



The Chronicle

A Publication of The Church of God (England)

April-June 2016, Volume 11, Issue 2

Take up thy cross and follow Jesus

Philip C. Bennett

*On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suff'ring and shame;
And I love that old cross where the Dearest
and Best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.*

The cross is a wooden structure used as a means of execution. It consists of an upright post, with a transverse piece to which people are nailed or tied.

Deitrick Bonhoeffer said: "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." The cross is an instrument of death, not just to maim you. It is something we take up deliberately: "And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (St. Luke 14:25-33)

Great multitudes were following Jesus but He knew that not all of them were committed and following for the right reasons. Today, the world has lost sight of true Christianity.

It accepts Christ with everything else. But there is a price that has to be paid. Jesus knew that He was born to die and every step He made was taking Him one step closer to the cross: *"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."* (St. John 12:27-28)

Jesus won the victory in Gethsemane, but it did not come easily. He prayed three times until His sweat became as great drops of blood. He was betrayed by His own, denied by Peter, forsaken by all the other disciples and arrested on false charges. He was ridiculed, stripped, spat upon, scourged and then led away to Golgotha to be crucified. Although He fell three times, He clung to His cross. Even while on the cross, He was taunted and ridiculed: *"And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth."* (St. Matthew 27:39-44)

Jesus could have come down, but He demonstrated His love for us by staying on the cross until it was all over. He then cried out, *"It is finished."*

Thomas Shepherd wrote the beautiful song:

*Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone,
And there's a cross for me.*

*The consecrated cross I'll bear
Till death shall set me free;
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.*

*O precious cross! O glorious crown!
O resurrection day!
When Christ the Lord from heav'n comes
down and bears my soul away.*

After Christ's crucifixion Satan probably thought, *"that's it, I've got Him now,"* and to make sure, they sealed His tomb and set soldiers to guard it - but God dispatched an angel to roll the stone away.

*"Death cannot keep its prey
Jesus my Saviour! He tore the bars away
Jesus my Lord!"
Up from the grave He arose,
with a mighty triumph o'er His foes.
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
and He lives forever with the saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah Christ arose."*

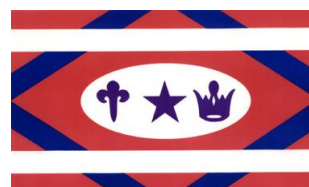


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Rikki Prince	National Family Camp Co-ordinator
Justin Clarke	National Men's Retreat Co-ordinator
Claudia Prince	National Choir Director
Brenda Prince	National Reporter
Karen Richards	Assistant Editor of <i>The Chronicle</i>



From the Overseer's Desk

We thank God for the good report from the National Ladies Retreat which took place on the 28th and 29th May 2016. One visitor gave their heart to the Lord.

The National WMB Prayer and Fasting sessions were well attended as individuals poured out their hearts to the Lord. I believe all who attended were refreshed in their spirits after each session.

London's baptismal service on the 1st June 2016 was also a great blessing as members, family and friends joined Sister Rebekah Wilson for her water baptism. Her testimony was a very positive one as she testified of how she sought the will of God before arriving at the point where she was.

The Vacation Bible School Talent Concert brought to the fore many hidden talents including Sister Wilhelmina Brown playing the mouth organ and Sister Maxine Whitter singing a beautiful solo.

Thank God for taking me safely to Saint Vincent and back. While there, I was able to share fellowship with Sister Browne, Sister Jacqueline Davis and the members of the island. I was blessed to be there during the mango season, especially with Sister Browne having a mango tree in the back yard. While driving along the roads, I could not believe the number of mangoes just lying there along the roadside as people walked by and ignored them - with mangoes being so expensive in England.

We had a wonderful National Convention and were privileged to have Bishop Kevin D. Werkheiser as our General Head-quarter's Representative. Both days were well attended by visitors from the local churches.

Whilst there, I appointed Sister Jacqueline Davis as the new Pastor for the local church (Biabou). She is doing a great work. Please remember her and the Church in Saint Vincent in your prayers.

Let us not be weary in well doing as great days are ahead for The Church of God.

*"Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion:
for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." (Psalm 102:13)*

Upcoming Events:

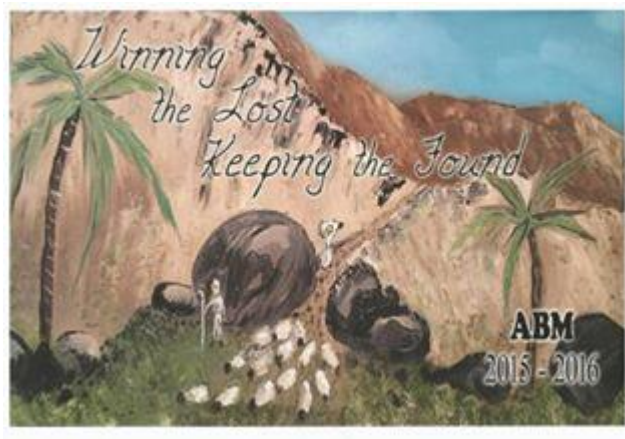
Druids Heath Concert	-	Saturday 6th August 2016
Wedding (Bro Joshua, Sis Bria)	-	Friday 12th August 2016
International Youth Camp	-	Friday 19th to Monday 22nd August 2016
General Assembly	-	Tuesday 23rd to Sunday 28th August 2016
National Men's Retreat	-	Friday 30th September to Monday 2nd October 2016



ABM BOOST

Wilhelmina Brown - National Assembly Band Movement Co-ordinator

The general Assembly Band Movement theme for the assembly year 2015-2016 is:
'Winning the lost, keeping the found'



To the children of the most high God - greetings to you all.

I want to boost and encourage us to remember the general theme for the ABM "Winning the lost, keeping the found". There is a battle going on in the Church today and if we are not careful, we will lose those who are spiritually weak and discouraged.

The Assembly Band Movement plays a great part in The Church of God. It provides extra help for individual members.

On 24th April 2016 in Long Lane Church we had ABM service and Sister Jennifer Thompson, one of our band leaders was moderator. An exercise was conducted, based on this question – what does the Assembly Band Movement mean to you? The feedback received was a blessing:

1. It helps as a training ground to pray more
2. It brings us closer in love and unity
3. It is a way where we can get together for encouragement and to reach out to our unsaved family
4. Band leaders can build relationships with their band members
5. Band leaders must be good examples
6. It encourages members to seek God for the Holy Ghost
7. Band leaders continue to work with the Pastor.

Many further comments were made. May the Lord continue to bless as we work in His service.

Sunday School Department



The Church of God

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOST

Jennifer Thompson - National Sunday School Co-ordinator

The general Sunday School theme for the assembly year 2015-2016 is:

'Wait on the Lord'

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacation Bible School

on 1st to 3rd August 2016

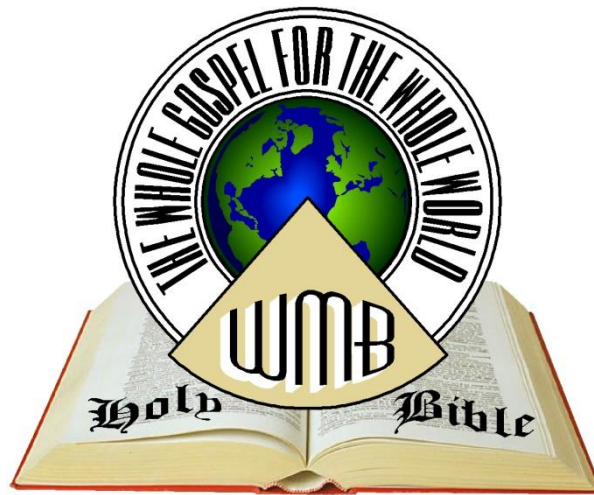
and 8th to 10th August 2016

at Handsworth Baptist Church Centre,

38A Victoria Road, Handsworth,

Birmingham, West Midlands, B21 0SA.

Start time to be confirmed



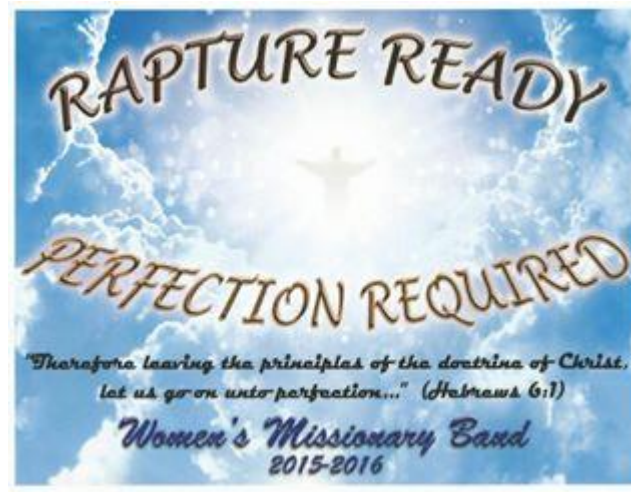
WMB BOOST

Beverley Anderson - National Women's Missionary Band Co-ordinator

The general Women's Missionary Band theme for the assembly year 2015-2016 is:

'Rapture ready, perfection required'

(Hebrews 6:1)



We are grateful to God for a wonderful and blessed Ladies Retreat, the Lord surely visited us. We give thanks and praise to God for visiting us. I trust that what we have received, we will build upon in order to prepare our souls for the rapture.

For those of you who watched the movie **'War Room'** demonstrating the power of prayer, I do hope that it was a blessing and a lesson in what prayer can do. I thought I would share one of the prayer lessons we have had in Handsworth church with you all.

Where to pray

Acts 12:5: **"Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made with out ceasing of the church unto God for him."** (The Church prayed for him).

History of the apostle Peter:

- Peter (also known as Simon) was one of the original 12 apostles.
- Peter was originally from Bethsaida on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.
- He became the leader of the apostles
- He had a brother called Andrew and they were both fishermen
- Peter was married and his home was in Capernaum.
- When Jesus called him to be an apostle, he was given the added name Cephas (Aramaic: “stone,” Greek: “*Petros*,” which in English is rendered as Peter).
- Peter was one of the three main apostles, along with James and John, who were chosen by Jesus to be present during certain important moments of His ministry.
- One trait of Peter’s character that stands out in the New Testament account, is his impulsiveness (rashness, hot-headedness)

When Jesus asked him “Who do you say I am?” Peter made that famous statement, “...***Thou art the Christ, (Messiah) the Son of the living God.***” (St. Matthew 16:16).

Under the power of the Holy Ghost, Peter healed the sick and raised the dead. He made a trip to Antioch, and possibly Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:12).

1 Corinthians 1:12: “***Now this I say, that everyone of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I have Christ.***”

It is believed that Peter later travelled to Rome, and was martyred there by crucifixion in 64 AD.

He is said to have requested that he be crucified upside down, because he said he wasn’t worthy of dying in the same way as Jesus.

Peter wrote two Epistles, called 1 Peter and 2 Peter, in the New Testament. Papias, a disciple of the apostle John, wrote that Mark’s Gospel was influenced by Peter’s writings.

St. John 1:42: “***And he brought him to Jesus (Andrew brought Peter). And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation A stone.***”

Where to pray

There was a remarkable change in the prayer life of the disciples after the resurrection of Jesus, and it is to be noted again after Pentecost. Before the death of Jesus, the disciples slept while Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. The account is given in St. Matthew 26:36-46.

After Jesus’ death and resurrection, 120 disciples assembled in the upper room, waiting for the coming of the Holy Ghost, and they prayed. So we should always pray when assembled with believers.

Acts 1:13-14: “***And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.***” (Jesus’ family and his brethren).

The disciples prayed as they went from house to house: Acts 2:46: “***And they continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.***” (As one).

The Church prayed when Peter was in prison: Acts 12:5: (Main study scripture) ***“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.”***

This indicates that we are to pray for each other when in serious difficulties. The Scripture does not mention anyone debating the circumstances of Peter but states that the Church prayed. This is what we need to do. No matter who or what. (Prison here can be identified with various circumstances, can you think of a few)?

Paul and Silas prayed in prison: Acts 16:25: ***“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them.”***

Here we see Christians praying in the presence of unbelievers, but not to be heard of them. Never pray to please others present; pray only to please God.

The most important place to pray is any place where you can be alone with God: St. Matthew 6:6: ***“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”***

We are instructed to pray in all places at all times: 1Timothy 2:8: ***“I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”*** (Without anger and unbelief).

It is a great joy to be able to talk with God, any time, any place and under any condition, and to know that He will hear and answer.

But the Scripture says ***“without wrath and doubting,”*** so we need to have a pure heart and no doubt of what God can do.



National Youth Convention 2016

The Church of God came together for another amazing National Youth Convention on Saturday 26th March 2016. The theme this year was **“Revived and Ready”**. This year’s Convention was more like an all-day revival rather than the traditional Convention programme.

The morning’s devotion was led by Sister Antonette Mwila and Sister Rebekah Wilson. The Scriptures read were taken from 2 Chronicles 7:14 and Acts 9.

Brother Rikki Prince preached the first sermonette entitled *“Repentance and Revival”*. Brother Rikki related a defibrillator – a device used on people with serious cardiac issues – with the work that God does in the heart of man. He urged the congregation to fix up quickly when things go wrong spiritually.

After this message, time was given for prayer and followed by a praise and worship session.

The next message was entitled *“O Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee”* by Sister Brenda Prince. Some accounts of the Azusa Street revival were shared as Sister Brenda encouraged the congregation to seek the power of the Holy Ghost.

Next on programme was a special song by Brother Jerome Solomon. It seems like the Lord put His seal of approval on the song as Brother Jerome sang *“As the deer panteth for the waters”*. The Holy Ghost began to pour out His blessings upon us as we yielded ourselves to His will.

The Gleaners from London Church, Handsworth Church and Druids Heath Church came forward next with their special items. Meshach Muirhead from Handsworth Church read Scriptures from Psalm 51:10 and Psalm 23:3. He also presented a battery and stated that in order for the battery to charge, it must be connected. Meshach stated that without righteousness we cannot please the Lord.

Lydia Wilson from London Church then came forward and shared with the congregation what she enjoys in Church and her favourite lessons. She also conducted a very fun quiz.

Delano Prince from Druids Heath Church followed with a short encouragement taken from St. Matthew 23. The graduating gleaners then were acknowledged and prayed for.

This year we had a total of four graduates from the Gleaner Band into the Victory Leaders Band: Lydia Wilson, Amelia Williams, Teresa Parchment and Antoine Maxwell.

A special tribute for The Church of God's Golden Agers took place during this time. The brethren were recognised for their years of faithful dedication to the Lord and His Church: Sister Wilhelmina Brown, Sister Olive Buchanan, Sister Elouise Whitter, Deacon Samuel Prince and Sister Beryl Richards.

The second session of the Convention began with some wonderful singing. The Pastors then came forward to greet the congregation.

The title of the next sermonette was "*A Revived Mind-set*" by Brother Stuart Brown. Brother Stuart spoke about a spirit of deception out in the world targeting the young people at school and trying to discredit our faith. It was stated that as students, we believe most of the things we are taught at school through our text books. However, many people decide not to believe what the Bible says because it was "written by man" but they fail to realise that so were textbooks.

Sister Claudia Prince then sang a very powerful song entitled "*Will you be Ready?*"

The National Youth Co-ordinator, Sister Claudine Brown then proceeded with her message on "*Spiritual Bankruptcy*". A comparison was made between the lack of spiritual reserves and the final days before payday when there is no money in the bank and the financial struggle is fierce. Sister Claudine called us to keep our spiritual balances in check and to make sure that we have a relationship with the Lord.

In closing, Brother Jason Prince made an altar call after quoting different statements made throughout the day. Some of the attendees left the Convention feeling revived and ready to tackle whatever Satan throws our way! Thank you Lord!

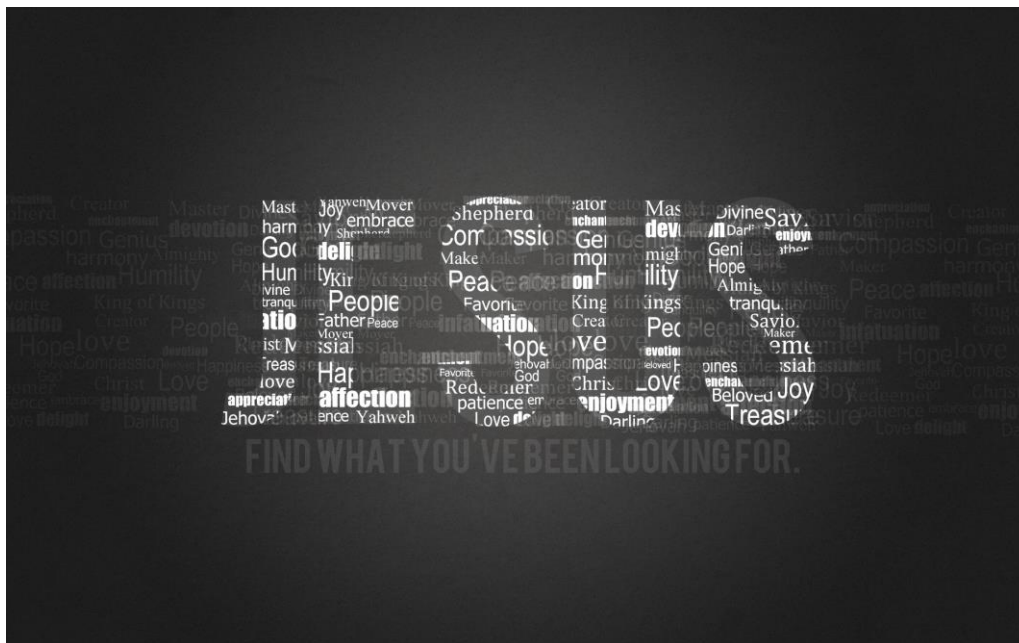
Sister Brenda Prince
National Reporter

I believe that Jesus is King of my life
He protects me through my battles and strife
Sometimes, I'm so weak, I almost fall,
Then He gently whispers "Lean on Me, I am your wall"

Everyone should know about Jesus, the King
He is the reason why I breathe
He is the reason for my bliss
I've learnt to trust Him everyday
With Him guiding my feet along the way
Praise His name, I'll never go astray.

Jesus the King shall return one day
Don't listen to silly conferences or silly debates
Don't waste time
Hurry, don't be late
Don't you want to walk through the beautiful gate?
Then we shall see Him face to face
And proclaim "we've made it through your grace"
Amen.

**Written and submitted by Sister Wilhelmina Brown
Long Lane Church**



National Ladies Retreat 2016

The ladies of The Church of God gathered together once again for our annual National Ladies Retreat which took place 28th-29th of May at the Ramada, Solihull. The theme this year was “...*for the hour of His judgment is come.*”

The first morning's devotion started with some wonderful singing led by the Church in Long Lane. The Scripture reading was taken from Revelation 14:1-7. Sister Violet Hamilton stated that the book of Revelation is not merely a time scale of future events to come but that it also serves to encourage Christians to maintain themselves living holy lives under many hardships and persecutions.

A group session then followed where each lady was to answer the questions assigned to the group with the intent of getting to know each other a little better. Some of the questions discussed were: If you could be a Bible character, who would you choose to be? What makes you happy? What is your most memorable moment while encouraging someone? It was nice to hear everyone's different responses and experiences.

A powerful message was delivered by Sister Cynthia Opoku-Boakye. The Scripture was taken from Revelation 19:5-9 by which she encouraged us to be rapture ready. She asked if the rapture was to happen this minute how many of us would be ready? An “I don't know or I'm trying my best” indicates we are not fully ready. Revelation 3:1-6 was also read. In this Scripture, the apostle John speaks about the Church in Sardis in which some brethren had not defiled their garments. Sister Cynthia stressed the importance of honouring God and living holy, as well as keeping our spiritual attire pure.

After our lunch, we gathered together for a devotion led by the London Church. Sister Chika Imhoff read a Scripture from 2 Kings 14:1-4. She mentioned that as servants of God we can be doing right but there may be high places in our lives that need to be broken down and destroyed.

A wonderful presentation entitled ‘*Judgement of the Saints*’ was then led by Pastor Angela Clarke. This presentation highlighted the five judgements of which the Bible speaks about. Those judgements are: Judgement of the believer's sin, Judgement of the believer's self, Judgement of the believer's works, Judgement of the nations, Judgement of the wicked. In this presentation Pastor Clarke stressed the importance of examining ourselves or be judged by Christ.

After a short recess, the retreat continued with a wonderful devotion led by Sister Claudia Prince. Following the devotion Sister Brenda Prince came forward to deliver a demonstration on modesty entitled: ‘*My daughter's closet*’. The aim of the presentation was for us to examine ourselves as daughters of God and endeavour to please the Lord as we advance to perfection. It was stated that the way we dress will be connected to the message we represent as children of God and members of the Bride of Christ.

The last discussion of the day was entitled: ‘*Schools and our children*’ and it was delivered by Sister Bria Stone. In her studies to become a primary school teacher, Sister Bria has encountered that soon-to-be teachers are being instructed on LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) issues with the intent of educating children as young as 3 years old of the acceptance of multiple sexual orientations. The importance of praying with and for our children was emphasised.

The evening came to an end as we watched a powerful film entitled: ‘War Room’ (The Power of Prayer).

Sunday morning was a new day of blessings and as we all sang ‘*Love, wonderful love*’ the Holy Ghost made an entrance into the building. Evangelist Taylor-Harrison came forward under the anointing of the Holy Ghost to read the morning's devotional Scripture taken from St. Matthew 25:31.

Sister Taylor-Harrison pointed out that it was time for our hearts to be knitted up with Christ as there is no time to joke. A time of separation of the sheep and the pretenders will come.

During this time Sister Julie Clarke shared a very touching testimony of her battles these past 8 years with illness. Sister Julie stated that in spite of everything that has happened to her, she has never asked God 'why'? but is happy to know that God loves her and is merciful towards her.

Pastor Beverley Anderson then delivered another timely message based on the theme Scripture. Pastor Anderson stated that the hour of judgement had come and we would have to be living examples as we endure the trials of our faith here on earth. She summarised Revelation 14:7 as this: 1. Fear God, 2. Give Him glory, 3. The hour of judgement is here, 4. Worship Him.

Before we dismissed for lunch, all the sisters were asked to come together for a time of prayer. It was during this time that the Holy Ghost began to manifest Himself in a very powerful way. After many tarried and prayed for their own personal situations, the Holy Ghost gave this interpretation:

"My people who are called by My name. I am calling you. I am calling you (x8). It is time, it is high time. It is time (x2). It is time now, now is the time. It is now time. My people, it is now time. It is now high time to come, come now. It is now time, high time to come, come now. I will come, I will come, I will come."

Immediately after this, Sister Jennifer Thompson addressed the need for salvation and one visitor gave her heart to the Lord! The Holy Ghost did a great work that day.

The last discussion was led by Sister Joan Taylor and it was entitled; *'The King James version of the Bible - Its Origin'*. Sister Joan brought forward a wonderful, detailed presentation of the ancestry of King James which is believed to have been Jewish/Black. Sister Joan stated that King James was displeased that only the clergy of the Catholic Church had access to the Bible (Vulgate) in those days as it was only available in Latin. He wanted commoners to read for themselves what the word of God said and not just follow what the church said. This led him to initiate the task of its translation into the English language.

The retreat concluded with a testimony session where we praised the Lord for the great works done during these two days!

The following statement was declared, "Judge YOURSELF by the Book because that's by what we will be judged."

National Ladies Retreat Testimonies:

Sister Beverley Wilson

Ladies Retreat has been such a blessing, once again. I could feel the presence of the Lord with us throughout each and every devotion, presentation and message. I had a lot to mediate on. The theme *'...for the hour of His judgment is come'* (Revelation 14:7) was already thought provoking, even more so after Pastor Angela's presentation on the **Judgement of the Saints**. She spoke about various judgements of believers. The one that stuck with me the most was the 'judgement of believers works'. God will judge believers as well as sinners, but He'll judge the believers according to our works, which will determine our reward. It made me want to work more for God, to find more opportunities to do so every day and especially at my work place. Here, I spend most of my time each week, and it's where my own personal battlefield is right now.

Sister Bria Stone

Ladies Retreat was an extraordinary experience that I thank God I was able to be a part of. From the moment I got there in the morning, I was blessed. I learnt so much as the Lord used the women of The Church of God to encourage and teach us. I left feeling revived and renewed and knowing my garment must be spotless, without any wrinkles and that image has stayed with me every day since. I thank God for His wisdom and His words.

Sister Brenda Prince – National Reporter

What's happening in London Church?

Greetings in the mighty name of Jesus.

This quarter, we would like to give God praise and thanks for these wonderful blessings, bestowed upon us:

- Planting our local church in the capital city of England.
- Blessing us with faithful saints whose determination is to make heaven their home and also to help others do the same.
- The spiritual growth of our juniors in Sunday School.
- Giving us the privilege of celebrating another birthday.
- Enabling two of our members to participate in the Sponsored Walk for Vacation Bible School held in Birmingham.
- Keeping us in good health.
- Giving our leaders inspiration.
- Allowing us to have excellent attendance to Church services and Sunday School.
- For making it possible for 80% of our sisters to attend National Ladies Retreat 2016.
- Blessing us with another baptism in June 2016.

To God be the glory, great things He has done.

Sister Chika Imhoff
Reporter

Special Note:

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