

CHURCH BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

African American Congregations

January - March 2008

January 6

As the new year begins, resolve to be a better and safer driver. If the roads appear hazardous or the forecast is bad, plan ahead. Make a checklist of what you will need to have in your car in case of an emergency. Also, inspect your tires, windshield wipers, and battery, and let someone know where you're headed. [The simple choices made every day often determine whether or not there will be a tomorrow for you.](#) Choose the future—play it safe every time you get behind the wheel.

January 13

Maintaining your tires is an important part of vehicle maintenance, especially in bad weather. At least 30 percent of cars and light trucks have at least one tire under-inflated, and low pressure can keep tires from performing properly. It is also important to check your tires for wear; those with worn tread are in danger of blowout. [Protect yourself and your loved ones with simple actions that can prevent injuries and death.](#) Earn trust, gain respect, and obey the law; your community and family will be grateful.

January 20

January 21st marks Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Commemorate by educating your family about respecting the rules of the road. Laws in all 50 states require kids to be buckled up, so let your children know that seat belt use isn't an option; it's the law. When it comes to protecting children in and around cars, the most important safety equipment is a responsible adult. [Kids know you care about protecting their future.](#) Steer them straight when you're in the driver's seat.

January 27

In bad weather, there are more things to consider than just the posted speed limit. Slow down and adjust for the current conditions, whether it's fog, rain, ice, or heavy traffic. Listen to weather reports and allow extra time for travel. Also, make sure to practice extra caution when it's very cold. An average of 36 children died per year from 1998-2006 from hyperthermia after being left unattended in a vehicle. [The simple choices made every day often determine whether or not there will be a tomorrow for you.](#) Choose the future—play it safe every time you get behind the wheel.

February 3

Super Bowl Sunday is one of the most exciting and entertaining national sporting events as friends and families gather to socialize and watch the big game. Yet, it is also one of the nation's most dangerous days on the roadways due to impaired driving. Enjoy food, family, friends, and football on Super Bowl Sunday this year, but no matter what team you cheer for, remind your family—fans don't let fans drive drunk. [Protect yourself and your loved ones with simple actions that can prevent injuries and death. Earn trust, gain respect, and obey the law; your community and family will be grateful.](#)

February 10

Show your children how much you care this Valentine's Day. Take time to properly install and buckle their child safety seats, and buckle your own belt as well. Children are safest in child restraints/booster seats until they're at least 4'9" tall (usually at least 8 years old), and all children 12 and under must ride in the back seat. [Kids know you care about protecting their future. Steer them straight when you're in the driver's seat.](#)

February 17

Over President's Day weekend, watch for increased pedestrian traffic as a result of the holiday. Slow down in residential areas and pay extra attention at intersections. Teach your children to be safe pedestrians by teaching them three things to do before they cross the street: try to cross at a corner with a traffic light; stop at the curb; look left, right, and then left again to make sure no cars are coming. [Protect yourself and your loved ones with simple actions that can prevent injuries and death. Earn trust, gain respect, and obey the law; your community and family will be grateful.](#)

February 24

As prom nears, spend time talking with your teenagers about the dangers of underage drinking and alcohol/drug impaired driving. About 10.8 million adolescents ages 12-20 are underage alcohol drinkers. Fortunately, you can have a great influence on the choices your children make. Together, come up with a plan to address situations when they are offered alcohol, are at a party where alcohol is being served, or the person driving them home has been drinking. Make sure they know to stay away from riding with anyone who has been drinking, and teach them the importance of making good decisions. Communication with your child is important for shaping their values. [The simple choices made every day often determine whether or not there will be a tomorrow for you. Choose the future—play it safe every time you get behind the wheel.](#)

March 2

As spring nears and the weather warms up, more motorcyclists will be on the roadway. When traveling behind a motorcycle, allow at least a three or four second following distance and pay extra attention. Per vehicle mile, motorcyclists are about 32 times more likely than passenger car occupants to die in a traffic crash. [Your family knows you care about protecting their future. Steer them straight when you're in the driver's seat.](#)

March 9

It's time to spring forward! With the extra hour of sunlight, remember to share the road safely with bicyclists who will be able to ride later into the evening. When bicycles are riding in traffic, be courteous: don't drive too fast or pass too close, and signal early to make the cyclist aware of where you're headed. [Protect yourself and your loved ones with simple actions that can prevent injuries and death.](#) Earn trust, gain respect, and obey the law; your community and family will be grateful.

March 16

Safety is more than just good luck. Drinking alcohol and driving takes away your chances of getting home safely and endangers others on the road. St. Patrick's Day has become a big night out for many Americans—but it has also become a dangerous night on our roadways due to impaired drivers. In 2004, approximately 48 percent of all traffic fatalities that occurred during the evening of St. Patrick's Day and into the early hours of the following morning involved drinking and driving. [The simple choices made every day often determine whether or not there will be a tomorrow for you.](#) Choose the future—play it safe every time you get behind the wheel.

March 23

Celebrate life this Easter and learn to avoid frustration while behind the wheel. Steer clear of agitated drivers and control your own emotions. Practice patience with those around you, and put your pride aside if confronted by an aggressive driver. Be a good example. [Your family knows you care about protecting their future. Steer them straight when you're in the driver's seat.](#)

March 30

Seat belts save lives! One out of every 10 drivers on the road will be involved in a traffic crash at some point in his/her life, and you stand a far better chance of surviving a serious injury crash if you are wearing a seat belt. If you don't wear a seat belt, your chances of serious injury are doubled. Unless you want to risk a ticket, or worse—your life, remember to buckle up every time. [Protect yourself and your loved ones with simple actions that can prevent injuries and death.](#) Earn trust, gain respect, and obey the law; your community and family will be grateful.

PASTOR'S NOTES

Winter Sermon Traffic Safety Message

Traffic crashes are one of the top causes of death in the United States, and are the *leading* cause of death for African Americans ages 5 through 14. These alarming statistics greatly affect the families of African American communities, but can be improved through diligent promotion of traffic safety.

Nationally, safety belt use among African Americans increased from 69% in 2000 to 77% in 2002. However, according to the 2006 National Occupant Protection Use Survey, safety belt use by African Americans is estimated to be at 75%, compared to 81% for all occupants. It has been estimated that approximately 1,300 African American lives could be saved and 26,000 injuries could be prevented if all African Americans buckled up.

What can you do to raise awareness?

- Be a good example: if your family and/or children see you buckle up, then they will be more likely to wear their seatbelt when you're not around.
- Remind your family *each time* they get into the vehicle to put on their seat belts.
- Make it fun—race to see who gets buckled the fastest.
- Don't just say "Because I said so," when your children ask about why they should buckle up. Explain to your family why it is important to be buckled by letting them know of the possible consequences.
- Get your community involved by forming a "Safe Community" where citizens can work together to bring attention to safety concerns, like child safety seat and seat belt issues.

There are many difficult decisions you must make for the well-being of your family, but doing what's best each time you drive is easy. It only takes about three seconds to buckle your safety belt—but that three seconds spent could be the difference of how many years of your life are saved.

The simple choices made every day often determine whether or not there will be a tomorrow for you. Choose the future —play it safe every time you get behind the wheel.