

Getting Connected

A monthly newsletter highlighting the ministry of the Churches of God in
Maryland, Delaware, Washington, D.C. and the Virginia Peninsula

Church of God Delmarva-DC Region Resource and Training Center

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I came across a phenomenon sometime back; a peculiar expression by some sincere Christians who felt it was "unspiritual to make a big thing out of Easter." In fact, they reacted so much to the traditional practices of big crowds, much music, high rejoicing, and dressing-up that they refused even to go to church on Easter (though they did go most of the year).

While I didn't agree with them, I wasn't particularly irritated. I took it all with a shrug of the shoulders and a takes-all-kinds-to-each-his-own allowance for their peculiarity.

But the more I thought about this, the more I became convinced that they were not only wrong, but they were victims of a deadly kind of reactionary spirit. It stirred me to press all the more for a bold, loud, forthright, festive, and celebratory Easter. Why do I recommend this sort of thinking?

First, because it's consistent with the Bible.

The angel at the tomb said, "**Go quickly and tell His disciples**" (Matthew 28:7). The obvious reason is to spread the word. **Tell** everybody. And be quick about it. Don't sit on good news. This is a day above all days!

Then on Easter night, after their first encounter with their resurrected Master, the Word says, "Then the disciples were **glad** when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20).

The whole spirit of the day is to spread the word to more and more. Crowds are the idea! And gladness should be **everywhere**. It's in the Book!

Second, because it's simply logical.

Since death has been vanquished, our lively celebration seems all the more appropriate to the occasion. No wonder so many people dress up with new clothes on Easter. While some may attack that practice as some sort of "carnal parade," I hold that new Easter outfits are just one more way to say, "New life is here, and I'm celebrating the newness!" Jesus had new clothes on Easter, too!

Third, because a "big" Easter should summon prayerful preparation among the Lord's people.

At least two reasons make this appropriate:

- The **Good Friday** lead-in to Easter's weekend is a heart-sobering time of humbling our souls and reflecting on the Cross of Christ - the price of our salvation.
- **Easter Sunday** is a unique occasion to invite people to church and to Christ. People will more likely visit you on this day than any other ... and we ought to pray for their spiritual openness.

Fourth, because the very thought of the resurrection should fill the skies with our songs of triumph!

Jesus Christ has burst forth from the tomb and the open door of the grave shouts like a song-filled mouth - "Christ is risen! Rejoice! Rejoice!"

If that doesn't make you want to celebrate this Easter, ask for a resurrection of your own!



- Pastor Darrell Rice

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UPDATES

Our deepest sympathies to . . .

. . . **M. Thomas and LaQuita Propes**, Assistant Director of World Missions, upon the passing of their daughter, Summer Joy Propes, on March 14, 2017.

Please pray for . . .

. . . **Jeffrey Shaw** (Thurmond, MD), was recently hospitalized is recovering at home.
. . . **Granvil Shawyer** (Baltimore, MD), retired minister, was recently hospitalized and is recovering at home.
. . . **Ministry team - Darrell Rice, Kim & Priscilla Tephabock, Carol Gordon** (leading medical missions personnel) as they minister in the Guyana National Convention April 18 - 25, 2017.

Transitions . . .

. . . **Josh Gangl** (Lexington Park, MD) recently moved from Huntsville, AL to accept the invitation of **Pastor Brian Shepard** to serve as youth pastor of Life Community Church of God.

Congratulations to . . .

. . . **Kevin Stanley**, Lead Pastor of the Chincoteague, VA Church of God, and congregation for retiring the mortgage on the parsonage March 14, 2017.
. . . **Carol Grant-Gordon** (Hyattsville, MD) upon the naming of a building in her honor at her alma mater, Sam Sharpe Teachers College (Montego Bay, Jamaica), on March 23, 2017.

RISE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE - MAY 4 - 5, 2017 (TAMPA, FL)

Pastor Tony Stewart, CityLife Church of God in Tampa, FL, is hosting the first RISE Conference - a FREE 2-day experience for church leaders who desire to rise above the average and accomplish extraordinary exploits for Jesus. Speakers include Jentezen Franklin, Samuel Rodriguez, and Dino Rizzo (Executive Director of ARC church planting agency). For information visit the website at riseconference.cc.

APOLOGETICS CONFERENCE - APRIL 21 - 22, 2017

Pastor Greg Copley (Chesapeake Christian Center/Pasadena, MD) will host a Christian apologetics conference, April 21 - 22, 2017 - Apologia 2017. Speakers include Dr. Vic Emerson, Dr. Ken Shrum, and Bishop David Bowyer, Jr. For more information see apologia17.org.

LIFE SOURCE LAUNCHES 24/7 PRAYER CENTER

Pastor Michael McDermott announced the March 1, 2017 launch of Life Source Churches' 24/7 Prayer Center, inviting people locally and from around the world to join the prayer movement. The Center opened with an emphasis on "Convergence" - 40 days of prayer focused on covering Baltimore. Check out lifesourcechurches.com for more information.

SMOKY MOUNTAIN JUBILEE - APRIL 25 - 27, 2017

The 2017 Smoky Mountain Jubilee National Senior Adult Retreat in Gatlinburg, TN, April 25-27, is the 'event of the year' for senior adults 50 and older. Information and downloadable registration forms are at <http://usamissions.com/smi2017/>.

EASTERN SHORE CAMPGROUND WORK DAY - MAY 6

Calling volunteers to help spruce up the Eastern Shore Campground in preparation for the summer activities. Plan to meet Saturday morning, May 6, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Lunch provided.

DISTRICT OVERSEERS' FELLOWSHIP AND TRAINING - MAY 16, 2017



Dr. J. David Stephens, 2nd Assistant General Overseer, will lead a training session for all Delmarva-DC District Overseers on Tuesday, May 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., at the regional office. Please register online via the email contact or website. Interaction with Bishop Rice and Dr. Stephens, along with details about upcoming ministry initiatives, will encourage and inspire.

EASTERN SHORE FELLOWSHIP MEALS WITH BISHOP RICE - MAY 12 - 13

Eastern Shore District Overseers have scheduled meal functions (free of charge) for all ministers and spouses for the purpose of allowing Bishop Rice the opportunity to listen, fellowship, and share information. Please contact your district overseer for further information:

Central Shore District	Pastor Keith Maxwell (District Overseer)	Friday, May 12 - 9:30 a.m.	Denny's - Easton, MD
Lower Shore District	Pastor Tim Shawyer (District Overseer)	Friday, May 12 - 12:30 p.m.	TBA
Northeast Delmar District	Pastor Billy Balderson (District Overseer)	Friday, May 12 - 6:00 p.m.	Wilmington, DE
Southern DE District	Pastor Darrel Morris (District Overseer)	Saturday, May 13 - 8:00 a.m.	Rudy's - Harrington, DE

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER - THURSDAY, MAY 4

The 66th annual national observance of a day of prayer is set for Thursday, May 4, 2017. An array of downloadable resources are available via the website: www.nationaldayofprayer.net. ***"O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God . . ."*** (Daniel 9:19).

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE COMPLETING COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAPLAINCY TRAINING LEVEL 2

Chaplain Dennis DuPont, Regional Chaplains Commission Coordinator, along with Chaplain Irene Gibson, conducted training March 9 - 11, 2017, for level 2 certification. The following completed intensive training to become certified as Level 2 Community Service Chaplains:

- Geraldine Izzard	LifeBuilders Harvest Temple/Forestville, MD	- Cindy Cooper	Heritage Community/Severn, MD
- Barbara Broady	LifeBuilders Harvest Temple/Forestville, MD	- Marion Williams	National/Ft. Washington, MD
- Melva Carty	Ebenezer/Hyattsville, MD	- Johnnie/Barbara White	National/Ft. Washington, MD
- Valerie E. Williams	New Hope/Waldorf, MD	- Robert Southall	Good Hope/Washington, DC
- Pete Barden	Heritage Community/Severn, MD	- Joanna Manokey	Victory Praise/Washington, DC
- Rosa Lorenzo	Heritage Hispanic/Severn, MD	- Eilene Brown	Ebenezer/Hyattsville, MD
- Iceline Rice	Rice Memorial/College Park, MD	- Vernon Vassell	Rice Memorial/College Park, MD
- John/Denice Rice	New Beginnings/White Hall, MD	- Linda Southern	Living Faith/Ft. Washington, MD

ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP PACKETS

Every year the Delmarva-DC Alumni Committee awards scholarships to students from the region planning to attend one of the Church of God colleges or universities. Packets are available at: cogdelmarvadc.com. Completed packets must be submitted by June 5, 2017! See website for complete information.

LEE ALUMNI GOLF TOURNAMENT - JUNE 19

The annual Alumni Golf Tournament is scheduled for Monday, June 19, 2017 at Hog Neck Golf Course in Easton, MD, with shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. It is the alumni golf tournament that raises money for the Delmarva-DC scholarships. Check website for info and updates - cogdelmarvadc.com.

SENIOR ADULT CRUISE SET FOR SEPTEMBER 23 - 30, 2017

A cruise of the Eastern Caribbean has been selected as the senior adult trip for 2017. The trip is open to all who may be interested - particularly those 50 and older. Complete information is available on the website - cogdelmarvadc.com - and included in the REACH newsletter.

CHECK REGIONAL OFFICE WEBSITE CALENDAR FOR IMPORTANT DATES - COGDELMARVADC.COM

DELMARVA-DC YOUTH & DISCIPLESHIP
Youth & Children's Leaders
ASPIRE
APRIL 29TH

10:00 AM || Lunch Provided



LANDON ROBERTS
DELMARVA-DC YOUTH &
DISCIPLESHIP DIRECTOR



ROB BAILEY
ASSISTANT INTERNATIONAL
YOUTH & DISCIPLESHIP DIRECTOR



MARK SPARKS
PASTOR
FREEDOM CHURCH



MIKE & LORI LAWVER
YOUTH PASTOR,
SMITHTOWN GOSPEL
TABERNACLE



BETH SIRBAUGH
DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S
MINISTRIES, INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY CHURCH



RON & NIKKI HAMILTON
CHILDREN'S PASTOR,
EDGEMERE CHURCH OF GOD

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\$10 each
5 or more \$50
#LeadershipSquad: \$2 OFF
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