



The Chronicle

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England's First Men's Retreat

Philip C. Bennett

It was a memorable day as the brothers of The Church of God in England gathered for their first National Men's Retreat on Friday 5th June 2015. For many years this had been spoken about, but eventually Brother Justin Clarke took up the mantle to organise the event. The theme of the Retreat was *'To be a Man of God'* taken from James 5:10. As the day approached, the men were excited about the prospect of gathering to seek the Lord and fellowshiping together.

After a hearty meal following our arrival at the Whitemoor Lakes Activity Centre, we had some introductory words from our National Overseer after which he led a concert prayer for the success of the event.

Brother George Wilson conducted a wonderful devotion based on the life of David, king of Israel who was described as a man after God's own heart.

He spoke about the way that David gained his experience looking after his father's sheep and was later anointed and called of God. We were encouraged to be like David.

Brother Jerome Solomon did an excellent presentation entitled 'What it means to be a Man of God.'

On Saturday morning at breakfast time in the canteen nearly everyone went up for seconds. That tells us something about the quality of the food.

After breakfast, Brother Patrick Clarke led the devotion, looking at the life of Samson. As a Nazarite he had to live a consecrated life to have the favour of God. He was greatly used of God to accomplish many great feats but had his weaknesses which his enemies exploited.

During our sports session we had a game of indoor cricket. In a tight game, Brother Stuart Brown bowled out Brother Patrick to give his side a win by 5 runs.

In the afternoon we had superb presentations from Brother Jason Prince and Brother Rikki Prince. Brother Jason looked at 'The preparation for Marriage and what came next.' Both the married and single brothers were asked to draw up a list. Brother Rikki looked at 'Conflict and Conflict Resolution.' There was much discussion on both of these topics.

For the evening session, Brother Joshua Anderson did an outstanding devotion which was followed by a presentation by Brother Stuart Brown looking at some of the areas that the enemy uses to attack men. He mentioned that the biggest problem comes from 'self' and that the solution was to develop a personal relationship with God and to mortify the flesh.

On Sunday morning, Brother James Mwila led the devotion - based on the character of Job. He said that in order to test Job, Satan had to first get permission from God. After Job received the news of all the disasters, he worshipped God and did not charge Him foolishly. Job's hope was not in his earthly, material possessions. He was anchored in God.

We then had an open air Sunday School class by the lakeside which reminded us of Jesus teaching by the Sea of Galilee. It was no coincidence that the day's lesson was based on 'The Christian Man.'

In our final session we were asked to write down a problem in our lives. We then prayed for each other and specifically for individuals who requested special prayers.

All too soon the National Men's Retreat came to an end, but we all felt that we were leaving with a special blessing.

Sadly, after we dismissed and sat around talking, we heard of the tragic death of our General Overseer, Bishop Stephen E. Smith. For about ten minutes we sat in total disbelief. We know without a shadow of a doubt that he has gone on to his eternal reward.

Let's continue to pray for Sister Smith and the Smith family for continued strength.

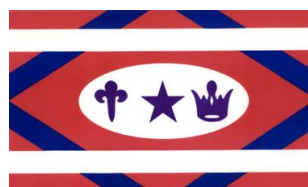


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Justin Clarke	National Men's Retreat Co-ordinator
Claudia Prince	National Choir Director
Brenda Prince	National Reporter
Karen Richards	Assistant Editor of <i>The Chronicle</i>



From the Overseer's Desk

It has been an eventful few months within The Church of God world since the last edition of *The Chronicle*.

On Friday 15th May, Sister Victoria and I flew to Saint Vincent in the Grenadines where we were able to worship with the Church members on this beautiful island. We also spent some time with Sister Browne. Sitting on Sister Browne's veranda with the breeze blowing in from the Caribbean Sea whilst eating a juicy mango was a wonderful experience.

Sadly, the day after we arrived in Saint Vincent, we were notified of the passing of our beloved Sister Prince. Sad as it was, we were cheered with the consolation she had gone on to her eternal reward. The Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:8: *'We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.'*

Just a few weeks later, we were again rocked with news of the sudden death of our General Overseer, Bishop Stephen E. Smith. The funerals of these two stalwarts were just one day apart and God comforted His people with a time of rejoicing at both funerals.

The National Ladies Retreat in May was again a great success as God ministered to our Sisters. Not to be outdone, Brother Justin Clarke organised the first National Men's Retreat which was well attended and a blessing to all who were present. Well done to Pastor Beverley Anderson and Brother Justin.

I was privileged to travel to the USA to participate in the selection process for an Interim Overseer at the beginning of July. It was amazing to see true Theocracy in operation as the Overseers prayed and sought the mind of God, together.

Again we thank God for being with us during our National Convention. Many have commented on the comfort they have received from the theme: *'...for the battle is not yours, but God's'* (2 Chronicles 20:15). This lets us know that we do not have to worry for our God will fight our battles. Bishop Kevin D. Werkheiser and his wife Sister Connie were a great blessing to the Convention.

Please remember Bishop Oscar Pimentel and his family in prayer as he fills this awesome position of General Overseer.

Upcoming Events:

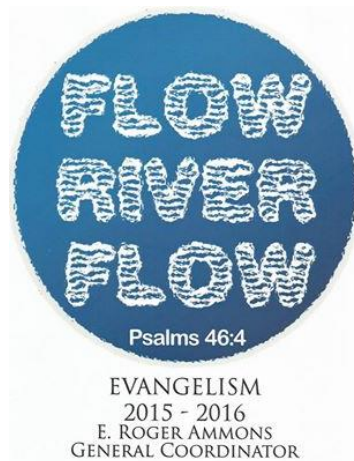
National Ministers' Convention – 31st October 2015



EVANGELISM BOOST

Jason Prince - National Evangelism Co-ordinator

The new general Evangelism theme for the assembly year 2015-2016 is:
'Flow river flow'



This is that...Guide

One of the roles of the Holy Ghost is to guide us into all truth. Have you ever felt the Lord directing you? Have you ever been obedient and seen the reason as to why the Lord was directing you that way? What a blessing it is. St. John 16:13 reads: ***“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”***

Isn't that amazing? To know whatever the Holy Ghost hears, that's what He will show us, including things in the future. The Scripture says *all truth*. We know that Jesus Christ is the way, truth, and the life (St. John 14:6). The Holy Ghost can guide a person into the revelation and truth of Jesus Christ. A guide that the Holy Ghost can use is us as people. After all, we are just vessels waiting to be used. Do we have this prayer in our hearts and in our mouths - here am I send me (Isaiah 6:8)?

Sometimes, we may feel that God does not talk to us directly concerning witnessing to someone. Do we always have to hear the words “Go and speak to that person about their soul?” The answer is no - (also not forgetting the Great Commission given to all of us by Jesus Himself in St. Matthew 28:19).

Let us look at the Scripture with Jesus and the woman at the well (St. John 4:7-39). Many people believed on Christ because of a conversation that started with Jesus saying “give me to drink” in verse 7. From this simple question, much was spoken about which led to not just her believing in Christ but also many that came to see a Man (St. John 4:29 and verse 39).

This is not the account that I would like to focus on. I want to use Philip as his call will be very familiar to many. Acts 8:26-29:

“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.”

The part I would like to focus on is verse 29: ***“Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.”*** Go join thyself to this chariot. No mention of who is in there, no mention of what he is to do when he gets there, no mention of speaking to someone about their soul, or Jesus Christ in verses 30-31:

“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, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.”

There was something hot inside Philip’s bones at the sound of someone reading the Holy Scriptures. We can maybe begin to know how he felt if we think of how we feel when we hear someone mention Jesus, or how we would feel if we saw someone reading the Bible near to us. It sets something off inside of us, AMEN! Philip wanted to go further, maybe the plan of why the Spirit spake to him in the first place was beginning to unfold in front of his eyes. This all started from Philip being obedient to join himself to the chariot.

We may have heard these words “go and speak to that person” or “go and help that person with their shopping”, or even “give that person 10p to pay the rest of their grocery bill”. In whatever way God speaks to us, we should be obedient as we never know the reason why. It could be to the saving of a soul, it could be to show the light of Christ, it could be to share the truth with a person that is already a Christian. The understanding of what Philip was teaching about Christ led the Eunuch to be baptized in Acts 8:36-39. Who knows where our conversations may lead a soul: to Christ, to be baptized, to The Church of God. In whatever way He leads, we can be assured that the Holy Ghost is never wrong as He only speaks of what He hears. We can also be assured that the Holy Ghost will guide all that are obedient to Him into ALL TRUTH.

Sunday School Department

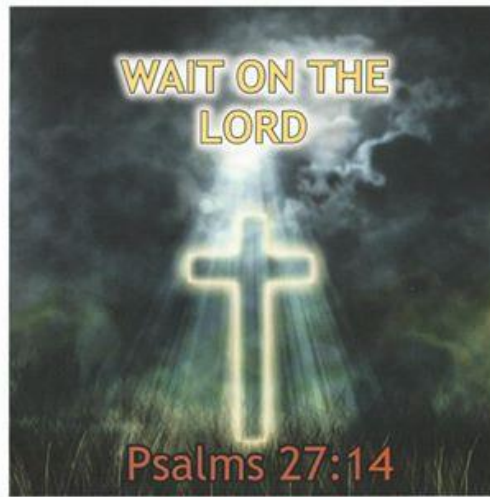


The Church of God

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOST

Jennifer Thompson - National Sunday School Co-ordinator

The new general Sunday School theme for the assembly year 2015-2016 is:
'Wait on the Lord'



Greetings to the wonderful Saints of God. I thank almighty God for the wonderful National Convention we had in July. It was a real blessing.

I also want to thank our children for their contribution on the Sunday School programme. They were a blessing and inspiration. Ephesians 6:4:

'...but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'

Please be encouraged by a poem read by our children: Amelia Williams and Sister Teresa Parchment from Druids Heath church:

The Battle is not Yours

Don't let the devil fool you
Satan knows the truth
He knows that God is in charge
He's afraid of everything
Don't let him fool you.

See, the Bible is the truth
Satan knows that
That's why he tries to keep us from it with distraction.
If you've accepted Christ
He really has your back.
Nothing Satan tries will ever hurt you, that's a fact.

Once you leave the ark of God, anything can happen.
You don't have to fight
God will do that for you.



On the 3rd of August 2015, The Church of God in England conducted our first Vacation Bible School at Handsworth church.

The theme for the Vacation Bible School (VBS) was '**The Fruit of The Spirit**'. Our first day's attendance was 25 pupils and 8 teachers. We had three classes: Teen, Primary and Pre-school.

Over the three days the children blessed us with a play, arts and crafts from the Pre-School and great discussions from the Teen class. They also worked together and produced a wonderful music video, which they later showcased to their parents on the final day. The children amazed us, more then what we expected.

In the Primary class, led by Brother Jason Prince, the lesson that was prepared was somewhat diverted to Repentance. At the end of the lesson, eight pupils wanted to be baptised. Some of the children left their testimonies at the end of VBS. Here are some:

Terell: *"VBS is a school for fun and games in a Christian way".*

Rebekah: *"I enjoyed the lessons and music video at VBS. I would like VBS to be longer than 3 days" ☺*

Teresa: *"This was fun and I can't wait for next year".*

Kathleen: *"This was fun and a lot of blessings for me personally. I can't wait for next year".*

Continue to pray for the Sunday School department as I mean to work and do my best for the Lord and His Church.

National Ladies Retreat

Our National Ladies Retreat took place at The Holiday Inn, Great Barr, Birmingham on 23rd to 24th May 2015. The theme was **'Let me be a beacon and an overcomer.'**

Sister Cynthia Opoku preached the first message on Saturday morning. We were asked – “do you want to be a beacon?” The word *beacon* was defined and Sister Cynthia spoke about beacons on top of police cars and ambulances. They are positioned in a focal point and attract attention. Sister Cynthia stated that our lives should be like magnets to attract the world. People are watching us as children of God. Galatians 5:16-24 was read concerning the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

Sister Cynthia said those who have not accepted Christ do not war against the flesh as they are fleshy. Christians have this fight and are engaged in spiritual warfare. When we overcome the flesh, we will become beacons. Without the fruit of the Spirit, we cannot be beacons.

Sister Jennifer Thompson led the afternoon devotion. The sisters sang '*Let my life be a light*' whilst a wonderful visual demonstration was shown. The lighting was switched off and a flashlight beamed effectively in the darkened room. Sister Jennifer stated a lighthouse is a beacon and stands as a guide. Our lives should illuminate and attract others to Jesus. Like a lighthouse, we are here to warn men of the dangers of not accepting Christ. St. Matthew 5:14-16.

A presentation followed from Sister Claudine Brown on the theme topic, with the focus on being an *overcomer*. The definition of an *overcomer* was given and it was stated that a lot of our overcoming is done in the mind.

The life of the Bible character Joshua was studied and we were reminded of his overcoming spirit. Numbers 13:31-33. Numbers 14:6-9, 30. There were 12 spies sent on a mission, but 2 had a totally different perspective to the 10 who were the majority. Caleb and Joshua's faith shaped their mentality. Deuteronomy 31:23 Joshua believed in God's promise. Joshua 3:7-8, Joshua 4:6, 21-24, Joshua 10:7-8, 24. We were asked how can we as Sister "Joshuaettes" overcome in our lives? The sisters concluded to maintain a positive mentality and to trust in God. His promise is great to him that overcometh in Revelation 3:21.

Sister Oneaka Prince led the next devotion. The Scriptures used for this were 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11 and Romans 12:21. We were encouraged to be lights, to shine in our environments and to overcome evil with good. The Spirit of God was present.

Pastor Angela Clarke did a presentation on the life of the Apostle Simon Peter. We explored his background, history and a fisherman's characteristics. Sister Angela said God can use and change anyone for His purpose and cause.

Jesus chose these types of people who maybe the world would shun. Our personal testimonies can help someone else. St. Mark 3:17 - Peter forsook all to follow Jesus. We are called to do something on God's programme. The Spirit of God manifested Himself and took over. A Holy Ghost message and interpretation was given to the congregation.

Our National Ladies Retreat Co-ordinator, Pastor Beverley Anderson preached the closing message on the theme. Sister Beverley stated that a beacon is an encourager, an example who out shines others and is a guiding light. An overcomer is a conqueror who triumphs.

In Genesis 1:31, God created everything and it was very good. Enoch was the first beacon in the Bible. Genesis 5:22 shows how he walked with God. As long as God is our Companion and Guide, we will triumph. Enoch pleased God. Hebrews 11:5.

Noah in Genesis 6:22 was a beacon. For us today to be beacons, we must do all that God has commanded us.

Sarah, wife of Abraham was the first God fearing woman recorded in the holy Bible. In comparison with Abraham, Sarah's faith was less. In the Scriptures, there are also examples of women with no holiness, piety or godliness. In Genesis 4:19 we learn of Eve's grand-daughters – Zillah and Adah. They were both involved in a polygamous marriage with one man, Lamech. The definition of both names was given – Adah meaning 'adorning the outward man' and Zillah means 'jewellery'. Genesis 3:16 documents where God said Eve's desire was to be to her husband and he was to rule over her. Adah and Zillah tried to change this. Pastor Anderson went on to state that our Advice to Members advises us what the Scriptures say regarding adornment and dress. There is no place in The Church of God for the spirit of Adah and Zillah.

Esau's two Canaanite wives – Judith the daughter of Beerli and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite were '*a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah*' (Genesis 26:34-35). Esau's light had gone out and he was no more a beacon. The Canaanite lifestyle was more appealing to him.

Pastor Anderson concluded by declaring these women were no shining examples. We are losing our older generation of warriors in Christ one by one. It is our responsibility to live as beacons. It is high time that we put Him first.

Soon after this, our National Ladies Retreat for 2015 came to a close. We thank the Lord for encouraging and admonishing us through His Word to be living beacons for Him.



England's 61st Annual National Convention

The Church of God in England convened its 61st National Convention on the 10th-12th of July 2015. Our theme was, "**...for the battle is not yours, but God's.**" We were blessed to have in our midst General Headquarters Representative: Bishop Kevin Werkheiser and his wife, Sister Connie Werkheiser.

On Friday night the convention opened with a warm welcome from our National overseer: Bishop Philip Bennett. First on program was Brother Stuart Brown with the BTI and CPMA boosts. Brother Stuart mentioned that BTI may be coming to England for the very first time next year. He also reported that all the churches were 100% in their CPMA memberships. The Evangelism boost and message by Brother Jason Prince then followed. The title of his message was "**The devil vs. God**" taken from Revelation 12.

Saturday morning we opened with Sister Victoria Bennett leading a concert prayer and wonderful singing by our Worship Leaders. The bible pledge was then led by Brother Patrick Clarke followed by the Flag pledge by Brother Nigel Davis. Pastor Beverly Anderson then proceeded with the WMB program. In her message, Sister Anderson stated that in these last days the battle will become fiercer and it is no surprise why sometimes we find it so difficult to pray. We were encouraged to read our bibles as. Satan knows what our weapons against him are and e wants us to be inefficient.

The next session opened with congregational singing by Handsworth church. During this session we had the ABM boost by Sister Wilhelmina Brown and a timely message on divine healing by Evangelist Armenia Taylor-Harrison. The healing line was directed by Pastor Ray Prince, as all those with needs came forward to be anointed with oil and prayed for. A testimony of healing has been included below in this report.

A new boost added to the convention program this year was the Men's Retreat boost by Brother Justin. The brothers have testified of the unity and blessings they experience from this event.

The last session of the day was opened in prayer by Sister Lorna Parchment. We were blessed with a message from Sister Cynthia Opoku entitled, "**I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Host**" taken from 1 Samuel 17:45. Sister Opoku spoke about the importance of names as individuals and how the name of the Lord of hosts is unlike any other name. In His name we are able to fight any Goliath that stands in our way! Brother Justin Clarke also spoke on the title "**...we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image...**" Brother Justin spoke of the boldness of the three Hebrew boys in Daniel chapter 3. He presented a mirror to remind us that God sees beyond what we see.

The evening came to a close with a wonderful VLB march and program. Sister Claudine Brown spoke about the need for spiritual de-cluttering. She used big empty boxes as visuals to warn us about the things in our hearts and minds that can be taking up too much space and are in the way of God's prosperity for our lives and the Church. The evening then came to a close as the altar was opened and many made their way forward to seek God's face.

On Sunday morning, the last session of convention opened with singing from the Long Lane church. The Sunday school programme led by Sister Jennifer Thompson included a march and presentations. We had special singing from the children of London's church after which they made known what they enjoy the most in Sunday School. Handsworth's children also presented what they had learnt and special singing. Little Naomi Muirhead blessed us as she boldly sang "**Bless the Lord with Me.**" The children from Druids Heath sang and recite what they had learnt during the year. De'lano Prince recited the books of the Old Testament followed by Jaden Williams with all the books of the New Testament. Samuel and Ella Prince then accurately quoted the Lord's Prayer.

Sister Kathleen Hamilton from the Long Lane church recapped all the things she had learnt in Sunday School throughout the year. It was said that Sister Kathleen is faithful in her attendance to Sunday School in spite of her being the only pupil in her age group. We are very happy to see what God is doing in the life of our children.

Our National Overseer's address was based on the convention theme following which Bishop Kevin Werkheiser preached from the book of Numbers, chapter 13. He encouraged us to stand up boldly and possess the land, as The Church of God is well able to do it in Jesus' name!

Bishop Werkheiser preached two messages centred around the theme of the Convention. On the last, day Brother Werkheiser preached from Numbers 13 and encouraged us to stand up boldly and possess the land for The Church of God is well able to do it in Jesus' name!

We had fantastic auxiliary, camp/retreat boosts and messages. A new boost added to the Convention programme this year was the National Men's Retreat boost by Brother Justin Clarke. The brothers have testified of the unity and blessings they experienced from this event.

We thank the Father, Son and Holy Ghost for a great Convention this year and pray that God will bless every church as we all trust the God that fights our battles!

Below are a few testimonies from this year's National Convention:

Sister Antonette Mwila

"Tobias was starting to develop dry, patchy skin on his forehead and eyebrows. We were praying it wasn't eczema. He went through the healing line at National Convention with his dad. Who else can look better after His own but God? The dry skin has cleared up and we have a happy, joyous little boy."

Pastor Beverley Anderson

"National Convention was a beautiful reminder for me to be encouraged that the battle, whatever it maybe, is not mine, it is the Lord's. As long as I keep close to Him and have a personal relationship with Him I won't have to fear what the devil may come with. There were so many messages that were a blessing to me, so much to digest but Brother Justin's analogy with the mirror was one that stuck with me. I want to see things the way God sees things. I want to see things with spiritual eyes, not with my physical earthly eyes. As Ephesians 6:12 says: '...we wrestle not against flesh and blood'; which requires me to get deeper into the Word and to know Him completely."

Sister Brenda Prince - National Reporter



The Woman of Steel

*Who is this woman, whose face can tell a million tales without one single word uttered?
Whose hair, steely gray, straight, and coolie to the touch, outdoors is rarely out of place,
With storm-weathered hands which have worked till the midnight all the way to the bone
Whether alone, or in a crowd, her presence loud, is undeniable as she graces the scene*

*Who is this woman whose voice ascends the lofty heights whilst others cower in silence?
Her gender, no barrier, to the call she has received of Her Saviour and King
With gaze affixed upon His light, the night she blazes with truth in hand
Her message none other than God-inspired, fired out with authority and flair*

*Who is this woman who, within context, takes the complex and breaks it into palatable chunks?
Complicated made easy, the magnificent KJV, made plain for all to comprehend and follow
Whether preaching, teaching, evangelising or washing the dishes with orange and lemon rind
The Word of our God, prepared and shared out like a finger lickin' irresistible dish*

*Who is this woman whose encouragement gives you wings when your feet struggle to stand?
If ever a boost one requires, her prayers ascend to the Great God whom she knows and loves
The melody of a thousand songs she knows and sings with a unique Frances twist
Whose whisper is louder than that of any brother or any sister I know*

*Who is this woman, who with a few words can compel you to worship her God in a monetary offering?
Who, like the metal to which she is compared, can hold everything up with quiet strength
Durable and long lasting, always casting her cares upon her heavenly Father
A match for that old dragon, who has never caught her yet*

*Who is this woman whose love is in action, whose work endeth not, whose heart is clamped in God?
Who with a simple wave of our ensign, can make you feel on top of the world
Who warms my school uniform before the fire so that it's not cold to the touch
Who can make Jacobs crackers and tea taste like its fit for a princess
Who can make cabbage and bacon taste like mutton and rice
Who feels your pain before you arrive, who arrives with a basket of sugar, milk or baked beans
Or even an envelope...right on time, as if your bank statement she has secretly seen
Who is this woman, whose eyes on God are steadfast, whose voice now cracks just a little as she
worships His name?
Whose hearing, dim with time has not paused the conversations they share
Who recites spiritual texts with eloquence, laughs at Home Alone and can enjoy a good Western,
As she lays down her tools, and passes on the mantle, nothing but gratitude we feel
For the love, the strength, the work and courage for my grandmother Frances, the woman of steel.*

What's happening in London Church?

God has blessed our church with lovely saints of God who continue to use their talents and gifts for His work.

There are on-going fund raising initiatives from several auxiliary leaders for their respective departments.

Mother's Day was very interesting. Our Pastor gave gifts to all of the ladies – regardless of whether they were mothers or not. This left us with a feeling of 'awe'.

Our Children's Church has embarked on a new theme '*Journey from Egypt to the Promised Land*'. This includes various activities.

We are grateful to God for choosing us to be a light for Him in the capital of England. Our prayer is to continue to let God use us for His glory.

The National Convention held in July 2015 was a great blessing. It helped us to recognise that God is our Advocate and if we would only release everything to Him, He will work on our behalf. The battle is 'His' not ours.

The General Assembly held this year in August was indeed a great blessing to our congregation. It helped us to see where we're at in God, where we ought to be and what we need to do to get there. Amen.

Please pray for us as we pray for you. God bless you.

Sister Chika Imhoff
Reporter



Gleaners Corner

Word Scramble on Samuel: 1 Samuel Chapter 3

1. Who did Samuel run to when he heard his name called out the first time?

LIE

2. How many times did the Lord call Samuel before he responded to his voice?

OFRU

3. The Lord said to Samuel 'Behold I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone that heareth it shall _____'

GEITLN

4. Who called Samuel when he was asleep?

THE RDOL

5. Who was Samuel's mother?

AHNNAH

6. Which part of the Bible do you find the story of Samuel

ODL ETSATENMT

7. Where was the Ark of the Covenant kept before it was stolen?

PELMTE

8. Samuel was a _____ of the Lord.

OERHTPP

9. What was Samuel doing when the Lord called him?

YLNIG WDNO

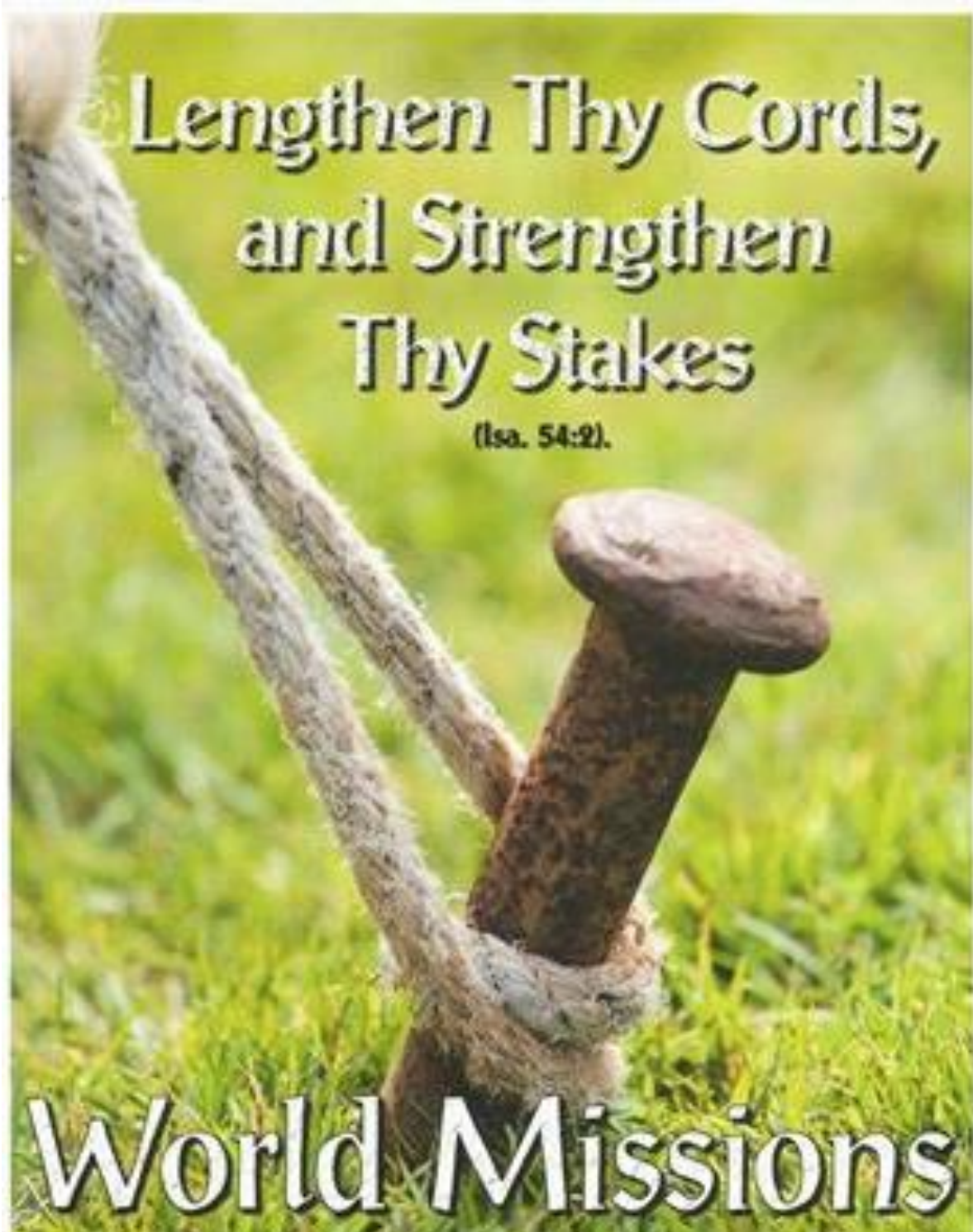
10. Who returned the Ark of the Covenant?

SIITIESHLPN



Created by Brother James Mwila and Brother Jonathan Wright - Long Lane Church

October World Mission Drive



Special Note:

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