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"...Write the vision and make it plain on the tablet so that it might be read quickly."

Habakkuk 2:2 (LEB)

## Christiansburg FCOG Calls Associate of Family Ministries Pastor



**Rev. Jessica and Mike Willis**

Pastor Jessica Willis began serving as the Associate of Family Ministries at the First Church of God in Christiansburg, VA January 1, 2017. Jessica graduated from Mid-America Christian University in 2005 with a Bachelors of Pastoral Ministry. She and her family moved here from Des Moines, Iowa where she served as an associate minister for 10 years. She spent 9 years serving as the youth pastor and 1 year serving as children's pastor. Jessica has received her licensing and ordination through the North/Central Region of the Church of

God. In Iowa Jessica served in a variety of leadership roles including state and regional ministry. Jessica served for 3 years as the Chair of CE for the Iowa State Assembly where her main responsibilities consisted of planning and directing state children and youth activities. She also has served in the North Central Region leadership council for 1 year.

One of Jessica's greatest joys is her family. She and her husband Mike have been married for 11 years and they have 3 beautiful little girls. McKena is 9 and Aundrea and Adalyn are both 6. Jessica's husband Mike is a great support for her in ministry. He also takes great pride and joy in their 3 girls. In Iowa Mike was a support in all of Jessica's ministries and he also served in the worship ministry. Mike plays guitar and sings.

Jessica is excited to be serving the First Church of God in Christiansburg.



**Aundrea, McKena, and Adalyn Willis**

God has already done some great things to get her and her family here and they are trusting for what God still has in store. Jessica sees her purpose in ministry as connecting all ages to a Spirit led relationship with the Truth that is Jesus found in God's Word. Only where there is Truth there is hope and freedom. John 16:4 "Jesus told him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life no one comes to the father except through Me." Jessica is prayerful and eager to see how God will use her in Virginia.

## I've Been thinkin...



**Dr. Bob Neace COGVA  
State Minister**



about Nehemiah.

When we read the story of Nehemiah, one is struck by his ability to inspire. His ability to bring encouragement to those who were discouraged and arrive at a place where they came together to build a wall around Jerusalem in an unfathomably short time (52 days) is nothing short of miraculous. (Don't worry, keep reading... This isn't about a wall! ☺) This was an incredible feat, given the discouragement of the people, their loss of focus on rebuilding their society, and the constant barrage of negativity from those around them that failed to see God's hand at work in the circumstances in which they found themselves. One would not have to look far out the window to see some similar comparisons in our own world.

What was it that made Nehemiah successful in leading the people of his day? I believe our answer is found in chapter one. As he made inquiry of his homeland, he hears the report that the walls are still yet destroyed and the burned gates are not yet built. To our knowledge, he has never been to Jerusalem, but carries the flame of passion to see Jerusalem return to the beneficiary of God's blessing it once enjoyed prior to its punishment of Babylonian captivity. He

wants to see his nations capitol rebuilt and his nation once again serving the God who called Israel into existence. Upon the news of Jerusalem's complacency, he sits down, weeps and mourns for many days, fasted, and prayed.

What was the content of his prayer? Praise first! Recognizing that all blessings come from God, he acknowledged the awesomeness of God, calling to remembrance His mercy. And then he begins to confess sin. He pleads for forgiveness of the sins of his nation, his forefathers, and even of his own sins. Once the confession of sin has been made, He begins to ask for the fulfillment of promises made that if they were to return to Him and keep His commandments, God would gather them together again. Nehemiah longed for a right relationship with God for his nation and himself, sought it through prayer, received it, and became a great leader in a crucial time in Israel's history.

Perhaps we in the Church of God would do well to reflect on where we are spiritually. Recognizing the complacency that plagues our churches, looking at our societal problems through the same lens that Nehemiah did, and rather than looking for answers in diverse places, we take opportunity to pray along

the same lines as Nehemiah. We could start by acknowledging that we are truly a blessed people who have lost our way. It would behoove us to begin listing the ills of our society as the sins we have allowed, taken part in, or perhaps even fostered for others. Sins such as sexual immorality, racism, sexism, ignoring the plight of the homeless and refugees, abortion on demand, are among a host of others we would do well to examine in our own lives and, following Nehemiah's example, pray for forgiveness as a body, and as individuals.

My prayer of late has been that God would crush the veneer around my heart, make it a heart of flesh, rather than a heart of stone, and open my eyes to better focus on how He would have me serve Him by serving others. In other words, break my heart with the things that break His heart.

Will you join me in this aspect of prayer, using Nehemiah's prayer for Israel as a pattern of prayer for our country and world, the Church of God (universal), our national offices, the Church of God in Virginia, our local churches, and finally, specifically for each of us as individuals. I have been praying along these lines out of conviction for several months, and am asking you to join me.

## Men's Ministry Gathering at Roanoke FCOG

We have begun a new year for the State Men's Ministry within the Church of God in Virginia. The theme this year for our quarterly training sessions is "Christian Men Persevering in Challenging Times!" It is important to understand God's Word when it tells us that we experience trials and tribulations. However, it also instructs us that if we persevere, we will win victory over the enemy. In fact, James 1:12 informs us; "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

Our training is normally on the first Saturday of every quarter, but in January due to inclement weather, we had to postpone until the end of the month. On January 28th, 2017, we met at First Church of God, Roanoke, VA with Senior Pastor, Jim Milner as the host church. Rev. Dick Gilbert, who is also the newly elected Chairperson for the Church of God in Virginia was our guest speaker. Pastor Gilbert gave us two examples about Christian men persevering. First was Joseph and secondly was Noah. We are called to persevere in this day and time as we continue to

get closer to Jesus' return to take us to our heavenly homes for those that continue to have faith, trust, and are obedient to His commands for our lives.

Our next training will be held in Suffolk and will be a Health Retreat to discuss men's medical situations, powers of attorney, and wills. It is a much needed discussion and we look forward to be blessed by those that will come out and provide the training for us. Please plan to come and join us as we learn, fellowship together as men of the Church of God in Virginia.



**COGVA Chair, Rev. Dick Gilbert**



**Men's Ministry Participants**

## Marion FCOG to Host Financial Peace University

Have you ever wondered at the end of the month where all your money went? Do you live from paycheck to paycheck? Most Americans do regardless of income. Have you ever wished you could find your way out of the bondage of credit card debts? Do you worry about your retirement? Kids going to college?

The Marion First Church of God is hosting Dave Ramsey's "Financial Peace University." Financial Peace University or FPU is a program that has helped more than 1.5 million families take control of their money, learn the Biblical truths about money, and in many cases get out of debt

completely. The average family completing the course pays off \$5300 and saves \$2700 in just 90 days. That's an \$8000 change in position! The class is a small group, led by a video of Dave Ramsey and his teaching team explaining and walking you through the process of budgeting, dumping debt, planning for your future and much more. After the video presentation, the coordinator then leads a discussion on what you have seen with the entire class.

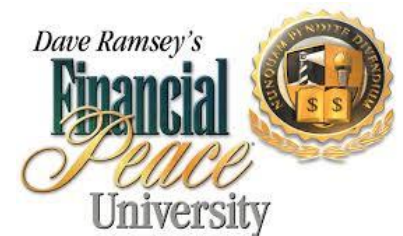
This small group setting enables people to feel more comfortable talking about their problems with money, what they are

learning and most importantly how to apply these new ideas to their family life immediately. FPU is practical, entertaining and fun. It is based on more than 800 verses of Scripture and is a Proven plan that will work for anyone.

The 9 week class begins February 28 at 7PM and goes each Tuesday night through April 25th. Dates subject to change based on weather. If interested in more information please go to this link: <http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/classes/1037603> or call Pastor William McCollian at 276-783-9008



**Rev. Bill McCollian**





## “Seek God with all your Heart” - Dr. Simeon R. Green III



Rev. Dr. Simeon R. Green III

As Christians, our faith will be tested daily, and sometimes hourly. God is real, and Satan knows He is real. In Matthew 10:34 Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.” Everywhere Jesus went in the midst of His ministry, people were opposing Him, even though He was healing bodies, opening blinded eyes, and bringing the Gospel of peace to the world. In the midst of that, warfare was going on in His presence. People were ready to kill Him, and eventually they nail Him to the cross for His stand for God and His Word. Conflict and disagreement

will arise between those who choose to follow Christ and those who don't.

However, we can look forward to the day when all conflict will be resolved. As we take our cross and follow Jesus, our different values, moral, goals, and purposes will set us apart from others. Please do not neglect your family, but remember that your commitment to God is even more important. God should be our first priority. Jesus let His followers know that if people hated Him, they would hate them too. We need to be aware that the enemy is here to bring opposition to

us, and it will not cease until we leave this world. Yet, God's grace is sufficient. It is an awful thought when we compare the alternative of not fighting the battle. If we do not fight the good fight of faith, we are going to be lost forever.

Jesus told His disciples, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:20). God has promised to be with us. He wants to encourage us to fight the good fight of faith, to (continued on page 7)

## Granby St. FCOG To Launch a Contemporary Worship Service



Rev. Harold Boyd

First Church of God at Granby Street in Norfolk, VA is paving the way for change to reach more people within our community through the offering of a Contemporary Service. In the over 100 years of existence of this church, nothing of this magnitude has ever happened. This service will offer contemporary music; however, the full gospel message of Christ Jesus our Lord will still be preached.

We believe this will open the door to so many

others that in this day and time, we understand the importance of reaching people where they are. Romans 13:11, using the NIV version tells us; “And do this, understanding the present time; the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.” Jesus reached people where they were throughout His earthly ministry and still meets us where we are today.

We as a body of believers know we are in the last

days and if we don't begin to meet people where they are, we will never reach those that still do not know Jesus or may have known Him but have walked away. It is time we awaken and rise up to reach those that need Christ Jesus before it is too late. Know we will be accountable for what we have done to reach the unchurched and nothing can be taken away from Christ's message, which is the true gospel. Launch date for this service is Feb. 5, 2017 at 12:30 pm

Harold Boyd  
Pastor, FCOG Norfolk

## Conditional Deeding Issues and a Plea to Address Them

In a recent COGVA Executive Board meeting, State Minister Neace was given the directive to encourage each church to individually take steps to investigate the deeding of their properties. Many of the deeds of church properties affiliated with COGVA still have a clause in their deed referred to as a “conditional Deeding” or a “Reversionary Interest” clause. This clause usually has language in it that stipulates if a property should fall into disuse or the body worshipping in that facility finds itself no longer in doctrinal harmony with the Church of God (Anderson), the property would revert to the Board of Church Extension and Home Missions. That entity (Board of Church Extension and Home Missions) no longer exists. After that entity ceased operations, it was directed via a court order that all properties with the clause were to be “quit-claim” deeded to Church of God Ministries, Inc. In numerous communications, it has been the expressed desire for Church of God Ministries, Inc. to transfer the “Conditional Deeding,” and/or “Reversionary Interest” clause to the state or regional organization to which they belong. For us, that is COGVA.

However, given some recent activities, it has become clear to the Executive Board of COGVA, this desire, though expressed, is not being pursued. As a result, the Executive Board of COGVA is asking each congregational leadership to pursue what is necessary to secure and safeguard their local church properties by specifically requesting Church of God Ministries, Inc. to transfer their “Reversionary Interests” to the Church of God in Virginia. This is by no means a mandate but a plea from the Executive Board to protect and safeguard the local church.

The following is excerpted from a 2012 General Assembly Resolution that addresses this issue and gives some instruction and language to help in this process:

“...The General Assembly of the Church of God recommends that local congregations conditionally deed their real property assets to their State, Regional, or Provincial Assembly, but that is not the only option. For local congregations that are not part of a State, Regional, or Provincial Assembly or that are not comfortable conditionally deeding their real property assets to those organizations, they also can choose to conditionally deed their property to Church of God Ministries, Inc., the corporate arm of the General Assembly of the Church of God, Anderson, Indiana.

Keep in mind that real property law is typically established at the state and local levels, so it is highly recommended that each local congregation secure the advice and assistance of a local attorney to prepare the appropriate deeds and include the necessary Conditional Deeding language. That said, a number of attorneys across North America have recommended a legal procedure whereby the local church first conveys title to its real property assets to its State, Regional or Provincial Assembly, OR if none, to Church of God Ministries, Inc. of Anderson, Indiana by a Quit Claim Deed. Then the Assembly or organization that has received the transferred assets re-conveys title back to the local church using a separate Quit Claim deed which contains the safeguarding conditional deed language. Once both deeds are prepared and executed, the attorney records them in the local recorder’s office.

Many Church of God congregations implementing Conditional Deeding have included safeguarding conditional deed language such as the following in their current deeds:

"To have and to hold, so long as the local Church of God also known as

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
 [Name of local church] [Street Address]

[City] [State] [Zip]

maintains fellowship and doctrinal unity with the General Assembly of the Church of God, Anderson, Indiana, and so long as the property remains in use by said church. If this property falls into disuse, or if in the opinion of said General Assembly, the [Name of Local Church] is no longer in fellowship and doctrinal unity with the Church of God, as represented by the General Assembly, this property shall go to, vest in, and become the property in fee simple of the [Name of State, Regional, or Provincial Assembly] located at [Address, City, State, Zip Code] or its successors or assigns.”

Again, this safeguarding language is merely an example, and each local congregation should consult with a local real property attorney to insure that any proposed Conditional Deeding language is consistent with the state and local law where the congregation is located.”

(Continued on page 6)

Requests for Quit Claim Deeds to be addressed should be sent to

Jim Lyon, General Director for Church of God Ministries, Inc.  
PO Box 2420  
Anderson, IN 46018

and a copy of that request should be forwarded to

Church of God in Virginia,  
4704 Roanoke Road,  
Christiansburg, VA 24073.

We, as the Executive Board, cannot over emphasize how important this matter is and ask for your prompt attention to research your church's deeding clauses.

Blessings,

Dr. Bob Neace, COGVA State Minister, under the direction of the Executive Board of COGVA.

## Mark Your Calendar

### February

15<sup>th</sup> Registration Deadline for Virginia State Youth Convention

18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 - 12:00-2:00 PM - COGVA CWC Eastern Region Luncheon @Joynes Road

CHOG/Hampton Theme: "Moments of Peace" - Speaker: Minister Lori Egan, Riverside Church of God

19<sup>th</sup> Installation Service for Rev. and Mrs. David Smith – Tibitha FCOG/Reedville

28<sup>th</sup> – April 25<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday Evenings at 7:00) Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University – Marion FCOG

### March

13<sup>th</sup> Mountain Empire Minister and Spouse Supper at El Campestre/Chilhowie, VA 6:00 pm

16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> COGVA Ministers Fellowship, Walmsley Ave FCOG/ Richmond

19-23 Reformation Renewal Rally, 7:00 nightly, Abingdon FCOG

31<sup>st</sup> - April 2<sup>nd</sup> COGVA State Youth Convention

### April

28<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup> C.W.C./W.C.G. Convention Riverside CHOG/Fredericksburg

### May

21-26 Indoor Camp Meeting/Mountain Empire District hosted at Chilhowie FCOG

### June

28<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup> Middler Camp grades 1-5

### July

10<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> Junior and Senior High Camp

30<sup>th</sup> – August 5<sup>th</sup> COGVA State Camp Meeting, Rev. Mitchell Birch, Preaching Evangelist, Rev. Jimmy Crumley, Worship Evangelist

something **BIG** is coming  
08.04.2017

## Groseclose To Host “Biggest Loser” Finalist

February 12 at 4:00 pm, Pastor William Wagner and the congregation of Groseclose FCOG in Rural Retreat will host Jennifer Messer. Jennifer is a wife and mother of two who fell into the everyday cycle of life and eventually lost who she was along the way. Therefore, leading her on the wrong path with her health. She reached out for help and was given an opportunity of a lifetime. She was chosen to be a

contestant on Season 15 of NBC’s “The Biggest Loser” and won a new life. She became stronger not just physically, but more importantly, mentally. She used the tools that were given to her and found that person she has always wanted to be. One of those in which is a healthy role model for her two daughters. Her passion now is to pay it forward by sharing her story and the many blessings that came

from her journey, such as acquiring her spin instructor certification and starting a support group called “the Journey of Fitness and Faith. For more information about this event, call Pastor Wagner at 276-686-5898



Jennifer Messer



## “Seek God with all your Heart” (continued)

Overcome luke-warmness that presses in us daily, and to keep the victory. If we want to live for God, Jesus is saying, “I am with you; do not give up.” Jesus was with the disciples physically until He ascended into Heaven, and then spiritually through the Holy Spirit (Read Acts 1:4). The Holy Spirit would be Jesus presence that would never leave them (Read John 14:26). Jesus continues to be with us today through His Spirit.

We read in John 13:33-35 these words: “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said

unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” My friends, if we want the world to recognize who God’s people are really, then we need the Love of God working in us day after day. The enemy knows that it is through God’s love that the world can see that we are His disciples. We are to love others based on Jesus’ sacrificial love for us.

Such love will not only bring unbelievers to Christ, it will also keep believers strong and united in a world hostile to God. Jesus was a living example of God’s love, as we are to be living examples of Jesus’ love. Do people see petty bickering, jealousy, and division in your church? Or do they know we are Jesus followers by our love for one another? Love is more than simply warm feelings; it is an attitude that reveals itself in action.

# COGVA Budget

August 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

Categories	Budget	Aug-Oct 1st Qtr Expenses	Nov-Jan 2nd Qtr Expenses	Balance
1000 State Office				
1100 Business Office	\$3,500.00	\$905.49	\$856.34	\$1,738.17
1200 Insurance	\$14,800.00	\$3,491.00	\$110.50	\$11,198.50
1300 Office Manager	\$14,437.50	\$3,609.36	\$3,609.36	\$7,218.78
1400 Income Taxes	\$3,320.00	\$879.82	\$879.81	\$1,560.37
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$36,057.50</b>	<b>\$8,885.67</b>	<b>\$5,456.01</b>	<b>\$21,715.82</b>
1500 Chair	\$800.00	\$	\$	\$800.00
2000 State Minister Reimbursement Fund	\$16,050.00	\$1,423.05	\$3,627.89	\$10,999.06
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$16,050.00</b>	<b>\$1,423.05</b>	<b>\$3,283.46</b>	<b>\$11,799.06</b>
3000 Executive Council/Standing Ministries				
3100 Executive Board	\$800.00	\$	\$	\$800.00
3200 Ministry of Church Service/Credentials	\$300.00	\$38.20	\$57.85	\$203.95
3300 Ministry of Christian Education	\$75.00	\$	\$	\$75.00
3400 Ministry of Evangelism	\$50.00	\$	\$	\$50.00
3600 Ministry of Program	\$2,000.00	\$24.32	\$765.64	\$1,210.04
3800 Ministerial Fellowship	\$100.00	\$	\$	\$100.00
3900 Church Property Team	\$75.00	\$	\$	\$75.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$3,400.00</b>	<b>\$62.52</b>	<b>\$823.49</b>	<b>\$2,513.99</b>
5000 Property and Maintenance				
5110 Camp Bedford				
5110 Caretaker	\$5,000.00	\$1,250.01	\$833.34	\$2,916.65
Health Insurance	\$840.00	\$210.00	\$140.00	\$490.00
5120 Campground Expenses (Maintenance)	\$1,000.00	\$	\$	\$1,000.00
Capital Improvements	\$750.00	\$	\$	\$750.00
Vehicle Maintenance	\$300.00	\$	\$	\$300.00
Camp Bedford Mkt/Advertising	\$500.00	\$	\$	\$500.00
5140 Utilities	\$6,000.00	\$968.59	\$1,125.86	\$3,905.55
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$14,390.00</b>	<b>\$2,428.60</b>	<b>\$1,699.44</b>	<b>\$9,862.20</b>



5200 Camp Christi				
5210 Caretaker	\$26,565.12	\$6,641.28	\$6,641.28	\$13,282.56
5220 Health Insurance	\$7,000.00	\$1,788.00	\$1,788.00	\$3,424.00
5250 Utilities	\$14,000.00	\$4,739.58	\$2,325.52	\$6,934.90
5260 Maintenance	\$4,000.00	\$	\$350.00	\$3,650.00
Camp Christi Mkt/Advertising	\$500.00	\$	\$	\$500.00
5270 Capital Improvements	\$750.00	\$	\$	\$750.00
5280 Vehicle Maintenance	\$500.00	\$	\$	\$500.00
5300 Legal Fees	\$500.00	\$48.50	\$104.36	\$347.14
5400 Ministry Expenses	\$300.00	\$		\$300.00
Christmas Bonus	\$1,300.00	\$	\$1,300.00	\$
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$55,415.12</b>	<b>\$13,217.36</b>	<b>\$12,509.16</b>	<b>\$29,688.60</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$126,112.62</b>	<b>\$26,017.20</b>	<b>\$24,515.75</b>	<b>\$75,579.67</b>
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$23,974.31</b>	<b>\$26,553.97</b>	
<b>Difference</b>		<b>\$(2,042.89)</b>	<b>\$2,038.22</b>	

**Church of God  
in Virginia**

4704 Roanoke Road  
Christiansburg, VA 24073

PHONE:  
(540) 268-2040  
FAX:  
(540) 268-2040

E-MAIL:  
[brobob4691@gmail.com](mailto:brobob4691@gmail.com)

[cogvaoffice@gmail.com](mailto:cogvaoffice@gmail.com)

**We're on the Web!**

See us at:  
[www.cogva.com](http://www.cogva.com)

**COGVA News Submission Guidelines**

COGVA News is a tool for the Church of God in Virginia to disseminate news of the Church at large and has begun to grow where clearer guidelines are necessary. Under direction from the Executive Board in their meeting of March 13, 2015, COGVA News will operate under the following guidelines. What follows is a work in progress as other State Newsletters are consulted. All articles should be limited to a length of 500 – 700 words. Submission to

COGVA News implies permission to edit submitted articles for clarity and space availability. Priorities of space will be given to items of news of local congregations/ministries, COGVA functions, regional activities, and COGVA Entities (C.W.C/W.C.G., M.C.G., Christian Education, and all ministries of COGVA).

Non-news items and editorials must be original to the author and quotes attributed to its proper sources. Priorities of

space will be given to items of news of local church news, COGVA Ministries.

Submission of articles should be limited to a minimum of one article per local church/ministry per quarter. A quarter will be defined as Aug.-Oct., Nov. – Jan., Feb. – Apr., and May –Jul.

Please remember, these guidelines are a work in progress and a future set of guidelines governing COGVA News will be forthcoming

***About the Church of God in Virginia...***

The Church of God in Virginia consists of 50 churches across the Commonwealth and according to current accounting serve over 2,500 constituents each

Sunday Morning. Our current State Leadership consists of

Chair - Rev. Dick Gilbert,

Vice-Chair – Rev. Henry Haskins,

Secretary – Sister Cathy Atkins, and

State Minister – Dr. Bob Neace.

**CHURCH OF GOD IN VIRGINIA**

4704 Roanoke Road  
Christiansburg, VA 24073