitive industry. Another challenge is having financial power resources when compared to larger companies and balancing traditions with modern expectations.

Rev. Green encourages and advises others interested in starting a business to know why you want to start a busi-

ness as well as the purpose. Secondly, do your research to understand what people need, and finally, build a simple, realistic plan to share what you offer and who you serve, and start small and grow steadily.

Congratulations to Robertson Funeral Home for longevity and continued success in the business industry.

# THE *Anchor* NEWS

*The Anchor News* is a free, monthly publication of Crawford Publishing, E-T-C, located in Waco, Texas, (254) 715-8943. All rights reserved.

### PURPOSE

*The Anchor News*, dedicated to serving the community and surrounding areas, focuses on positive news and accomplishments of minorities.

### POLICY

Anchored on the principles of scripture, *Anchor News* will at no time publish information that is potentially libelous material or intentionally malicious, derogatory or irrelevant.

### EDITORIAL POLICY

Signed opinion articles do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial staff. Unsigned editor-

ials reflect the opinions of the editor.

### LETTERS & ARTICLES POLICY

The comments and opinions of our readers are welcomed. Letters and articles should be e-mailed. Letters should be no longer than 200 words and must include a name and phone number. Article submissions should be no longer than 450 words and should include an original head shot (in jpeg

format) along with your name, address and phone number. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, space, potentially libelous material and copyright infringement. We also reserve the right to refuse derogatory, irrelevant and malicious submissions.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

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To request advertising rates, contact the office at (254) 715-8943 or visit theanchornews.org.

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# LITTLE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY, INC.: INSPIRING FUTURE LEADERS

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

Businesswoman Teresa Echols has successfully owned and operated Little Christian Academy, Inc., for the past thirty-six years. Little Christian Academy is a faith-based early childhood education center for young children, and Echols was motivated to start her academy because she had a deep desire to provide children with opportunities to grow academically, spiritually, and socially in a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate learning environment.

As an African American business owner, one of the main challenges Echols has faced is limited access to funding and resources, particularly during the early stages of starting and growing Little Christian Academy. Over the years, she has had to navigate regulations, secure financial support, and gain trust in sys-



TERESA ECHOLS

tems where minority-owned businesses are often under-represented. As a result, persistence and resilience are mandatory to maintain success. Despite these challenges, faith, community support, and a strong commitment to serving children have been key to overcoming obstacles.

Today, Little Christian Academy serves as a vital

support system for families in the community and helps bridge early learning gaps by focusing on literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional development, particularly for children who may otherwise lack access to high-quality early education.

Echols advises anyone interested in starting a business to start with purpose and faith. Be clear about why you want to start your business and let that purpose guide your decisions. Pray, plan, and prepare—then trust God through the process. Surround yourself with supportive mentors, stay teachable, and remember that growth takes time. Consistency and obedience matter just as much as vision.

Her own advice and example have brought Teresa deserved accolades and success since 1989. We wish her continuous success as she remains diligent in molding young minds.

# MARILYN & DWAYNE BANKS: BUILDING COMMUNITY

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

When Marilyn and Dwayne Banks opened Marilyn's Gift Gallery & Sound World Music in November 1989, they were doing more than launching a business. They were planting a lasting symbol of pride, culture, and inspiration in the heart of East Waco. Located at 818 Elm Avenue, the shop quickly became a place where customers could find meaningful merchandise and feel connected to the community it represents.

From the beginning, both Marilyn and Dwayne shared the dream of entrepreneurship. With deep ties to the community, Dwayne brought a strong knowledge of music across every genre, making Sound World Music a natural fit. Marilyn, known for her love of fashion, had a clear vision for a gift gallery that celebrated style and self-expression. She wanted hats, fashions, and plenty of "bling," but with purpose behind every item.

That purpose shaped the



MARILYN BANKS

identity of the store. Marilyn and Dwayne were intentional about what they carried, choosing merchandise that was inspirational, uplifting, and positive. Black art, books, African attire, and cultural artifacts were not optional additions. They were essential. Their goal was for the Gift Gallery to reflect the community and to ensure that every customer who walked through the doors felt a sense of pride.

Over the years, customers have shared how the store's presence has motivated them. Many are grateful not only for what they can purchase, but for what the business represents: proof that success is possible. The Bankses openly acknowledge that they, too, were inspired by other business owners, and their hope has been to pass that encouragement forward to the next generation of dreamers.

For those who desire to start a business but feel hesitant, Marilyn and Dwayne offer simple, faith grounded advice. Put God first in every decision, pray about the steps ahead, and allow God to lead. Their favorite scripture reflects that steady confidence: Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me."

More than three decades after opening, Marilyn's Gift Gallery & Sound World Music stands as a reminder that when vision meets faith and community commitment, a small business can become a lasting legacy.

# ANCHOR NEWS: AMPLIFYING LOCAL BUSINESS

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

The Anchor News, a community-focused publication serving the Central Texas area, began in 2002, when Linda heard a heavenly voice that instructed her to start a newspaper and call it The Anchor News. After not heeding to this initial command, she was summoned again in Bible Study, which prompted her to answer the call that has continued to summon J. L. and Linda as they approach their twenty-fourth year as owners and operators on August 5, 2026.

In fulfilling what they love, they simply highlight the good stuff that the community shares by spotlighting individuals, businesses, and special events as well as pertinent topics such as health issues and educational updates.

Sharing news is very important, and although J.L. and Linda's desire is to do so in an economic and affordable way, one challenge they face in general is people wanting free advertisement. As kindhearted and giving as J. L. and Linda are, increased prices of paper, ink, and print-



J.L. & LINDA CRAWFORD

ing expenses must be met to keep the presses rolling.

Despite a few setbacks, God continues to bless the Crawfords, and The Anchor News continues to make a positive impact on an awaiting audience in Waco and other surrounding cities and communities.

The Crawfords advise people interested in starting a business to NOT quit a primary job to do so. Business expert, LaVeda Brown, once told Linda when the Anchor News first started that the paper was a baby, and "a baby cannot support the family."



"...the Bread which cometh down from Heaven is God's supreme testimony, the clearest evidence of His truth, the sign of His consummate bounty, the token of His all-encompassing mercy, the proof of His most loving providence, the symbol of His most perfect grace."

— Bahá'u'lláh

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## CHRISTIAN BROTHERS MOVING: CENTRAL TEXAS IN MOTION

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

Christian Brothers Services is a locally-owned and operated African American business that has maintained in the Waco area for twenty-six years. Owner Janet Cheeves prides herself in offering professional moving services for residential and commercial customers and companies. Her hard work has been rewarded with A+ ratings from the Better Business Bureau. The company also provides lawn services, clean out, and haul-off services

Janet's motivation to start her business, under God's guidance, was a deep desire to help relieve the stress involved in packing and moving as well as securing financial independence. The company's goal was and continues to be pro-



JANET CHEEVES

viding opportunities to create positive impact and inspire a better way of life by exemplifying Christ's love.

One main challenge that Janet has faced as an African

American business owner is not giving up, especially during difficult times. She has vowed to stay focused and keep the faith.

Impacts that her business has had on the community include providing clothes and furniture give-aways to those in need and giving food to the homeless and her church, Zion Hill Baptist Church. Janet loves offering prayer and support to those in need.

Her helpful advice for others who are interested in starting a business is to prioritize your faith, seek divine guidance through prayer, and trust that God's plan will unfold. Even when the journey gets tough, stay committed, keep your eyes fixed on your goals, and hold on to hope, for it's in perseverance that success is born.

## MOMMA D'S CHICKEN AND MORE: DELICIOUS SOUL CUISINE

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

The owner and founder of Momma D's Catering and Momma D's Chicken & More is Denise Robinson, a professional caterer and food entrepreneur. Her motivation to excel in this career started with her family as she grew up watching her mother and father and her Uncle Floyd run a restaurant and catering business at their family establishment. She later attended culinary school in 2000 at TSTC, where her passion began a career.

Her passion evolved into Momma D's Catering and Momma D's Chicken and More to provide home-style meals through her catering services for weddings, repast dinners, pop-ups, celebrations, and



DENISE ROBINSON

community events.

Some business challenges Denise has encountered include start-up costs, managing food expenses, standing

firm on pricing, and maintaining consistency while growing her business.

As an African American business owner, Momma D's business has positively impacted the community by serving families during important moments, supporting local events, and representing resilience and Black entrepreneurship.

Her advice for someone who wants to start a business is to believe in yourself, learn your craft, stay consistent, and never undervalue your services. Success comes with patience, faith, and hard work.

We appreciate Ms. Denise Robinson for sharing her family's influence, her love for good cooking, and her excellent service in our community.

## MCDOWELL'S FUNERAL HOME: A NEW APPROACH

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

McDowell's Funeral Home, L.L.C., a well-established business in the East Waco community, was motivated by a vision of the late Mr. Lester McDowell forty-four years ago. Mr. McDowell was driven, compassionate, and motivated to have a black-owned and operated business that would serve the black community and beyond. This family-owned, respected business provides services that strive to make losing loved ones a comforting and consoling experience.

Current owner, Mrs. Lois McDowell and her daughters, Madelyn and Andrea, continue to promote and support her husband's and their father's vision by not only providing the best ethical services, but also keeping costs affordable, and



LOIS MCDOWELL

going above and beyond during very challenging times.

Through it all, McDowell's Funeral Home has had a lasting, positive impact on the community it serves as they remain traditional, thoughtful, and caring for families during the process of honoring loved ones.

## DORSEY-KEATTS FUNERAL HOME: A TRADITION OF CARE

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

Founded in 1960, Dorsey-Keatts Funeral Home has served Waco and the surrounding communities for more than six decades. This family business was established during an era when Black families depended on trusted, community-centered businesses. As a result, the Dorsey Keatts' Funeral Home became known for its professionalism, compassion, and respect for tradition.

Through changing times, the Dorsey-Keatts' families maintained their commitments to provide quality service, to build strong community ties and to expand to additional locations across Central Texas.

Owner Robert Dorsey encourages new entrepreneurs to stay patient, keep



ROBERT DORSEY

their reputation clean, and never forget that consistency and character are what truly build a lasting business.

We salute the Dorsey-Keatts Funeral Home for maintaining its longevity since 1966 and setting a standard for others to emulate.

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# APRIL: STRESS LESS, LIVE MORE

BY DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL



DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

Calm is a practice. April is Stress Awareness Month—a perfect time to pause and evaluate how stress is affecting your daily life. While some stress is unavoidable, chronic stress can take a serious toll on your physical and mental health. It can contribute to headaches, fatigue, poor sleep, high blood pressure, and even weakened immunity.

The good news is this: managing stress doesn't require a complete life overhaul. It starts with small, intentional practices that help your body reset and your mind refocus.

Tips to Reduce Stress & Restore Balance

1. Practice Intentional Breathing

Your breath is one of the fastest ways to calm your nervous system. Try deep breathing exercises such as inhaling for 4 seconds, holding for 4 seconds, and exhaling for 6 seconds. Even a few minutes can lower tension and improve clarity.

2. Take Movement Breaks

Sitting for long periods increases both physical and mental strain. Stand up, stretch, or take a short walk every hour. Movement helps release built-up stress and boosts your mood.

3. Set Healthy Boundaries

Not every request deserves a "yes." Protect your time and energy by setting clear boundaries at work and home. Saying no to what drains you allows space for what restores you.

4. Limit Digital Overload

Constant notifications and screen time can increase

anxiety. Designate specific times to unplug from social media, news, and emails. Your mind needs quiet moments to recharge.

5. Prioritize Rest & Recovery

Sleep is essential for stress management. Aim for 7–9 hours of quality sleep and create a calming nighttime routine. Your body heals and resets while you rest.

**YOUR TAKEAWAY**

Stress may be part of life, but it doesn't have to control your life. When you build simple habits that support calm and balance, you strengthen your ability to handle challenges with clarity and resilience.

This April, remember: calm is something you practice—not something you wait for.

**MONTHLY SELF-CARE CHALLENGE**

"Pause & Reset"

Set a timer twice a day to take a 5-minute reset break. Use that time to breathe deeply, stretch, or sit quietly without distractions. These small pauses can significantly lower stress levels over time.

Screening Reminder: If you're experiencing chronic stress, fatigue, or poor sleep, speak with your healthcare provider about stress-related health impacts and possible support options.

## HEART

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Some people see a building. I see a bridge.

A bridge between where we've been and where we're going. A place where workforce development meets early learning. A place where children and adults in East Waco have access to best-in-class STEAM education—right in their own neighborhood, and at a cost that doesn't put opportunity out of reach. It is a place that honors our past and offers our future—with experiences that are out of this world.

Because the truth is, our communities have waited long enough for opportunity to "trickle down."

I don't believe in waiting.

That's why I've pushed for things that matter—bringing the first bank to East Waco in almost a hundred years, fighting for a \$15 minimum wage for city staff, and making sure our residents are treated fairly when it comes to something as basic as water.

This work isn't theoretical for me. It's personal.

I was taught early on that

somebody has to be willing to stand in the gap. Somebody has to think about the people who aren't being thought about.

I've made the decision that I will be that somebody.

Because District 1 isn't just where I serve—it's home.

And everything I do is grounded in truth, guided by vision, lifted by the voices of this community—and carried forward through action. Your vote for me keeps this momentum we've built to keep District 1 strong.

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Conducted under the auspices of  
Glasser Institute for Choice Theory

# DON'T GET CAUGHT OFF GUARD

BY MARGARET IVORY

Last Friday, I experienced something that reminded me just how important it is for seniors to stay alert—especially when we are out running everyday errands.

I had just finished shopping at Walmart and was walking back to my car, minding my own business like most of us do. As I approached my vehicle, I noticed a woman standing near a truck. She had what appeared to be money in her hand, but something about the situation didn't feel right.

Before I could even get fully settled, she quickly approached me and asked if I would take her home. Then she said she would give me \$100 to do it.

Now, let's think about this.

A stranger offering cash for a ride in a parking lot? That alone should raise a red flag.

I didn't hesitate. I told her clearly, "You can't give me a dime because I am not taking you anywhere. Do I look like an Uber driver to you?" The moment I said that, her demeanor changed. She realized quickly that this old woman was not someone she could pressure or manipulate.

And just like that, the situation ended.

But here's the lesson: not every situation ends that easily.

As seniors, we are often tar-



MARGARET IVORY

geted because scammers assume we are more trusting, less confrontational, or simply unaware. But the truth is—we must stay aware and prepared at all times, especially in places like parking lots where people can approach us quickly and unexpectedly.

Here are a few important reminders:

First, never accept money or offers from strangers in exchange for rides or help. Even if the money looks real, the situation may not be. This could be a setup for theft, robbery, or something worse.

Second, trust your instincts. If something feels off, it probably is. You don't owe anyone an explanation. A firm "no" is enough.

Third, keep your distance.

Do not allow strangers to get too close to you or your vehicle. Maintain your personal space and be ready to get inside your car and lock your doors immediately.

Fourth, stay aware of your surroundings. Avoid distractions like looking down at your phone while walking to your car. Scan the area and notice who is around you.

Lastly, don't be afraid to speak up.

Scammers rely on hesitation and politeness. A strong, confident response can shut down a bad situation quickly—as it did for me.

Whether that \$100 was real or fake doesn't matter. What matters is recognizing that something wasn't right—and acting on it.

We have worked too hard in life to become easy targets now.

Stay alert. Stay firm. And most importantly, stay safe.

Margaret Ivory, Medicare Plans Broker, 254-313-7413

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## GOD, DESTINY AND A GLASS OF WINE, AN EASY READ AND PERFECT GIFT

The best gift sometimes comes in a small package. Such is the case with *God, Destiny and a Glass of Wine*. All chapters begin with one of Linda Crawford's own "true-story" personal narratives that she later connects to a point that is relevant to this journey called destiny. The book is an easy read. Several readers have told her that they couldn't put it down once they started. It is available on Amazon.com. *God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine* is sure to open your heart to receive healing, encouragement, and a different outlook on life.

Chapter 1: This Too Shall Pass, but When?

I was almost out of breath by the time I made it to the car. Though it was just a few feet away, it seemed like 100 miles. I had parked my car in the backyard to hide it from the bank. Let's face it. It was an old piece of stick-shift junk, but it was all I had, and I was behind on the payments. But tonight, in my panic to get out of the house, maybe the backyard wasn't so smart. Dressed in a gown, house shoes, and a thin jacket, I gripped the keys that were pinned inside my bra. Oh yes, my bra. That was the safest place to keep my valuables, like my

car keys and what little money I had. I had learned a lot in my 29 years. With lightning speed, I dashed out the backdoor, tripping over the threshold, but still holding my balance and determination. Thank God my boy was spending the night with a friend. It was pitch-black dark outside, as I had no time to flip on the outside lights. I just needed to get out. Once inside my car, I let out a sigh, unaware that I had been holding my breath. Quickly locking the car doors, I knew I was on my way. The car was run down and bent up, but it was my path to freedom tonight and my only means of transportation. I'll never forget it. It was a gray and black Toyota, well....a fading gray and a fading black, a hatchback, about 8 years old at the time, and a stick. Ha! A stick. That could be a holdup since I was still in the learning stage, but I could handle it. I tried to crank the old trap, but it just clicked. I tried again, combining my efforts with a plea. "Please God, I need my car!" Just as the motor turned over, I heard that dreadful sound, a swatch-type sound, like an old screen door dragging. My God! He knew I was going to try to get away. He



LINDA MASON CRAWFORD

knew, so he had unlocked the hatch back, ahead of time! He was in the back so fast; all I could do was bite my lip and jerk forward. "Stop the car, Lynn, and give me the money!" he yelled, as he swiftly crawled into the back seat. He lurched through the bucket seats so fast that my head literally seemed to spin, like the girl in the Exorcist. Grabbing the steering wheel, he yelled again, "Gimme the money, Lynn!" The Exorcist...I was sure that his voice changed. But tonight...no, not tonight. I kept driving, the car swerving across into the other the lane and back again as he, too, gripped the wheel. We came within inches of hitting a minivan. I saw head lights

of an 18 wheeler that we also barely missed as we sped into the on-coming traffic. Hands pinned to the wheel, I was driving to my pastor's house, and no one was stopping me. That was the life I lived for most of my 16 years of marriage to a crack addict, one that was much different from my single days of the quiet, country, church girl. I had never touched drugs in my life. I smoked only one cigarette that nearly killed me. And here I was, 29 years old, married to a drug addict. I had so many similar stories to contend with, jumping fences to get my car back from the drug dealers, standing toe-to-toe and nose-to-nose with dealers who threatened to kill me if I didn't leave them alone about getting my car back, knocks on the door in the middle of the night from thugs demanding money my husband owed them, stealing my own car back and driving backwards, trying to miss the flying bullets. You name it; I just about dealt with it. Many times over the years, I walked into my house to find that every piece of furniture and every appliance was gone—sold in exchange for drugs. I remember waking up one Christmas Day to find that

my babies' gifts were gone, sold for drugs. Once, I frantically searched the streets of Tampa because my husband put our 6-year-old out of the car since it was "too dangerous to take him to the crack house," he said. This was before the days of cell phones. I don't even remember how I found my baby boy. I could go on and on, but the only thing that matters is that one day, I accepted the truth that I had to forgive if I expected to move on with my life. I have since come to grips with the truth, that my now ex-husband was a good person, who loved people. When he was straight, he would give away his last. When he was not, he would take another person's last. I literally saw him take his shirt off and give it away. Once he pulled off his watch and gave it away, and then took my watch and gave it away, too. He had a heart of gold, but in addiction, he was the devil. Still, I had to find a way to forgive. I owed it to myself, my children, and my God.

To order *God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine*, paste the following into your browser: <https://www.amazon.com/Destiny-Glass-Linda-Mason-Crawford/dp/069211761X>.

### 5.0 out of 5 stars | Inspiring & Encouraging | Kindle Customer

(Reviewed in the United States on August 20, 2019)

"I absolutely love this book! I could not put it down and read it in two days. There is so much good stuff in this book that I am reading it again. It is inspiring, encouraging and will bless you."

### 5.0 out of 5 stars Five Stars | Amazon Customer

(Reviewed in the United States on May 21, 2018)

"This is an amazing book. It is entertaining, compelling and convicting. A definite must-read for everyone!"

### 5.0 out of 5 stars | Easy read and applicable to my life

(Reviewed in the United States on March 27, 2019)

"After *God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine*, I felt like I could take the author's response to certain circumstances and apply to my own life. Each chapter is a life learning lesson of praising God through hard times, and walking into God's plan for my life. It may appear as an easy read, because I read it in one day my first time reading it. Then I had the opportunity to re-read and breakdown each chapter week by week."

Rey

### 5.0 out of 5 stars | Excellent Book

(Reviewed in the United States on June 13, 2020)

"This is an amazing book. I found it helpful in navigating my fear of not reaching my full potential. It helped me understand how I can have a positive God-ordained destiny. Excellent work!"



**God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine**  
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carry me daily.  
Missing you...*  
Marcus Lee



**ROSETTA LEE**  
*Thank you for loving  
our family so well.*  
David Smith

*Give her more than flowers. Give her a place of honor.*

# COACH G: A LEGACY OF LOVE, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY

BY DR. TARA BRISCOE

Tammy LaTorsha Briscoe-Gindratt—affectionately known on the court as “Disco Briscoe,” known in her community as “the Picture Lady,” and lovingly called “Coach G” by the many children she has mentored—is a woman whose life exemplifies faith, service, leadership, and love. Born on January 24, 1967, in Waco, Texas, to Lela Briscoe and Andrew Benton, Tammy was raised in Parkside Village by her strong, devoted mother alongside her younger sister, Tara Briscoe. From an early age, she displayed resilience, compassion, and a natural talent for sports.

Athletic Achievements at Paul Quinn College

1985–1986 season:

- Helped lead her team to 2nd place in the Conference
- Achieved a 3rd-place finish in the Conference Tournament

- Earned All-Conference



**TAMMY LATORSHA BRISCOE-GINDRATT**

honors

1986–1987 season:

- Won the Conference Championship
- Won the Conference Tournament
- Earned All-Conference honors
- Named to the District 10

SEE **COACH**, PG. 13

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# WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPENS, GOD SUFFERS WITH US

BY MONA DUNKIN

1. Be proactive. Take re-  
sWhen tragedy strikes, the  
cry of the human heart is  
“Why?” Like our birth, free-  
will is a gift from God giving  
us the ability and responsibil-  
ity to make our own choices.  
When we go astray, let’s look  
at how to handle truth.

Bad things happen because  
of the violation of laws. Laws  
are for our protection, not  
bondage, and violating laws  
often brings ill results. When  
mankind disregards spiritual  
laws, the consequence of pain  
naturally follows. Just as the  
law of gravity was in effect  
before Issac Newton’s discovery,  
so the law of truth or conse-  
quences is in effect whether  
we subscribe to it.

Bad things happen be-  
cause of a little three-letter  
word: SIN. Sin started with  
the first man, Adam, and our  
universal heritage in him has  
been passed on from one  
generation to another. The  
good news is, there is a sec-  
ond Adam, and this him, our  
sin nature – although never  
eradicated – can be changed.  
Jesus gives a new nature to  
“whosoever will” and the Holy  
Spirit longs to impart a con-  
trolled temperament that  
overcomes genetic and envi-  
ronmental imprints.

Bad things happen be-



MONA DUNKIN

cause of wrong perspectives.  
Failing to see the dignity of  
each life leads to rudeness,  
disrespect, prejudices, big-  
otry, and inhumane treatment  
of each other. This disregard  
of life created in God’s im-  
age manifests itself in crimes  
of greed, as well as crimes of  
passion. Failure to perceive  
each person as having infi-  
nite worth and value leads  
to abuses and murder of all  
kinds – manslaughter, infan-  
ticide, genocide, and abortion.  
Begin to see yourself and oth-  
ers as the wonderful work of  
art you are, an original, with a  
designer label.

Bad things happen be-  
cause of bad choices. We  
have freedom to make our  
own choices, but not with-

out consequence. The choic-  
es of one person affect anoth-  
er person for good or for bad.  
There are spiritual laws that  
cause great heartache when  
violated. God is a gentleman  
and will not force His way on  
anyone. He gives us a mind  
with which to reason, think,  
evaluate and understand, and  
he gives us a free will with  
which to choose. The Bible  
contains God’s truth about  
spiritual laws. God leads,  
guides and directs, but He will  
not force; He simply gives you  
a free will, and allows you to  
choose. He allows you to ex-  
ercise your God-given right of  
choice.

Many times, a person says,  
“Now, God, if this is not right  
– if this is not what I am sup-  
posed to do – You stop me!”  
But God does not stop us.  
God steps aside and waits  
for us to act. We must make  
choices. The result of choic-  
es will be either joy or sor-  
row. The Bible states we are  
to commit our ways unto the  
Lord, to trust in Him and to  
lean not unto our own under-  
standing. We are not to be  
led astray by our own desires  
and whims. Through our con-  
science, God clearly reveals  
the best way and leaves the  
choice to us.

Bad things happen be-  
cause of the free will of oth-  
ers. Just as God will not force

you to do what is right, neither  
will He force another. We may  
ask, “Where was God when  
the twin towers were being  
destroyed?” Or, “Where was  
God when I was being beat-  
en as a child?” God was in  
the same place He was when  
His own dear Son was being  
brutalized and killed. And His  
heart was breaking. His heart  
was breaking, not only for His  
Son, but also for those who  
mistreated Him. God’s heart  
was breaking for you when  
you were being abused. His  
heart was also breaking for  
those who abused you. God’s  
heart is broken for the individ-  
uals and families of wrongs.

Bad things happen for rea-

sons our human thinking can-  
not explain. One of the great-  
est tragedies of sin is that  
innocent people are harmed.  
But innocent does not mean  
sinlessness. Make peace in  
your own heart with the work-  
ing of God’s infinite wisdom.  
Trust when life does not make  
sense. Pray when the heav-  
ens seem brass. Believe, even  
when you do not understand.  
It is through these avenues  
that you will receive peace.

Invite Mona to speak to  
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BY LINDA MCDONALD

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trends, and a network of trust-  
ed contacts to help smooth the  
process.

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streets are rising in value, what  
school zones are in demand,  
and how to navigate city regu-  
lations. Most importantly, a  
trustworthy agent is your ad-  
vocate—someone who listens,  
negotiates for your best inter-  
est, and helps you make wise  
decisions every step of the way.



LINDA MCDONALD  
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ty that you can trust me.

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**WANDA B.  
GUNTER**

Author, Artist &  
Contributing writer  
for *The Anchor News*

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## WHEN LOVE IS COMPLICATED— HEALING BEYOND NARCISSISM AND SILENCE

BY LINDA CRAWFORD,  
CERTIFIED LIFE COACH

Some relationships do more than challenge you. They reshape you.

If you have dealt with a narcissistic partner, you know what it feels like to question your own reality. You give, adjust, explain, and still feel unseen. If you have experienced passive aggressive behavior, you understand the quiet tension, the unspoken resistance, and the emotional distance that leaves you carrying the weight alone.

But this is not where your story ends.

What you have faced is more than difficult personalities. It is emotional imbalance. Yet, through it, you have gained something powerful. Awareness.

Now comes the next step.



LINDA CRAWFORD

You must learn to trust your voice again. These dynamics often teach you to doubt yourself. Healing means recognizing that your thoughts and feelings are valid without constant approval.

You must redefine what

healthy looks like. Healthy is not confusion or emotional guessing. It is consistent, honest, and peaceful. You deserve clear communication and steady love.

You must release the need to fix people. Growth is a personal decision. No amount of love or patience can force someone to change.

You must rebuild your boundaries, not walls, but boundaries that say, "This is what I accept, and this is what I no longer allow."

Finally, give yourself permission to heal without guilt. Wanting peace does not make you selfish. Choosing yourself does not make you wrong.

What comes after narcissism and silence?

Clarity. Strength. Peace.

You are not starting over. You are starting wiser.

WISDOM AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MEN...

## STRENGTH ISN'T ALWAYS LOUD

BY J.L. CRAWFORD

My brothers, let me talk to you plain.

We were raised to believe that strength looks like control. Keep it together. Do not show too much emotion. Handle your business and keep moving. That may work in the streets or on the job, but in your home, it can quietly damage what matters most.

A good man provides. But a wise man connects.

If you are only bringing money, decisions, and direction into your home, but not your heart, your family will feel the absence. Your wife does not just need leadership. She needs presence. Your children do not just need rules. They need relationship.

Now let me say this clearly. Silence is not strength.

When something is wrong and you shut down, when you avoid hard conversations, when you carry stress alone and expect everyone else to adjust, you are not protecting your family. You are distancing yourself from them.

Real strength is being able to say, "This is where I am struggling." Real strength is listening without getting defensive. Real strength is choosing peace over pride.



J.L. CRAWFORD

The Bible reminds us in Proverbs 27:17, "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." That sharpening requires contact, not distance.

Brothers, your home should not have to guess how you feel. Speak life. Speak clarity. Speak love.

And if you did not see this modeled growing up, that is not an excuse. It is an opportunity. You can become what you did not have.

Being a man is not just about standing tall. It is about showing up.

Strong. Present. Accountable.

That is the kind of man your family will remember.

## AN OPEN LETTER TO VOTERS

Dear District 1 Voters,  
Greetings!

On May 2nd, District 1 faces a clear choice: continue on the current path, or choose a new direction grounded in accountability and shared prosperity.

Ask yourself: Are you satisfied with persistent poverty, stagnant wages, rising costs, and increasing displacement? Are you better off than you were eight years ago? Do you feel your voice has been heard and your needs truly prioritized?

Data from Prosper Waco's 2024 Snapshot Report confirms what many already feel—too many in our community are being left behind, with poverty highest among households of color and wages among the lowest. These disparities are not inevitable, and they should not be ignored or accepted as the status quo.

We can continue down a



RACHEL E. PATE

path where growth happens around us, but not for us—or we can choose a future where progress is shared, intentional, and rooted in the needs of the people who call District 1 home.

Change means more than new leadership—it means new priorities.

It means ensuring redevelopment benefits existing residents, not just outside interests. It means protecting affordable housing, supporting small businesses, and including the community in decisions that shape our future.

It means focusing on real improvements you can see in your neighborhood and feel in your daily life. It means building partnerships with residents and organizations already doing the work. It means creating opportunities for our children to thrive and build lasting stability right here in District 1.

But change also requires us. We must stay engaged, show up, ask questions, and hold leadership accountable beyond election day.

On May 2nd, we are choosing more than a candidate—we are choosing our future. Let's choose one we build together.

Sincerely,  
Rachel E. Pate

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# THE MIND, THE HEART, THE WILL

BY PASTOR MATTHEW REED

I actually want to discuss your will, but to be effective I must speak of two components of your will. The mind is where thoughts of the heart come from Matthew 9:4 says And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? Matthew 15:19 says these scriptures refer to your thinking which is done in the mind.

These next scriptures deal with the heart and its location (Matthew 22:37 and Mark 2:6). From these scriptures, one can deduce the heart is in the mind and one's soul is in the heart. The scripture in Romans 12:2 speaks of the renewing of one's mind. Philippians 4:8 says, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." These scriptures manifest the dominance of the mind in our spiritual walk with our God.

This brings me to Your (our will). Our will is found in our hearts. If we are going to serve as we ought, we have to will it. Remember the mind is the gate to



PASTOR MATTHEW REED

the heart and the heart is where your will resides. To shape our will to serve and obey God, we must renew our minds with the scriptures. To stand firm to do the will of God, we must take heed of our thoughts.

This is the whole thing in a nutshell. We must guard what goes into our mind, watch what we look at, watch what we read, watch what we hear, and watch whom we listen to. If you hear you can't obey God, you are not going to develop a will to obey. Let your will be developed by the scriptures. Remember, whatever your will is, that's what you will do. AMEN!

## Temple of Christ — CHURCH —

MATTHEW REED MINISTRIES, INC.  
1710 Monte Vista • Waco, TX 76777 • (254) 753-0772



### Church Services

- SUNDAY SCHOOL  
10:00 a.m.
- MORNING WORSHIP  
11:15 a.m.
- SUNDAY EVENING  
6:00 p.m.
- MONDAY BIBLE STUDY  
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- WEDNESDAY PRAYER WORSHIP  
7:00 p.m.

Pastor Matthew Reed and wife, Helen

## COACH | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

All-Conference Team

- Competed in the District 10 NAIA Playoffs

Conference Leadership as a Forward:

Tammy became a statistical leader in multiple categories:

- 7th in scoring
- 2nd in rebounding
- 6th in assists
- 5th in free throw percentage

Her teammates often commented that Tammy was not just a great outside shooter but could also play effectively inside, making her an all-around, versatile player who could impact every aspect of the game. Her skill, energy, and

court vision earned her mention in numerous news articles highlighting her scoring, rebounding, passing, and assists. She gained recognition for her dazzling no-look and behind-the-back passes, along with her nearly automatic precision shooting. Tammy's dedication to youth and her community has been a constant thread throughout her life. She returned to the Dewey Recreation Center—her childhood training ground—where she spent 27 years coaching, mentoring, and shaping generations of young athletes, many of whom still lovingly call her "Coach G." Today, she contin-

ues her commitment to care and guidance as a Home Parent at the Methodist Children's Home, providing stability, support, and love to children and teenagers.

Family is at the heart of Tammy's purpose. She is the proud mother of LaTorsha and TaShea Gindratt, goddaughter Tamara Givens, and the loving grandmother of Ta'Lelah Gindratt, X'Zhakai Gindratt, and Autumn Givens, and a great big sister to Rev. Dr. Tara Briscoe. She also played a significant role in raising her cousin Marques Carroll Jr., extending to him the same love, guidance, and care she gives to her own children.

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—presents—

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Monday, April 13, 2026

7:00 PM – 8:00 PM | Live via Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6220120754>

Meeting ID: 622 012 0754 | Passcode: 2QZpu6

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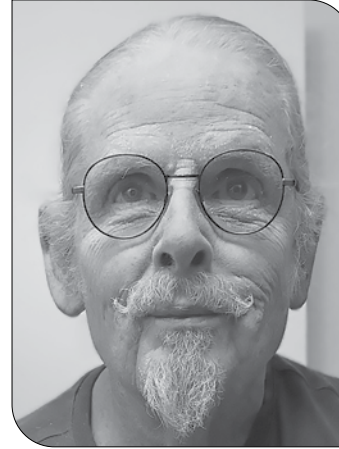
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# BODY AND SOUL

BY MICHAEL JONES

We all need food. An empty stomach sends an urgent message: find food! Eat or starve! So, does a hungry soul send us the same message?

The Torah, the New Testament, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Zend-Avesta, the Qur'an, and most of the holy books of the world's great Faiths, all refer to this same "bread of life" in one way or another. Generally, bread symbolizes the life-giving power of God's revelations; the inner strength we can all derive from partaking of those revelations; and the sustenance those revelations give to the entire world. In the gospel of John, Christ explained: "... my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." The phrase "Give us this day our daily bread" comes from the Lord's Prayer, the only prayer recorded by the Bible as originating directly from Christ himself. Repeated in slightly different versions in the gospels of Mathew and Luke, this powerful prayer essentially asks the Creator to grant us life – but not just the physical life our food sus-



MICHAEL JONES

tains.

In his Book of Certitude, Bahá'u'lláh, the prophet and founder of the Bahá'í Faith, employed that same symbol, saying, "This is the food that confers everlasting life upon the pure in heart and the illumined in spirit. This is the bread of which it is said: 'Lord, send down upon us Thy bread from heaven.' This bread shall never be withheld from them that deserve it, nor can it ever be exhausted. It groweth everlastingly from the tree of grace; it descendeth at all seasons from the heavens of justice and mercy."

Bahá'í teachings say that these revelations, and the heavenly sustenance they continually provide to humanity, come to us throughout history as a bounty from the Creator, who never leaves humanity without guidance. More importantly, Bahá'u'lláh taught that the successive revelations actually formed unified spiritual school for humanity – a progressively revealed sequence of linked spiritual messengers: "... all the Prophets of God, His well-favoured, His holy, and chosen Messengers, are, without exception, the bearers of His names, and the embodiments of His attributes. They only differ in the intensity of their revelation, and the comparative potency of their light."

The sun gives light and warmth to the world every day. No one could survive without its rays. Similarly, Bahá'ís believe the Creator has sent us His gifts of all the spiritual messengers and prophets to feed, nourish, and enlighten our souls.

To learn more about the Waco area Bahá'í community, visit our website at [wacoba-hais.org](http://wacoba-hais.org). Find out more about the Faith's global initiatives, go to [bahai.org/beliefs](http://bahai.org/beliefs).

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Honor the women who gave us life, love, and legacy. Celebrate your mother, grandmother, or the mother of your children with a beautiful printed tribute that your family will treasure for years to come.

Whether she is still with you or watching over you, this is your opportunity to say what matters most.

### YOUR TRIBUTE INCLUDES:

Portrait photo | Up to 10 words

### PRICING:

Black and white: \$35 | Color: \$45

### Perfect For:

Children honoring their mothers | Families remembering loved ones  
 Husbands honoring the mother of their children

### DEADLINE:

April 25 or until all spaces are filled.  
 Limited space available

### TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT, SEND:

Photo, 10 words, and payment

Visit [www.theanchornews.org](http://www.theanchornews.org) and click "Donate" or text for details

### SAMPLE TRIBUTES:



MAE PEARL

1938 - 2024

Forever my first love,  
 Mama. Love always,  
 Angela Johnson



ANNIE RUTH

Your prayers still  
 carry me daily.  
 Missing you...

Marcus Lee



ROSETTA LEE

Thank you for loving  
 our family so well.

David Smith

Give her more than flowers. Give her a place of honor.

# YOU WILL MEET GOD WHEN YOU DIE!

**BY APOSTLE FANNY MINNITT**

“You Will Meet God When You Die!” What a profound statement to make, but it is something to reflect and assess concerning your faith, spirit, soul, and body. On November 1st my husband and I were going to a funeral, and just as I was shifting in my seat getting relaxed for a road nap, I saw a large billboard on my right that said in big letters, “You Will Meet God When You Die! I asked my husband, did you see that billboard? For some reason it resonated in my spirit. It still resonates in my mind, and this happened last year. Prior to seeing this billboard, we had to decide which funeral we could attend. Two of his relatives had funeral services on the same weekend, both had transitioned from cancer. Both were in the hospital at the same time transitioning in two different states.

Answer the questions below “TRUTHFULLY”.



**APOSTLE FANN MINNITT**

**QUESTION – Genesis 1:1**  
– Do you believe that God created the heavens and the earth?

**QUESTION – Genesis 1:26**  
– Do you believe that you were made in God’s image?

**QUESTION – Hebrews 11:6**  
– Do you truly have faith in God and the word of God?

**QUESTION – Romans 12:2**  
– Has your mind been renewed against the ways of the world

**QUESTION – John 3:16**  
– Do you believe through Jesus you will have eternal life?

**QUESTION – Revelation 14:6**  
– What do you know about the Everlasting Gospel?

It is critical that we understand that there is life after the first death. According to Revelation 21:1 there will be a new heaven and a new earth. God’s sons and daughters will have peace beyond our imagination in the new earth. But this is not automatic; we must by faith trust and believe in God’s word.

I heard a young person

say that “I am not religious, but if there is a heaven...”. If it is a heaven and you die without true answers in your heart, if God asked you the above questions and it determined your heaven or hell faith, after death on this earth; shouldn’t you follow God’s plan for your life? You should study His word every day, pray every day, pray for others every day, and prepare for the day of the LORD every day. Glory to God!

“You Will Meet God When You Die!” When you do...?

## Church DIRECTORY

**Tree of Life NDC**  
1612 Austin Avenue, Suite A | Waco, Texas 76701  
Pastor/Founder – RT Allen | Co Pastor – Sandra Allen

SUNDAY SCHOOL – 9:30  
MORNING WORSHIP – 10:30  
WEDNESDAY INTERCESSORY PRAYER – 6 to 6:30  
BIBLE STUDY – 6:30 to 7:45

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Friday Night Prayer – 6 to 7 p.m.  
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