



# THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THE NORTHEAST REGION



P. O. Box 2002, Uniontown, PA 15401 — www.tcog-ne.org

## A Life-Changing Witness

James R. Horne, State Overseer

Truly the Great Commission given to us by God and our thrust to evangelize the world with the Last Days message is only made possible through the foundational truth of the sacrifice Jesus Christ made for us all. The apostle Paul told the Church at Corinth that, "...if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. 15:14). Jesus purchased our salvation, sanctification, divine healing, and the Church with His own blood on that old rugged cross. The account didn't end at the cross, it didn't end in death! It continued on that He victoriously arose from the tomb and it is because of that fact that we also have a glorious assurance of that same resurrection power! That is hope that goes far beyond this life only. What power and glory is found in our Lord. It's a message that destroys the disease of sin! Our debt is stamped, "Paid in Full"—redeemed! To The Church of God, wherever we are found, He is still declaring, "Go" and take His message to the world.

We are familiar with the story of Naaman the leper found in 2 Kings, chapter 5. In this account we read that the Syrians had gone out and brought back captive a "little maid" out of the land of Israel. The scripture tells us that she served and tended to Naaman's wife. This was a young lady who was taken from her home, and living in a foreign land, but she still recognized and had confidence in Her A conversation ensued whereby the young lady told Naaman's wife, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy" (v. 3). Naaman had the disease of leprosy, which also symbolically refers to sin or uncleanness, This little maid knew her God well enough that she spoke of the Lord's power and witnessed about it. What were the results of her message? After Naaman's cleansing he said, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel" (v. 15). Her witness changed lives. As Christians, this world is not our home. Whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, we know the hope of the true and living God and have a message to go and preach—in this dispensation it is the whole message for the whole world, able to cleanse and change lives, able to deliver from sin and so much more. We may just be a "little maid," of sorts, but we still have the message!

It's not too early to start planning to attend the Regional Convention to be held in Uniontown, June 28-30, 2019. Our guest speaker will be our General Overseer, Bishop Oscar Pimentel. We're still a good ways off, but mark your calendars and save these dates! Come one, come all!



Greetings from The Church of God in Monongahela.

Recently Brother Burdett Manager presented a sermon called, "A Search for Treasure." It was an uplifting message, and I will share a few of the highlights. He said, "We woke up this morning because He blessed us with another day." A treasure is something of great value, and we each cherish what we most value. Brother Burdett used one example of a Honis Wagner baseball card selling for \$2.1 million. To some people, that would be a treasure, but we value something much more precious.

"There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise..." (Prov. 21:20).

"Unto you therefore which believe he is precious:..." (1 Peter 2:7).

The greatest possession is the truth. Jesus is the truth. Everybody has the ability to have Him. He is a treasure beyond measure.

"...but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

"But lay up for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:20, 21).

We at the Monongahela church certainly have been blessed with many treasures. In addition to our wonderful pastor, we have two amazing Sunday School teachers. They are such a treasure that I thought it would be nice to share some of their thoughts with you.

Olive Branch: Is there any advice you would give to members of your class to enhance their learning experience?

**Sister Elaine Smail**: The best advice I can give students to enhance their learning experience

is to be prepared for class. This requires a careful and prayerful approach to the lesson. Students should read the lesson more than once before class on Sunday. Make notes and jot down questions. Pray for understanding and wisdom. Pray for the

teacher and other class mates. Be ready to participate in class, remembering that no comment or question is unimportant. Finally, review the lesson afterwards to further solidify the learning experience.

**Olive Branch**: Please share with us how you prepare to teach the class.

Sister Elaine Smail: My preparations for teaching

Sunday school class begin with a complete submission of myself and lesson to the Lord. I pray for Holy Ghost anointing, wisdom and understanding

to teach a lesson that will honor God. I pray throughout the week about the lesson and I pray for my students.

I read the lesson several times and prepare a short outline or lesson plan. Then I can get started writing my lesson. I research various study Bibles and commentaries for insight. I refer to BTI and Church of God resources for insight and verification of doctrinal topics.

As I prepare my lesson, I try to do so in a manner that will reach all students of varying levels of spirituality and intellectual ability. I try to incorporate thought provoking questions in my lessons that will stimulate class participation and discussion. This is very important to me because I believe that some of the most valuable lessons are learned from the comments, questions, and testimonies of students.

Because my lesson is usually expanded beyond the actual commentary lesson, I make copies for students, upon their request, to use in class.

Olive Branch: Is there any advice you would give to members of your class to enhance their learning experience?

Brother John Burdett: First, pray. Then study the Word of God daily. I feel that the underlying purpose of Bible study and the Sunday School program itself is to learn who God is and who we truly are by comparison. By studying the Bible (the Word of God) we learn who God is (see John, Chapter 1) and what His will for our lives is.

Olive Branch: Please share with us how you prepare to teach the class.

**Brother John Burdett**: I ask the Lord for help and inspiration each time. I never want to minimize the importance of memorizing the scriptures, but I think that simple memorization of the Word of God is insufficient to sustain us spiritually. We must seek to understand why the Word was written and what the scriptures truly mean.

I rely upon a divine revelation of God to give me direction and understanding into the hidden mysteries of the Word of God. I also try to apply the precepts of God to the current events of our daily lives. As we study the Word of God, we should seek answers to the basic questions: Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?

We at Monongahela are truly blessed to have Brother Burdett, Sister Elaine, and Brother John to help us in our search for the "treasure." Thank you for your willingness to follow the will of God and preparing us in our walk.

Respectfully yours, -Judy Smitley, Reporter

"Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not," can you finish the rest? I am certain that most can finish the rest of that line and sing the chorus of that song by memory. But, do we ever stop and ponder what it truly looks like to have the Lord's great faithfulness in our lives?

As I am closing this season of my life and graduating college, the Lord has shown me how His faithfulness has had an impact on my life. I would like to share with you a few of the ways that "thou changest not, and thy compassions they fail not; great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me."

Rewind several years back to my entering middle school. I struggled with girls making fun of me, saying hurtful things, and singling me out. Though I was in a Christian school environment, it did not mean everyone lived and acted the way they should have. Many times I wondered, "How am I going to get through this, Lord?" or "Is it ever going to get better?" But I clung to the lord and truly depended upon Isaiah 26:3 that says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." And I remember crying before the Lord numerous times saying, "Okay, Lord, 'count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations' (James 1:2) and 'think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you' (1 Peter 4:12). I will praise you in this storm, for You are who You are, no matter where I am." I kept my focus on Him, even though it was the hardest thing I ever had to do.

As I entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the Lord took care of me and removed those girls from my environment. I never realized just how closely the Lord has His hand on me until years later. He has shown me that He knew what He was doing through that whole situation and used it to strengthen my relationship with Him and even gave me a vision of the Church during that time!

Fast forward to my senior year, trying to decide where to go to college. I had two choices in my hands. One was Waynesburg University, a faithbased university that challenged their students on



growing in their walk with Christ, and the other, Penn State Beaver, who offered me a sports scholarship and had only some campus ministry opportunities. You are probably thinking, "Oh that's easy, pick Waynesburg, right?" Looking back, it was an

easy choice, but in that time, I really struggled with where to go. I kept praying and it didn't seem like God was giving me an answer. The deadline was coming closer, and yet I was still uncertain. I visited Waynesburg one last time and had a conversation with a current student that changed my life. He shared with me that when he was deciding where to go to college, he truly felt that this was where God wanted him to be. His relationship with Christ was something he valued, and he was able to grow in his walk with the Lord at Waynesburg. I can remember that conversation vividly, and how the Lord worked through that student to lead me to a decision. After that conversation, I remember the Lord tugging at my heart and letting me know that this was where I was supposed to be, and I made my decision. The Lord once again, did what He did best, and showed me His faithfulness and provision in my life.

As I am leaving college, the Lord is revealing His character to me. He has shown me the two pivotal times in my life where He showed up BIG TIME and did amazing things. He has shown me that His faithfulness is truly great and that there truly is, no shadow of turning with Him. He has shown me that His love, truly never fails, and His character will forever be. He has shown me how to listen for His voice and to tune out all the other distractions.

May you be encouraged that no matter what you may be facing, God's faithfulness will always remain. He may be preparing you for something you may face later in life or, He may be using your situation to strengthen your relationship with Him. Whatever the situation may be, He's right there beside you, holding your hand, leading you closer to Him!

Regional VLB Coordinator, Alicia Smail "And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee" (1 Kings 21:1-3).

The story of Naboth and his vineyard is a beautiful example of a man who refused to surrender his heritage—even when confronted by the king. Next to the king and queen's palace was a vineyard. It did not belong to them, but to a man whose family had owned and cared for it. Ahab, the king, wanted to enlarge his own house in Jezreel by planting an herb garden, and thought he needed Naboth's vineyard to do so. The king's offer to Naboth seemed very generous. He offered Naboth a better vineyard or

even cash if he would consent to the exchange. No hardship seemed to be involved—except in regard to Naboth's principles.

You see, over 500 years before, Joshua had divided the land to the people

of Israel. Naboth's ancestors had received that plot of ground and for generations that vineyard had been in his family. It had been handed down through a long line of ancestors. This land was, very much, a spiritual inheritance from God. It was Naboth's duty to hand it down to his family who came after him.

Naboth refused to exchange or sell his inheritance and died because of his refusal. He could

have easily consented; after all, it seemed like a great deal. He couldn't rationalized the sale as others, who sold their lands to the king. He could've gotten equal value, of even better than that. In the end, Naboth lost his vineyard—

and his life. But one thing he didn't lose was his reverence for his heritage! That was something Ahab, nor anyone, could take away.

What about you and I? We have a rich heritage in The Church of God. We are a blessed people! Sadly, many turned back and have sold their inheritance for what they perceived to be a "better vineyard," choosing to let down the standard and accept manmade decrees and false doctrines taught by other religious organizations; or they have completely rejected their faith, rather choosing to sell out for the "cash" offered by this present world through worldly amusements, entertainments, enticements, and allurements.

In the end, we will all face the consequences of our choice. Much is at stake! Our inheritance is not a plot of ground. It's much more. It's eternal life.

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

May God help us to value our heritage of holiness and revelation so deeply that, regardless of the

pressures of this world and the attacks of the enemy, we will cling tightly to it, and with God's grace, hand it on to those who follow—undeluded, unblemished, and undiminished!





Greetings from Uniontown, Pennsylvania!

God has been so gracious to us! Satan has attempted to afflict many of our members but God has brought them through victoriously!

Sister Peggy Fordyce was spared from a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer! Brother Gary Satanek recovered within four weeks of his joint replacements to both knees. Sister Kathy Smith continues to heal from her pulmonary condition. Many of our young and healthy have been afflicted with the viruses spreading around. God has been so good to us! We have been given the opportunity to worship with former acquaintances from our previous congregation. God sent special friends and messengers for the Horne family and to our church... they actually came in the form of a moving company. Sister Mary Shelton and her family helped the Hornes move into their new house, and ministered in Word and song to us the next day. We were truly blessed by the Spirit of God!

We are so thankful for our pastor and his family. We filled a garbage can with household supplies to move into their new home for first Sunday in January. In February, we honored them for their humility in serving God and His Church with the message of the towel. Christ taught one of the most blessed practices through washing one another's feet. Now it was our opportunity to shower the Hornes with a laundry cart full of new towels for their home. We are just having a great time loving one another at Uniontown Church!

God has been blessing in our services by showing us the true beauty of The Church of God. Sister Horne blessed us with a class on the purpose of The Advice to Members. She instilled in us God's true love for us to have a willing heart and to live a blessed life. Brother Horne preached about the sacredness of The Church of God and how her program cannot be mocked or changed to suit man's desires. There is so much more in store. We are excitedly looking forward to the upcoming events for our church and region!

-Denise Satanek, Reporter



Jesus said, "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:15).

"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, ex-

cept some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him... Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:26-31, 35).

Philip was obedient when the angel of the Lord spoke to him and he was obedient to the spirit of God, also. You may not understand God's plans at first, but the results will be great. Philip preached Jesus unto the Ethiopian eunuch and he believed and was baptized. We must be obedient to the spirit of God. There are still many "eunuchs" waiting on us to come and preach Jesus to them. We must daily throw out the lifeline because someone is sinking today. Let us be like Philip-obedient to the Lord. Souls will be saved. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him

Jesus" (v. 35). This is what we are called to do.

Remember, March is World Mission Month Give so that others may live. Please give. Time is short and many are still lost. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).

Regional WMB Coordinator, Peggy Fordyce





### You Can be *MAD* ABOUT SUNDAY SCHOOL

<u>Make a difference</u> at Sunday school if you Eight P's

- 1. Your *Presence* counts—be there or be square!
- YOUR <u>PARTICIPATION</u> IN CLASS\_IS NECESSARY—WE LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.
- BE PREPARED BY READ YOUR LESSON IN ADVANCE AND REAP GREATER BENEFITS.
- PRAY, PRAY—FOR YOURSELF, YOUR TEACHER, AND OTHER STUDENTS.
- PULL FAMILY AND FRIENDS OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE AND INVITE THEM TO SUNDAY SCHOOL.
- PACK WHAT YOU LEARN IN YOUR HEART AND MIND, AND CARRY IT EVERYDAY OF YOUR LIFE.
- 7. BE **PASSIONATE** ABOUT THE BIBLE AND ITS ETERNAL TRUTHS—STUDY IT ON A CONSISTENT BASIS.
- 8. BE **PERSISTENT**, YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD AND IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW IN SUNDAY SCHOOL!

And... let's add to the menu the lessons we are studying during the first half of 2019: The Precepts and Parables of the Bible.

**Precepts** are the commands of God found in the Bible.

**Parables** are earthly stories with a heavenly meaning. They illustrate the precepts of God.

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (Jer. 15:16).

To enhance learning, consider participating in *Bible Training Institute--BTI*. This two-week intensive and comprehensive program will be an unforgettable experience. Not only will you learn some of the "deeper things" of the Bible and The Church of God, you will experience the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, while enjoying fellowship with other saints of God.

Start now making your plans to attend. The next BTI is May 26-June 8.

Regional Sunday School & BTI Coordinator, Elaine Smail





Greetings from the Regional ABM Department. Even though our typical "love month," February, is gone, as members of The Church of God, we are to show love every moment of the day. The ABM Department of The Church of God is called the auxiliary of love. Billy Graham's book, Wisdom for Each Day, asks, "How do we put love into action? Serve one another. The Lord modeled this when He washed His disciples' feet. Be patient with one another. This is possible because of the Spirit's presence in us. Be courteous to one another. Even if someone is difficult or disagreeable, treat them with gentleness and love. Set an example for one another. 'Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity' (1 Tim. 4:12). Edify one another. We are to encourage and build up our brothers and sisters in Christ. Pray for one another. What a privilege to come before the Lord on another's behalf. 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us' (1 John 4:11, 12)."

Let us be examples of showing God's love to believers and non-believers.

We are looking forward to spring and may we be faithful in serving the Lord.

Regional ABM Coordinator, Louise Smail

## FORD CITY

Our meeting place is now located at 1200 Orr Avenue, Kittanning, Pennsylvania. Upon being faced with several major building repairs, the membership sought God as to how to proceed. After much discussion, it was decided that a realtor would be contacted to determine the value of the building. Soon after the appraisal, the property was placed on the market and quickly sold. A new location was prayed for and sought after diligently.

While waiting once again for God's direction, Sunday School was held at a temporary location. When our new location became available, it was brought before the membership, who unanimously agreed to sign a one-year lease for the room rental.

We had Sunday School at the new location on February 10, and will be once again continuing services as in the past. We are also looking forward to great things from our Lord in our new Church community and would appreciate all prayers that the love of Jesus will flow freely to draw others in the area.

Some members are in need of prayer. Brother Bill Flick had open heart surgery with several stents put in. Brother Sheldon Flick underwent back surgery before Christmas, but is recovering well, praise God! Brother Gary and Sister Olivia Sturgill are pressing on in home Bible studies since Gary's job keeps him from being able to attend church. We are praying that Gary's schedule will be cleared on Sundays.

God has been good to us at Ford City and, although we lacked for awhile in being able to assemble for services, God has continued to keep us strong in the faith and trusting Him to never leave us nor forsake us.

Please make note that any correspondence should be mailed to Brother Wendell Flick, 725 Painter Avenue, Ford Cliff, PA, 16228.

-Arlene F. Sturgill, Reporter

Dust gathers in even the tidiest of homes. If gone neglected, what was once a beautiful and comfortable home will deteriorate into a

# Spring Cleaning

Rebekah Horne, Assistant Editor

filthy, smelly mess. A clean house requires upkeep. As winter begins to wear off and springtime approaches, some people engage in what has come to be known as "spring cleaning" during which they inspect and clean their houses top to bottom.

We live in a filthy world. Our souls, too, require constant upkeep and care. Thank God this world has no power to cause us to sin against our will—God's grace is greater and can enable us to rise above every temptation and live above sin victoriously. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13). But just living here means you come into contact with things that begin to weigh on your soul or affect your spirit or attitude. Before you know it, there can begin to be a buildup in your soul and you must take care to keep it clean and pure. Your heart and mind should be wholly given to God, but sometimes it seems some foreign contaminants try to sneak their way in.

#### FOREIGN:

- -of, relating to, or derived from another country or nation; not native
- —belonging to or proceeding from other persons or things

(This is a sobering thought. There are only two possible origins for the things in your heart. If they don't come from above, from God, the only other option is that they are earthly, sensual, devilish, having come from below.)

- -not belonging to the place or body where found
- (Is there anything at all in your heart that doesn't belong there?)
- —alien in character; irrelevant or inappropriate; remote
- —strange or unfamiliar

(God knows everything in your heart. He easily recognizes those things that are "alien," strange, and unfamiliar to His own Spirit and character, the things that are inappropriate and contrary to His own heart.)

#### **CONTAMINATE:**

- —to make impure or unsuitable by contact or mixture with something unclean IMPURE:
- —not pure; mixed with extraneous matter, especially of an inferior or contaminating nature; mixed or combined with something else

(Mixing other things—your own thoughts, ideas, plans, strategies, feelings, etc.—with what God desires to do in your heart destroys the beauty, quality and value of His grace. It hinders its work and renders it ineffective. It's like fighting against your own soul.)

—marked by foreign and unsuitable or objectionable elements or characteristics

(It is marked. It is apparent. There is evidence of the spirits and natures that do not belong. It is all "naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13). Nothing is hidden to the all-seeing eye of our omniscient God.)

We cannot afford to let foreign contaminants begin to build up in our hearts, like dust in a house gone neglected. It is our duty to inspect our own souls from time to time and do some tidying up. God desires to cleanse us with the washing of water by the Word. Look into the mirror of God's Word, letting it reveal what needs cleaned up. Apply it to your life daily. Jesus is coming back for a people free from all foreign contaminants, "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). Is it time to do some spring cleaning in your soul?

KARNS CI

CITY

Greetings to everyone. We have been having wonderful services. The Lord has been so

good to all of us so far this winter. We surprised the pastor's wife with a birthday party with 25 family members. We also had a birthday family party for our pastor. We thank the Lord for him. Thank the Lord for touching Sister Phyllis Johnson. She is home from the hospital. We want to thank you for praying for all of us here. God bless you all.

-Alma Kelley, Reporter

## **District Conventions**

## Western District

## **Eastern District**

Ford City, Grove City, Karns City, Monongahela, & Uniontown, PA Brentwood, NY, Lawrence, MA, New Rochelle, NY, & Philadelphia, PA

March 23, 2019

**April 7, 2019** 

Grove City, PA

New Rochelle, NY



Greetings on behalf of Ladies Retreat. Here we are at the latter part of February. Time stops for no one. We are encouraged in the new year to do all we can for the Lord and the great Church of God, as we know

that time is short and souls need saved. We are diligently working to reach out to them. The Ladies Retreat theme for this year is "Reach The Lost At Any Cost." We must work together to complete the great commission to "Go ye into all the world" and preach the gospel to every creature. With the help of the Lord, fasting, praying, and working together we will finish this race and make it home. The Retreat is May 3-5, 2019. We are excited to have Sister Deborah Perkins and Sister Delores Pullium return as our guest ministers this year. The application will be available soon. I look forward to seeing you all at the Retreat.

Be much in prayer for all of the workers. God will bless in a mighty way if we are obedient to His will and let Him have His way. God bless.

Regional Ladies' Retreat Director, Angie Pitts



### REVIVAL



MARCH 3 10:00AM © 105 JAY LANE, KARNS CITY 6:00PM © 1874 SCRUBGRASS ROAD, GROVE CITY MARCH 5-9 6:30 NIGHTLY © 124 MORGAN STATION ROAD, LEMONT FURNACE

March 10
10:00am @ 531 West Main Street, Monongahela
6:30 @ 1200 Orr Avenue, Room 111, Kittanning

## SPECIAL GUESTS: MARY SHELTON & CREW



The revival services above will likely be past by the time this paper is received. We look forward to giving a good report of them in our next edition!



Need a break from all the cold weather and snow? Need a vacation? Well, July is the perfect

time to relax in the sun, have fun with the young people, enjoy good meals and wonderful revival meetings! Come to Camp July 17-21, 2019. It's the best time of your life. Make plans to be there. God bless.

Pray for our youth.

Regional Camp Director,

Alma Kelley