

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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M. Darrell Rice

Administrative Bishop

Marsha Rice

Women's Discipleship
Director

Landon Roberts

Youth & Discipleship
Director

William A. Reid

USA Missions/REACH
Director

Lorinda Roberts

Girls' Club Coordinator/
Credentialing Secretary

Evelyn Myers

Treasurer/Administrative
Assistant

Betty Moore

USA Missions Administrative
Assistant

Angie Sharpe

Youth & Discipleship
Administrative Assistant

UNWRAPPING CHRISTMAS

Christmas month begins. And again I find myself wanting to reach out to help people who can't, by themselves, **"unwrap"** Christmas. It is, you know, **"wrapped"** for many . . .

. . . **wrapped** in the bandages of bygone hurts and disappointments,
. . . **wrapped** in the plastic of sophistication which prohibits childlike wonder,
. . . **wrapped** in the tinsel of a materialistic binge,
. . . **wrapped** in the confetti and streamers of empty partying,
. . . **wrapped** in the busy-getting-ready preparations,
. . . **wrapped** in the artistically designed whiskey box of bombed out "celebrations."

The Ghost of Christmas Past returns to haunt numberless now-redeemed members of the Father's forever family, but without the beneficial results produced by Scrooge's specter.

The "wrappings" listed are not necessarily reflective of one's current hindrance, but rather, the cluttered residue of a person's private history. They are the wadded packages of Christmases ruined in other times, at other places. Sadly, the impact carries on, souring year after year. I'm speaking of people . . .

- who had a **heartbreak** one Yuletide, and now always associate the season with that tearful memory,
- who have been burned out over **family stresses** surrounding the holidays, so that now these days are dreaded instead of anticipated with joy,
- who become wearied with the carnality of **superficial** gift giving when love seldom attended the presents, and now wince at the idea of Christmas shopping.

How many cases? How many varieties of death wrap a God-appointed celebration of **life**?

I come to you, today, friend, in Jesus' Name. Confronting those ghouls of past pain, I pray with you: **"Father, forgive our Christmases, as we forgive those who Christmased against us."**

And I say, **"Be free, dear one!"**

Through Jesus - the Babe become King, the Son become Lord, the Child become Christ - in His mighty Name, lay hold of this festive day with rejoicings. Refuse to let the Prince of Darkness smother the Season of Light. The one who sought to murder the Baby of Bethlehem now seeks to ruin your celebration of His coming. Resist him with all the strength Your Lord provides.

Be untied.

Be unfettered.

Be unwrapped.

Take my hands, and together . . .

Let's dance toward Christmas!

- Pastor Darrell Rice



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UPDATES

Our deepest sympathies to . . .

. . . **Marian Kilgoe** (Farmington, DE) upon the passing of her father in early November 2017.
. . . **Julie Massie** (North East, MD) and family upon the passing of Pastor Ralph Massie (North East Church of God) on November 15, 2017.

Please pray for . . .

. . . **Gail Price** (Williamsport, MD) underwent surgery on December 1, 2017 to remove potentially malignant lymph nodes.
. . . **Brenda Anderson** (Washington, D.C.) recently underwent a medical procedure to repair a leaking heart valve.
. . . **Philip Morris** (Salisbury, MD) underwent surgery on his feet on October 20, 2017, and is recovering.
. . . **Teri Mullen** (Washington, D.C.) recently had surgery to repair a broken leg and ankle.

Congratulations to . . .

. . . **James Allan Gilliam** (Middle River, MD), Senior Pastor of the Christian Fellowship Church of God, upon his retirement from secular employment (38 years on the job) in order to devote his full attention to pastoral ministry.
. . . **Oliver Subryan** (Hyattsville, MD), **Stanley Murray** (Baltimore, MD), and **Stulan Taylor** (Beltsville, MD) were each awarded honorary doctorates by the Canadian International Chaplaincy Association University and Seminary (Long Island, NY) on November 26, 2017 in recognition of their extraordinary contributions to their community and church.
. . . **Mark Sparks** (Westminster, MD) upon his ordination as Bishop in the Church of God on November 12, 2017.
. . . **Celeste Blakeney** (Temple Hills, MD) received her credentials as an Ordained Minister in a ceremony officiated by Bishop Darrell Rice and Dr. James Huntley on November 5, 2017.

Transitions . . .

. . . **Chris Lockemy** (Baltimore, MD) accepted the invitation of Bishop Rice and the Regional Council to serve in the part-time position of Regional Launch/Re-Launch Coordinator (strategic church planting) beginning January 2018.
. . . **William Wheatley** (Rock Hall, MD) accepted the appointment as interim pastor of the Rock Hall, MD Church of God.

CONGRATULATIONS TO RECENT CAMS GRADUATES

The following completed the 5-month Calling and Ministry Studies (CAMS) course in preparation for the Church of God credentialing process:

- ✦ **Rodney and Antwalyse Henderson** - New Hope Church of God/Pastor Aaron Jones (Waldorf, MD)
- ✦ **Daniel Hockensmith** - Lifeway Church of God/Pastor Darrel Morris (Bridgeville, MD)
- ✦ **Linda Jenkins** - Clarence Street Church of God/Pastor Carlton Cannon, Jr. (Seaford, DE)
- ✦ **Jimmy Munn** - Lifeway Church of God/Pastor Darrel Morris (Bridgeville, MD)
- ✦ **Callie Nicholson** - New Hope Church of God/Pastor Aaron Jones (Waldorf, MD)
- ✦ **Kevin and Mary Ramsey** - New Covenant Community Church/Pastor Rob Leins (Bel Air, MD)
- ✦ **Kimberly Ross** - Living Faith Community Church/Pastor Abrian Haynes (Ft. Washington, MD)
- ✦ **Pauline Tober** - Freedom Church/Pastor Mark Sparks (Westminster, MD)

NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT (NCD)

To date, 7 Delmarva-DC churches and pastors are participating at some level of involvement with the NCD process of assessing and addressing issues related to church health. The Regional Council approved a cooperative plan to assist local churches in sharing the cost of NCD assessments and coaching. If interested in knowing how your church can benefit, please contact Pastor Andy Stevens (Milford, DE), certified Natural Church Development coach, at info@andyismycoach.com. Also, access NCD information at <http://ncdamerica.org>.

MINISTERIAL EXAMS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Congratulations to the following ministers as they advance in rank by successfully completing exams on November 16, 2017:

Ordained Bishop:

- ✦ **Rob Leins** - New Covenant/Bel Air, MD

Exhorter:

- ✦ **Russell Campbell** - Lansdowne, MD
- ✦ **Evaristo Gonzalez** - Life Community/Lexington Park, MD
- ✦ **Buckie Harrison** - House of Mercy/Millersville, MD
- ✦ **Peter McPhun** - Living Hope/Laurel, MD
- ✦ **Shambræ Robb** - Ebenezer/Hyattsville, MD
- ✦ **Tiffany Sparks** - Hancock, ND
- ✦ **Samuel Tom-Sahr** - Rice Memorial/College Park, MD

Ordained Minister:

- ✦ **Monica Fedderick** - Refuge Temple/Temple Hills, MD
- ✦ **Pat Felton** - Christian/Brandywine, MD
- ✦ **Greg Fentress** - Living Waters/Pocomoke City, MD
- ✦ **Leonardo Policarpio** - National Church of God, Filipino Christian Center/Ft. Washington, MD
- ✦ **Rafael Tobias** - Heritage Community Church/Severn, MD
- ✦ **Kevin Tressler** - International Community Church/Frederick, MD
- ✦ **Charles Weedon** - New Hope Fellowship/Hagerstown, MD
- ✦ **Diana Weedon** - New Hope Fellowship/Hagerstown, MD
- ✦ **Daryl Wilson** - Heritage Community Church/Severn, MD
- ✦ **Phillicia Wilson** - Heritage Community Church/Severn, MD

CHURCHES ENGAGING THEIR COMMUNITY

Delmarva-DC churches routinely minister to the socio-economic needs of their communities throughout the year. But it certainly seems to pick up the pace in the fall and during the holidays. Here are a few that have made headlines:

- Life Community Church of God (Lexington Park, MD) - "Just wanted to pass on some good news in the area of ecumenical unity and outreach. We collected 158 pairs of shoes and 228 pairs of socks during our annual Barefoot Sunday." - **Pastor Brian Shepard** on 11/27/17
- Christian Fellowship Church (Middle River, MD) - "I'm excited to tell you that on Sunday, November 19, our church will be sending off almost 1,100 gift shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child sponsored by Samaritans Purse." - **Pastor James Allan Gilliam**
- Park Lane Church of God (Federalsburg, MD) - "So thankful today for many hands and hearts and huge extra efforts to load, unload, transport and hand-deliver 300 TURKEY BOX MEALS for the annual Park Lane Church of God **HEART OF THANKSGIVING** outreach." - **Pastor Ray Parsons**
- Epic Church (Baltimore, MD) - "Such a great day serving the people of this community at the 6th annual [#BeWarmBaltimore](#) Coat Drive! Special thanks to Councilman [@zekecohen1](#) for partnering with us, we look forward to doing more together." - **Pastor Chris Lockemy** on 11/13/17
- Chincoteague, VA Church of God - "Great night at our free Community Dinner at [Chincoteague Church of God](#). Looking forward to next months. [#churchbythebeach](#)." - **Pastor Kevin Stanley** on 11/2/17
- Crisfield, MD - "What an awesome night! Crisfield Church of God *Trunk or Treat!* We had perfect weather for a great community outreach! Thanks to everyone who came out! Especially those who donated and those who participated in decorating trunks and handing out candy!" - **Pastor John Thorne** on 11/1/17
- "The [Baltimore Dream Center](#) recently hosted **"Thankful Thursday: A Feast For Fellowship,"** a community fellowship dinner sponsored by Sagamore Development featuring appearances by Baltimore Ravens cornerback [Brandon Carr](#) and celebrity chef Robert "Chef Stew" Stewart. Earlier in the day, volunteers from Sagamore Development and Plank Industries partnered with the [Maryland Food Bank](#) at the "Pack to Give Back" to pack 560 holiday meal bags for those in need containing traditional holiday fixings like cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, cornbread mix and stuffing. In the evening, volunteers, including Brandon Carr, served a delicious meal to over 300 guests from across the city including smoked gouda macaroni and cheese, herb roasted turkey, chive mashed potatoes, apple pie and more, all prepared by [Chef Stew](#). THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered their time to make the event a success." - **Pastor Billy Humphrey** on 11/21/17

This is just a sampling of the scores of churches throughout Delmarva-DC touching thousands each week for Christ in tangible ways.

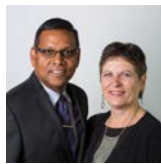
Concert of Prayer

Saturday, January 20, 2018 - 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Life Source International Church - 7000 Rossville Blvd, Rosedale, MD



Dr. David Ramirez
Assistant General Overseer



Larry & Connie Hasmatali
Western Canada
Administrative Bishop



Dr. Wayne & Reverend Pam Brewer
Men's/Women's Discipleship Directors



Bill Isaacs
Center for Pastoral Excellence

YWEA

2018

european renaissance

Sending the Light Across Europe

Recent studies show that the majority of Europe no longer believes that God exists. In a region of the world where in the 16th century much of our theology was written, the light of truth has dwindled to a weak flame. It's time to IGNITE THE LIGHT OF JESUS in Europe again!

In keeping with the YWEA Mission and Vision, The "2018 YWEA European Renaissance-Sending the Light Across Europe" will focus on the following areas for potential impact:

- ▶ **PARTNER** with "Send the Light to the Cities" to help establish Ministry Training Centers in the Cities of Paris & Amsterdam
- ▶ **HELP RESCUE & PROVIDE** for orphan boys and girls at 3 Orphanages in Ukraine
- ▶ **PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT** to "Europe's Child" as we help Gypsy Children attend Youth Camp and encounter Jesus's love
- ▶ **REMODEL AND EXPAND** the "European Theological Seminary" in Germany as well as provide resources to Train Pastors & Church Planters for Europe

For more info
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