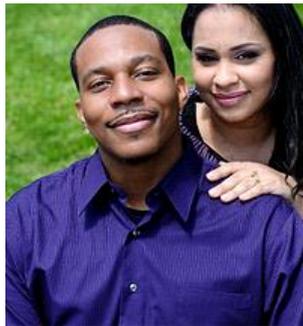


“...Write the vision and make it plain on the tablet so that it might be read quickly.”
Habakkuk 2:2 (LEB)

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State Youth Convention Registration Extended



**Rev.'s Michael and
Melanie Thigpen**

Virginia State Youth Convention for COGVA is set to kick off March 11-13. The setting is the Great Wolf Lodge in Williamsburg, VA (<https://www.greatwolf.com/williamsburg>) and each room will host 6 individuals. The HOTEL cost is 394.28 per room for the weekend and must be made by the church coming. Youth convention staff will not be making reservations. You can

book rooms by clicking the aforementioned link or calling 1-800-551-9653 and using the promo code 0511chur. Registration is still open at a cost of \$70.00 (late fees waived, but no T-shirts with registrations made after November 1, 2015)

We will be taught by Pastor Michael J. Thigpen who is the Lead Pastor of Celebration Church at Arrow Heights, which is located in Anderson, Indiana. For more information on Pastor Thigpen, go to <http://www.celebrationchur>

charrowheights.org/#!about-pastor-mike/c1d4b

Worship will be led by “EXODUS”, a ministry team from Liberty University. This dynamic group has been with us before, and those wanting to know more about them can see their information at:

<http://www.liberty.edu/worshipcollective/index.cfm?PID=7301>.

For more information, or for registration forms, contact Rev. Lance Jenkins at lj4gsus1976@gmail.com or Stuart May at 434-841-1615



“Epiphany: From 2015 to the New Year” Sylvia McDorman



Rev. Sylvia McDorman

“The gospel is timeless.

The only proverbial timeline that we need to consider is the second coming of Christ; that is NOT a timeline to us, only to God himself.”

As we come to a close of December, we reflect upon celebrating the birth of our Savior. Some people say it didn't feel like Christmas because of the unseasonably mild temperatures here in Virginia. Many people say, oh where did Christmas go, is it over? If we truly celebrate and reflect on the birth of Christ, we focus on its true meaning with the plan and will of God. In that reflection we know that the Christmas season is not a matter of the calendar date or any weather parameter, but rather an inner condition of the heart and soul with our response to the life and plan for Jesus. We focus on the cradle at Christmas, but babies outgrow their cradles. This baby grew out of the cradle to carry our sins to the cross. We remember that Easter is the sequel to Christmas!

The close proximity of Christmas to the New Year is quite fitting! Christ's birth was so monumental that it divided time. It was the fulfillment of prophetic messages given through the ages of the coming Messiah. Christ's birth was a new era; it was like a line drawn in the sand just like the dawning of a New Year. Humanity will look to a new year to make changes and resolutions,

just because it is a new year, a fresh start. Jesus brings ultimate new life with fresh starts!

The truth of the matter is that Christmas came with the intention that the gift is timeless and should never be neatly packed away for another season as are decorations. The Christmas story continued to unfold as it did through Jesus' life, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. The thread of Christmas weaves all the way from Genesis through Revelation; it continues as face another new year.

The birth of Christ was an epiphany. The word epiphany was derived from a Greek word defined as a manifestation or revelation. It was God coming or shining through in human form. Some faith cultures or churches celebrate January 6 as Epiphany, which falls twelve days after the celebration of Christ's birth. It originated as an ancient church festival that celebrated the visit of the three Magi to Jesus with gifts, known as Three Kings' Day. Some faith cultures signify other events of Jesus' life with the Epiphany.

Of utmost importance is that Epiphany was a revealing of Christ to the Gentiles, as well as the promise to the people of

Israel. Simeon, a devout and righteous man, had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would live to see this promised child. Simeon was moved by the Holy Spirit on Jesus' eighth day of life to go into the temple courts. There he saw Mary and Joseph bring baby Jesus to the temple for purification and consecration to the Lord. Luke 2:29-32 tells us Simeon's praise to God: “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people; a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

A revealing, a manifestation, an epiphany; a striking realization of Christ and God's purposes are the meaning of Christmas that does not end with the flip of the calendar. That realization with the abiding of the Holy Spirit should carry us each day forward with no stop in time or date. Hebrews 13:8 reminds us that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” The gospel is timeless. The only proverbial timeline that we need to consider is the second coming of Christ; that is NOT a timeline to us, only to God himself. (Continued on page 7)

“God Is Our Owner” – Rev. Dr. Simeon R. Green III

God is our owner; and the fact that He owns us, allows Him to have a priority over us. Until we realize God is our owner, nothing is going to go as it should. His divine ownership gives Him that privilege. When Christ was here on earth, He gave us a prescription to follow, but so few people have followed it.

Most people have gone to the doctor at some stage or another. The doctor gave the prescription and said, “Now, this will help you; take this prescription to the pharmacy and have it filled.” Sometimes they put the prescription someplace and forget about it. Sometimes it might be a good thing if they do; but the fact remains, whatever that prescription was related to, it will have no effect on them if it is not filled. It has to be filled and used.

We have a prescription in the Word of God, and it has been here from the time God gave the Word. All of us have access to it, but if we don't work on it,

or have it filled, it will do us no good. We find in the Word of God, Matthew 6:33, “But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things (things we worry about) shall be added unto you.” There are things that worry people – the job, the husband, the wife, the children, and the list goes on and on. Well, do we believe the Scripture just quoted? If we believe God, we have to believe what He says. Because His Word is our only true prescription. If He has given something for us to do, the little we can do is to obey. Seek Him First!

Psalm 115, verse one records, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake.” It is God we have to give the glory. We can do it if we seek Him. It is very difficult to give Him the glory if we haven't sought Him, because man will be man as long as he lives. Man wants the glory and recognition. He wants

to say, “It was me.” He wants to say, “Do you see what I did?” But God says, “Give Me the glory.” He is pleased when we praise Him. He is pleased when we give Him the glory. He has every right to it. We are but dust. We are only instruments through which He can work. Let's see to it that we give Him the glory by seeking Him first.

In the Book of Jeremiah 9:23-24, we read, “Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” May God help us to make Him our eternal choice and live for Him, because it is only then that life is worthwhile. May God bless you!

Happy New Year 2016



Rev. Dr. Simeon R. Green III

Joynes Road CHOG

Marriage Retreats Offered to Pastors at Little to No Cost

Pastor Tom Carnahan shares the following with COGVA Pastors.

“Not sure if you know this but Pastors go free to the Weekends to remember marriage retreats. They just have to pay the hotel and food cost. The link for

this special offer is https://shop.familylife.com/events_1.aspx?categoryid=97

Jackie and I have been to a number of them and to the cruise, they are great get away with other Christians.”

This appears to be an awesome opportunity and is well worth looking in to and we are certain Rev. Tom Carnahan would love to tell you more. Feel free to contact him at Thomas.Carnahan@occ.tr eas.gov.

Christmas Bazaar at Granby St. CHOG



Pastor Harold Boyd reports a tremendous success as the Granby Street CHOG held it's annual Christmas Bazaar. He reports the following:

God's Blessings from First Church of God, Norfolk at Granby Street. It has been a whirlwind year and numerous things happening within our congregation.



This year, on Saturday, December 5th, we held our annual Christmas Bazaar. There was everything from specialized vendors for companies, vendors who have went into business selling other companies' wares, to craft people who made crafts, personal items, and even making jewelry. It was a fun day for all and all vendors were impressed with the love and joy from our church family.

Here are some pictures to show what sort of things were happening during the day. Even baked goods were sold, hotdogs, hamburgers, chips, & drinks. A great day in Christ.



S.E.A. Youth Speak to Difficult Issue



Keith Murray

Recently, Dr. Neace was a participant in the Southeastern Association of the Church of God. While there, the youth of the Association presented a skit entitled "Is This the New Norm?" and had an open forum for discussion of homosexuality. The conversation was quite spirited and thought provoking. At the end of the discussion, Brother Keith Murray provided this

synopsis of the goal in presenting this skit to the body:

We asked you the body of Christ the question is this new norm?

We sit back in our seats and we see things going on in our Churches and in our congregations but we as ministers, pastors, leaders & teachers refuse to preach and or teach on it. The reason we came up

with the skit is because we have as a body of believers seen things that are going on in our churches. Due to our unwilling to listen and obey Gods word. The Bible tells us that the spirit want always dwell with men. God will turn them over to a reprobate mind. What is a reprobate mind? It's to know what's right and to decide within (Continued on page 8)

COGVA Budget 2015/2016

August 1, 2014 - July 31st, 2015

Categories	Budget	Aug-Oct 1st Qtr	Nov-Dec 2nd qtr	Balance
1000 STATE OFFICE				
1100 Business Office	\$3,800.00	\$552.90	\$203.43	\$3,043.67
1200 Insurance	\$14,800.00		\$3,412.50	\$11,387.50
1300 Office Manager	\$14,437.50	\$3,609.36	\$2,406.24	\$8,421.90
1400 Income Taxes and Social Security	\$3,320.00	\$880.07	\$498.36	\$1,941.57
SUBTOTAL	\$36,357.50	\$5,042.33	\$6,520.53	\$24,794.64
2000 STATE MINISTER				
2100 Salary Package (Salary, House, Etc.)	\$9,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$6,000.00
Pension Contribution	\$450.00			\$450.00
2200 Travel & Expenses	\$4,000.00	\$1,192.62	\$189.81	\$2,617.57
2300 Expenses for State and National Meetings	\$2,600.00		\$200.00	\$2,400.00
SUBTOTAL	\$16,050.00	\$2,692.62	\$1,889.81	\$11,467.57
3000 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL/STANDING MINISTRIES				
3100 Executive Board	\$1,000.00			\$1,000.00
3200 Ministry of Church Service/Credentials	\$300.00	\$18.28	\$2.60	\$279.12
3300 Ministry of Christian Education	\$75.00	\$36.75		\$38.25
3400 Ministry of Evangelism	\$50.00			\$50.00
3600 Ministry of Program	\$2,000.00		\$331.98	\$1,668.02
3800 Ministerial Fellowship	\$100.00			\$100.00
3900 Church Property Team	\$75.00			\$75.00
SUBTOTAL	\$3,600.00	\$55.03	\$334.58	\$3,210.39
5000 PROPERTY AND MAINTENANCE				
5110 Camp Bedford				
5110 Caretaker	\$5,000.00	\$1,250.01	\$833.34	\$2,916.65
5111 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	\$976.77	\$1,835.40	\$3,187.83
SUBTOTAL	\$14,390.00	\$2,436.78	\$2,808.74	\$9,144.48
5200 Camp Christi				
5210 Caretaker	\$26,565.12	\$6,641.28	\$4,427.52	\$15,496.32
5220 Health Insurance	\$7,000.00	\$1,788.00	\$1,192.00	\$4,020.00
5250 Utilities	\$14,000.00	\$5,929.42	\$1,304.05	\$6,766.53
5260 Maintenance	\$4,000.00	\$333.33		\$3,666.67
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	\$400.00	\$23.50	\$25.00	\$351.50
5400 Ministry Expenses	\$300.00			\$300.00
Christmas Bonus	\$1,300.00		\$1,300.00	\$0.00
SUBTOTAL	\$55,315.12	\$14,715.53	\$8,248.57	\$32,351.02
TOTAL	\$125,712.62	\$24,942.29	\$19,802.23	\$80,968.10
Income		\$24,423.67	\$16,453.72	
Difference		\$(518.62)	\$(3,348.51)	

Mark Your Calendars

February –

14th Freedom Sunday/Leap of Faith Sunday – Emphasis on CHOG Trafficklight COGVA Congregations are being challenged to join with believers and communities around the world to unite through prayer and worship on behalf of the more than 30 million men, women, and children around the world who are enslaved today. Join us for this global celebration and help us reach our goal of \$1 million dollars to spread Jesus’ good news of freedom around the world. More information on COGVA’s Leap of Faith participation in this even will be in the January 2016 COGVA News.

March –

11th -13th Virginia State Youth Convention Great Wolf Lodge, 549 East Rochambeau Dr., Williamsburg, VA Theme: “Confidently Transformed” Michael Thigpen, Speaker, “Exodus” leading worship. Registration packets have been mailed. For questions, please contact Stuart May at 434-841-1615 or info@vasyc.com

19th C.W.C./W.C.G. Regional Prayer Breakfast – Roanoke FCOG,

20th PALM SUNDAY

27th EASTER/RESURRECTION SUNDAY

April –

2nd Men’s Ministry “Christian Men On Fire For God”, Bellamy Ave. CHOG/Norfolk Host Congregation. Dave Tackett will be speaking on Peter, the Disciple

8th -9th Minister’s Fellowship Place to be determined, Theme: “Keeping a Kingdom Focus In Conflict”

22nd-23rd C.W.C./W.C.G. Convention, Atkins FCOG, Theme: “He Calls Us Friend” Naomi Bryant- Resource Leader

26th-28th Church of God Regional Convention and CHOG Table Vancouver, WA

May

8th Mother’s Day

15th-20th Mountain Empire Churches of God Indoor Camp Meeting, Chilhowie FCOG, Dr. Dave Sebastian,

June

3rd -4th Men’s Ministry Workday – Camp Christi 29th – July 1st Middler Camp, Grades 1-5



Wounded Knee Missions Trip Open to More “Missionaries”

Roanoke FCOG is planning a missions trip to Wounded Knee, South Dakota. The dates for this venture are July 1 – 10. Departing from the parking lot of Roanoke FCOG, the expected miles travelled will be 1,516.62 miles per mapquest. We will need to drive about 500 miles each day. The first stop would be Evansville or Lafayette, IN which is about 550 miles from Roanoke. Mary Harris has contacted a Hampton Inn in Evansville and the cost is \$109.00. The next stop would be Omaha, NE, which is another 575 miles. Hotel costs for this stop are yet pending. From Omaha to Wounded Knee is 400 miles.

To date, 23 people have expressed interest in participation of this trip. If you are interested in this

opportunity to show Christ's love to our native Americans, please contact Mary Harris at mharris3491@yahoo.com or Dr. Bob Neace at brobob4691@gmail.com who will forward information to Mary.

Given the current numbers of participants, costs are projected as follows;

3,000 miles round trip – cost of gas approximately \$2,900. (3 vans)

Hotels (4 nights) depending on number of rooms \$5,800 (for 12 rooms)

We will ask each person going to contribute between \$400-500, and this can be raised by fund raising at your church or any way you want to. Mary Harris is keeping in touch with Wounded Knee

regarding projects we would be doing, and one thing Emily Clark suggested is that we do Bible school.

We will need to take our own bedding, linens, and food.

This is a tremendous opportunity to minister outside the comfort of home, build relationships with others we may never have had the opportunity to meet, and enhance relationships with those we know by working side by side with one another. Will you prayerfully consider participation by presence or giving to make this mission trip a success in showing Christ's love for others? In order to give, please send donations to Roanoke FCOG, 5008 Hildebrand Road, NW, Roanoke, VA 24012



A Missions Team at Work in

Wounded Knee

Epiphany... (continued)

We are called to be ready and help others BE READY. That is the epiphany for everyday; that people will come to know Christ and share His light with others.

As we look ahead to 2016, the working and abiding of the Holy Spirit in our lives, churches and into our communities is the epiphany that will make a difference to the lost and hurting people in Virginia and beyond. Let us not be complacent; let us seek God in prayer to be instruments of grace to reclaim and restore the

lost. May the prayer of the Church of God in Virginia be that the light and love of God be more widely revealed and accepted in our communities; and yes, even within the walls of the local church. Pray that our lights shine strong and bright in the midst of darkness and controversy. Pray specifically for your church, your congregation and your community; also pray for your congregation to get on board with this prayer list as well. Be a united vessel of prayer!

Moses was preparing the Israelites to enter new

territory--the Promised Land. They would face uncertainties and challenges as they looked ahead. Moses reminded them in Deuteronomy 11:12: "It is a land the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end." Each day ahead will present challenges, uncertainties and new territories. God is already there! He desires to underwrite the work of His church through His Spirit.

Remember the

encouraging words of Paul in Philippians 1:4-6: "In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Go forward humbly yet with Godly confidence of the Holy Spirit! Have a blessed New Year!

Church of God in Virginia

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www.cogva.com

S.E.A. Youth (Continued)

yourself to do whatever you choose to anyway. It will be our fault because we didn't warn them or teach them what the bible says. Until we in the body of Christ stand up and call sin sin we will suffer and our Churches and our communities. If our pastors don't stand up for what they know is right and sit people down in the congregation would be low then not living right we

are going to Suffer as a result.

Ezekiel 3:20-21 says "Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be

remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul."

We must not accept this as the new norm! Preach the word of God and stand on it!

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.

CHURCH OF GOD IN VIRGINIA

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