

St. John's AME Church (Montgomery, AL)

Sons of Allen

Rev. James E. Arnell, Pastor

Keith T. Houston, Unit President



A Review of Service & Fellowship

Submitted by Keith T. Houston

A Bit About the Unit

Pastor Arnell had the vision and wisdom to establish St. John's Sons of Allen Unit in September 2001.

E.J. Knight served as the unit's first president from 2001 to 2005. Kenneth Washington served as the second president from 2005 to 2009. As an Advisor to St. John's Sons of



Allen, the first annual St. John's Sons of Allen Day was facilitated & coordinated by Keith Houston in 2008 and he has coordinated this event annually since that time. Michael Burns served as St. John's third Sons of Allen president from 2009 to 2013 and Joseph Crosby served as the unit's fourth president from 2013 to 2015.

Keith Houston is St. John's fifth Son of Allen president and has served in the office since elected in 2015.



St. John's Son of Allen's Mission Statement is "To organize the men of St. John's AME Church in Chris-

tian fellowship and social action; to develop and direct their Christian skills to serve as role models for the church and community. Our Motto is "Keep it simple and have fun". This motto has remain a staple for St. John's Sons of Allen since stamped by Bro. Kenneth Washington's administration as the unit's members remain excited and jubilant regarding all of its endeavors. Simply put, the men of St. John's Sons of Allen like what they are doing and have fun in doing so.

Prior works and projects of this men's ministry include a Father/Daughter Sweetheart fellowship during the month of February, sponsoring a river boat dinner cruise on Montgomery's Harriott II, painting the interior of a Habitat for Humanity house, assisting with labor at a Habitat for Humanity store, assisting with grounds keeping at Lincoln Cemetery, sponsoring outings at the Montgomery Biscuits baseball game as a family event and providing a large flat screen television for the game room of the church (donated by a SoA member).

St. John's Sons of Allen has grown to a steady membership in the range of 30 members over the years. Although some of our youth go away to college and adults relocate due to career moves, this men's ministry has maintained a steady membership of approximately 30

members. This has been accomplished by God's grace of new member men joining the church and the returning home of men to Montgomery for retirement who grew up at St. John's during their youth. In addition, Pastor Arnell and Bro. Keith Houston have made initiatives to bring younger gentlemen of the church into the fold of the St. John's Sons of Allen ministry. Hence, carrying out the ministry's mission of serving as role models for the young men of St. John's.

The initiative of bringing younger gentlemen into the fold has complimented the ministry in making its membership diverse with excited youth, energized young adults, insightful middle aged adults and seniors who offer wisdom and foundation for the ministry. President Keith Houston can be quoted as saying, "Our membership is comprised of financial supporters, moral and political supporters and those who support us with physical labor". "Our membership with such talents as it has, has made St. John's Sons of Allen a ministry that supports all of Pastor Arnell's initiatives and programs of the church". This ministry was founded in service, reaching out to the men of the church and with Pastor Arnell's unyielding support.

St. John's Sons of Allen Continued.....



It is important to note that the first 9th District Sons of Allen Men of Valor Conference was hosted by St. John's AME Church (Montgomery) under the pastorship of Rev. James E. Arnell. The seed of St. John's Sons of Allen was watered by this conference and the local ministry has continued to sprout since that time.

St. John's Sons of Allen activities over the past year are as follows:

- In December on 2015, the SoA brought Christmas cheer to the home of one of its members on the Sick & Shut-In List with poinsettia plants & a Get Well Doggie.



- In February 2016, the SoA co-sponsored a Super Bowl Fellowship party with the YPD in the Christian Life Center. The fellowship included watching the game on the Big Screen in the CLC auditorium; the kids were also able to play Wii games, X-Box games, Uno Cards and billiards in the game room throughout the party. At half-time, the kids played Pin-The-Tail-On-The-Donkey with winners of the game receiving gift cards. Everyone participated in a door prize drawings at half time.
- In Jun 2016, the Sons of Allen

served at teachers, chaperones and also drove the transportation van for Vacation Bible School.

- In August 2016, Family Night Event I was sponsored by St. John's Sons of Allen at Brunswick Zone (Bowling Lanes) in Montgomery. St. John's church



family of the young, the young-hearted and the wise turned out for a night of bowling, food and fun.

- St. Johns also held its Eighth Annual Sons of Allen Day with Honorable Greg Griffin, Circuit Judge of the 15th Judicial Circuit as the guest speaker. Judge Griffin challenged St. John's Sons of Allen with making a difference in the lives of young men. Pastor Arnell and the SoA accepted Judge Griffin's challenge. This event was attended by Presiding Elder Albert Hyche of the Montgomery Selma District.
- In September 2016, Family Night Event II was sponsored by St. John's Sons of Allen as one of its members donated 35 tickets to the Alabama State Hornets vs. Texas Southern Tigers football game at Hornet Stadium in Montgomery. This event was attended by the SoA

members and members of the St. John's family.



- In October 2016, the SoA contributed a large box of school supplies for the ARRC WMS Valiant Cross Academy School Supplies Drive.
- In November & December 2016, the SoA established teams and delivered food boxes to selected Montgomery residents for St. John's WMS annual Thanksgiving & Christmas Food Boxes respectively.

St. John's Sons of Allen is currently composed of 33 members including 6 young men in junior high, high school or college. The SoA youth initiative is supported by the families of these young men. St. John's SoA 2016-17 Officers are:

- ♦ President, Keith Houston
- ♦ 1st Vice President, Lamarius Whetstone
- ♦ 2nd Vice President, Joseph Crosby
- ♦ 3rd Vice President, Larry Coleman
- ♦ Treasurer, Anthony Gibson
- ♦ Secretary, Kindell Anderson
- ♦ Chaplain, Lekeedric Taylor
- ♦ Advisor, E.J. Knight
- ♦ Advisor, Kenneth Washington