



The Chronicle

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Stay Connected

Philip C. Bennett

On occasion we turn on devices at home and they fail to come on. This is normally due to a fault somewhere within the system. Sometimes the power switch is off or the device is not plugged in. There also could be a fault in the device itself or the line.

A verse in Frederick M. Lehman's hymn - The Royal Telephone says: *'Fail to get an answer? Satan's crossed your wires, by some strong delusion, or some base desire. Take away obstructions, God is on the throne, and you'll get an answer through the royal telephone.'*

As Christians we **MUST** stay connected to the Power Source because without Him we can do nothing: *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."* (St. John 15:1-6)

Some Christians rejoice in the fact that they were saved many years ago and that they are a member of The Church of God, but just being a member of The Church of God is no guarantee of eternal salvation. We need to stay saved. We can lose our salvation, our sanctification and the Holy Ghost if we do not stay connected. We do not want to be like Samson who was blissfully unaware of the fact that God had departed from him: *"...And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him."* (Judges 16:20)

When we are connected, God the Power Source will talk to us and reveal deep and hidden things. Those who are connected will be able to discern things that would otherwise remain hidden. After Naaman had been healed of leprosy he departed from the prophet Elisha who refused to take any reward from Naaman. However, his servant Gehazi followed him and lied to receive some garments and silver.

He then returned home thinking that nobody knew what he had done, but Elisha was connected to God - the Power Source and discernor of all things: *"But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi?"*

And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.” (2 Kings 5:25-27)

The Apostle Peter wrote: *“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:5)*

We need to be lively or living stones, as only living stones are able to build a spiritual house. Dead stones are unable to offer spiritual sacrifices.

When buildings are being constructed, scaffolding is often used in the construction. The scaffolding is not a part of the actual building but is merely there to help in the building process. Once the building is completed, the scaffolding is removed and is not a part of the finished product. We need to make sure that we are a part of the building and not just scaffolding. We can all remember people who were once among us, who helped in the building up of the Church that are now no longer with us. What happened to them? **They failed to stay connected.**

God is going to bring those who are willing to perfection; but those who refuse will be cut off: *“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.*

And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” (Hebrews 12:25-27)

The heat is going to be turned up and those who cannot take it will have to get out of the kitchen (leave us). The heat is designed to perfect us. Situations are going to come upon us to prove us and reveal people’s true identity. At times we will not even know we are being tested.

When God called Gideon to deliver Israel, he started out with 32,000 men. When Gideon through God’s direction asked for those who were fearful and afraid to go back, 22,000 returned home. After Gideon’s army had been reduced to 10,000 from 32,000 God Himself chose the test to reduce the number even further. He told Gideon what to look out for but did not reveal to Gideon whom He would choose. Gideon was asked to bring them down to the river to drink water and he was to observe how they drank. Of the 10,000 men only 300 lapped the water as a dog would do, and those were the ones chosen to go into battle. (Judges Chapter 7)

Some have stayed under the radar and have gone undetected for years but the Holy Ghost is going to expose them. *“...be sure your sin will find you out.” (Numbers 32:23)*

“Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.” (St. John 6:70-71)

Jesus knew who Judas was but He did not expose him. He gave him time to repent. Some have been in Church for years and do not know where they are yet. **“They take the Church for papi show.”** They do not want anyone to reprove them. In other words: **“Just leave me alone to do my own thing.”**

“The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man... Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself.. Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.”
(Isaiah 33:8, 10, 13-16)

Stubbornness and rebellion will cause us to lose our connection. *“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.”* (1 Samuel 15:22-23)

Saul lost his connection with God because of disobedience.

Korah, Dathan and Abiram lost their connection because of rebellion. (Numbers Chapter 16) They became overly ambitious and wanted to take over the priesthood from Aaron whom God had chosen. They and all their sympathisers, 250 men of renown who were famous in the congregation were destroyed. **God is no respecter of persons.**

Writing to the members in Rome, the Apostle Paul stated: *“Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”*
(Romans 11:19-22)

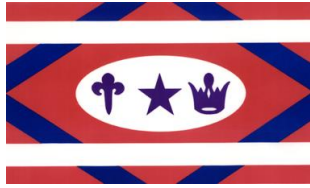
If a branch is removed from a tree, regardless of its size, it is just a matter of time before it will wither and die. You would not believe that only a short while ago that same branch was so green and flourishing.

Let us stay connected.

Message originally preached by
National Overseer, Philip Bennett
at National Ministers' Convention in 2009. 📖

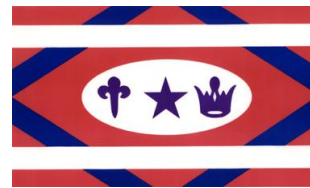


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From the Overseer's Desk

It was a privilege to have our World Mission Co-ordinator, Bishop Robert J. Hawkins Jnr. and his wife Sister Malissa Hawkins with us during our National Ministers' Convention in November. Bishop Hawkins introduced us to a new phrase, *"Finders weepers, loser's keepers."* Most thought he had it back to front until he explained that, when we lose our lives for Christ we shall find it and if we find/keep our lives and live for self, we will lose it. *"He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."* (St. Matthew 10:39)

We also thank God for our new licensed ministers - Deacon Patrick Clarke and Evangelist Claudine Brown. Let us continue to pray for these ministers, that their ministries will be a blessing to Christ and His Church.

During her message entitled *"Fasten your seatbelt"* which I feel is very pertinent for the time, Sister Claudine stated, "when on an aeroplane, we should heed the warnings from the pilot who can see the dangers that are ahead e.g. turbulence. Jesus, our spiritual Pilot also foresees and knows of impending danger. He has given us warnings in His Word." She went on to say that we fasten our spiritual seatbelts through prayer, fasting, sanctification, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, reading our Bibles, attending church regularly and being around like minded people.

We would all do well to pay attention to the warnings given to the Church by the Apostle Paul when he declared: *"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"* (1 Timothy 4:1-2)

Again, in 2 Timothy 3, Paul warns us of the perilous times which would come. I do not think we need anyone to tell us that these are the times that the Apostle was writing about. He went on to outline what would be the characteristics of this perilous time.

Let us make sure our seatbelts are on and securely fastened, so we will not be thrown out of our seats in Zion during this time of turbulence.

Ruth C. Jones in her song *"In Times Like These"* encourages us, *"Be very sure, be very sure, your anchor holds and grips the solid rock!"*

Upcoming Events:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| All night Tarrying Service | - Friday 18 th January 2019 |
| VLB Quarterly Prayer Meeting | - Friday 1 st February 2019 |
| National Family Camp | - Monday 18 th February - Thursday 21 st February 2019 |
| National WMB Prayer and Fasting | - Saturday 16 th March 2019 |
| Annual General Meeting (AGM) | - Friday 29 th March 2019 |



ABM BOOST

Cynthia Opoku - National Assembly Band Movement Co-ordinator

The general Assembly Band Movement theme for the assembly year 2018-2019 is:

'Till we all come'

(Ephesians 4:13)



Greetings to you all in the name of Jesus.

We need to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling as stated in Philippians 2:12:

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your

own salvation with fear and trembling.”

The thing is - no one can work my salvation out for me or for you, but we must do this for ourselves. Although we are in this business together, helping and praying for each another as the Word of God tells us, the bigger part is on us as individuals.

Let us ask grace of God and for help from our Helper, the Holy Ghost because we cannot do it on our own.

PLEASE DO WELL TO ATTEND BAND MEETINGS.

Sunday School Department



The Church of God

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOST

Jennifer Thompson - National Sunday School Co-ordinator

The continuing general Sunday School theme for the assembly year 2018-2019 is:
'Embrace the Vision'

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

I also extend a special thank you to all of our Sunday School superintendents, teachers, and other workers in this department, for their prayers and hard work.

The greatest Gift keeps giving and giving

This is a special time of year, especially for Christians. It is a time of praise, thanksgiving and worship. After the fall of man, sin separated mankind from God. God had a plan to rescue or redeem mankind back to Himself. St. John 3:16 is the plan and states:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God gave His only begotten Son to bring back man into a relationship with Him.

As the lyricist Charles Wesley states in **"Hark the Herald Angels sing"** *'...Born that man no more may die... born to give them second birth.'* THANK YOU JESUS.

St. Luke 2:10-11:

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

St. Luke 2:14: **"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."**

The good tidings or good news the angel brought to the shepherds is of peace, hope, great joy and good will. PRAISE GOD!

Just a reminder of the purpose of Sunday School:

To teach the Word of God
To build the Church

To win souls
To help the community

God willing, not too long from now, we will enter into a new year. Let us pray for the vision to fulfil the purpose of the Sunday School. May God bless us as we continue to work for Christ and His Church. Amen.

Diary dates of upcoming activities for 2019 (Venues to be confirmed)

Vacation Bible School

25th - 26th April 2019

Family Fun Day

18th May 2019





EVANGELISM
DEPARTMENT

EVANGELISM BOOST

Claudine Brown - National Evangelism Co-ordinator

The new general Evangelism theme for the assembly year 2018-2019 is:

'Power of Prayer'



Greetings in the name of our Lord and Head of the Church, Jesus Christ. I thank God for the opportunity to serve in the Evangelism department this year. Sharing the gospel and spreading the truth is our mandate as Christians, and I pray that God will give us all a heart-felt love for this work. Paul encouraged Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:5 to **"...do the work of an evangelist..."** May God give us the strength, the inspiration and the unction to tell this dying world that there is a Saviour.

This year's theme is apt. Evangelism and prayer must go hand in hand, and so a reminder of its power is encouraging. Jesus set us an example in St. John 17:21 when He not only prayed for His disciples, **"...but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;"** This tells me that Jesus prayed for us

before we even believed in Him and we can pray for others.

Let us not underestimate what prayer can do. Prayer is powerful because of the awesome power of the One who is hearing and receiving them. **"Thine, O LORD is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine;"** (1 Chronicles 29:11), Praise the Lord. **"All"** includes the souls of men!

The power of prayer is not determined by the speed of the answer. Sometimes, we stop praying because the answer does not seem to be forthcoming. Prayer takes patience, and faith. I **must** believe that prayer can alter situations, and when praying for the souls of men, I **must** believe that God can draw and save them and that the Church will help to keep them. If I pray for a soul, but lack belief that God can turn their heart, my prayers become empty words. When Jesus was in his **"own country"** (St. Matthew 13:58), **"...he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."** We can take from this, that our faith is necessary for mighty works to be done. If we do not believe, we cannot expect those we evangelise to, to believe either.

In addition, righteous, holy living will make our prayers effective. **"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."** (James 5:16). **Availeth** means to produce or result in, as a benefit or advantage. For our prayers to be productive, and to bring results, let us live lives that shine in the beauty of holiness; after all, our lives will speak louder than our words, in our evangelism efforts.

Evangelism can seem like a daunting task when we look at the conditions around us – but if there is nothing impossible for God, that must mean that He can still save in 2018/19. Are you ready to work in this important field this year? **"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."** (St. John 4:35). Brethren, let us go, in the name of Jesus.

Announcement: Friday 18th January 2019, 9pm – National all night tarrying service at Long Lane Church. Please listen out for announcements to fast in anticipation.

Please pray for the Evangelism department as we labour together with God to win souls for His kingdom. God bless you.



WMB BOOST

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

The general Women's Missionary Band theme for the assembly year 2018-2019 is:

'The Lifeboat'

(St. John 3:15)

Thank God for another year to work on His programme. The new general theme is appropriate for the present times we are in. We are living in a world that is drowning in sin. When RMS Titanic (a British passenger liner) sank in the North Atlantic Ocean, on 15 April 1912 - after colliding with an iceberg, only those in the lifeboats were saved.

Some of these tragic passengers, suffering the trauma of knowing they were about to die, were able to hear what would be their final call to redemption. They heard the melody of *'Nearer my God to thee'* with these lyrics: *'Nearer, my God to Thee', Nearer to Thee! E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me... There let the way appear, Steps unto Heav'n: All that Thou sendest me, In mercy given. Angels to beckon me, nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee'.*

'Nearer my God to Thee', written by Sarah Flower Adams, her most notable hymn, came about in 1841. Her pastor was looking for a hymn for the following week's sermon on Genesis 28:11-19, which is referred to by many as "Jacob's ladder." Adams offered to write the hymn to go along with the pastor's sermon.

In Genesis 28:16-17, when Jacob arose from the dream and stated *"surely the Lord is in this place," "... this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."* He realised that the only safe place was in God, and he had happened in his dream upon the gateway to heaven.

Our work is to let this world know that Christ is the gateway to heaven. We need to sound the message of safety that is found only in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We need to let them know that the Church is the lifeboat and that they do not have to drown in sin. There is safety in the lifeboat.

One definition of a **lifeboat** is that it is a self-propelled vessel. This means it is self-driven, pushed or impelled - once in it we must encourage and provoke others, as well as pressing onwards.

It is a relatively large, open decked vessel which is capable of carrying equipment and supplies for the navigation crew, operational personnel and passengers. Jesus Christ is the Navigator, the passengers are the crew and the Holy Ghost is the Operational Personnel. He guides the lifeboat along the way from earth to heaven.

There is a song that states, *'throw out the lifeline, someone is sinking today'*. We need to throw out a lifeline from the lifeboat we are in to someone who is sinking...our friends, colleagues, family and neighbours. Salvation is not a selfish rescue but we must selflessly strive to impart it to others.

As missionaries, let our work for the coming year be filled with lifelines being thrown out to sinking friends, loved ones and associates that we come into daily contact with. May God bless us as we work on His programme.

England's 64th National Convention

Theme: *'...upon this rock I will build my church...'*

(St. Matthew 16:18)

On Saturday 3rd November 2018, The Church of God in England met for our annual National Ministers' Convention at Long Lane Church, Halesowen. The theme was **'Rescue the Perishing'** and we were privileged to have Bishop Robert J. Hawkins Jnr, General Headquarters representative, and his wife Sister Malissa Hawkins in attendance.



The day consisted of messages and boosts from all the National Auxiliary Co-ordinators, as they outlined their plans for this Assembly year and boosted the general auxiliary themes.

We were encouraged by Sister Karen Richards' message **'Go ye therefore and teach all nations...'** (St. Matthew 28:19). She broke down the Scripture so eloquently, explaining we should be obedient to the Master's command to go, preach and teach to all nations. She said Jesus' command was not just a directive for the early Church or any particular individual, but applicable to all of His children today.



We were privileged to have Bishop Hawkins officiate with Bishop Bennett in the ordination of Brother Patrick Clarke as a licenced Deacon in The Church of God.

Sister Claudine Brown received her licence as a Female Evangelist in The Church of God. We pray that the Lord will continue to guide these ministers as they work for Him.



Bishop Philip Bennett's message was based on the Convention theme from St. Matthew 4:18-22, Bishop Bennett preached on the importance of Jesus calling the 12 disciples and the importance of our response to His call. Peter, Andrew, James and John all listened, immediately forsook all and followed Christ. It is wonderful to be a worker for Christ and this should be our main concern. Bishop Bennett told us God's work requires time and our ministers' should allow quality time in doing God's work. If every member were to pay tithes, then this would enable each pastor the ability to perform their duty and provide financial support.

'Fasten your seat belt' was the message preached by Sister Claudine Brown - National Evangelism Co-ordinator. She displayed an image of an aeroplane seat belt warning light. This warning sign requires the passengers on board the aircraft to fasten their seat belts because turbulence is ahead. She said before we can tell others of the saving grace of Christ we must make sure we are seated, and our belts are securely fastened. After this safeguard, even if turbulence does come, we will remain seated and secure. The pilot can see the danger ahead so we must adhere to the warning. In closing she said we can fasten our seat belt through; prayer, fasting, sanctification, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, studying the Word of God, attending Church services regularly and being around like minded people. Scriptures: Hebrews 4:14; Hebrew 10:23; 2 Timothy 3:14.



As our programme came to an end, we were encouraged to keep on working for the Lord by Sister Malissa Hawkins. Bishop Robert Hawkins' message was based on the Convention theme.



Bishop Hawkins read from St. Mark 4:35-41 and stated "The Church of God is moving, according to God's prophecy. God only makes us dwell in safety and we have the promise of Jesus, who said He will never leave or forsake us. The devil tries to bring a storm but Jesus will bring peace. The enemy will try to bring depression but Jesus brings joy."

We were sad to end our day of worship and fellowship, but we thank God for all His mercies. We look to Him to help us through another busy year, working on His programme.



Assembly Band Movement

General Theme: **'Till we all come'** - Ephesians 4:13
National band meetings, dates to be confirmed
Regular band leaders meetings

Bible Training Institute

General Theme:
'Walking by the Same Rule, Minding the Same Thing' -
Philippians 3:16
BTI Second Term, to be arranged

Church of Prophecy Marker Association

General Theme: **'Heritage'**

Evangelism

General Theme: **'Power of Prayer'**
Coffee mornings, to be arranged with local pastors
All night tarrying service, 18th January 2019
University and park outreaches, Summer 2019

Sister Beverley Wilson - National Reporter

Sunday School

General Theme: **'Embrace the Vision'**
Vacation Bible School, April 2019
Family Fun Day, May 2019

Victory Leaders Band

General Theme: **'Enemies on the Run'** - Judges 7
Youth social event, 3rd January 2019
Prayer and Fasting service, 14th April 2019
National Youth Convention, 28th April 2019
Youth Outreach, date to be confirmed

Women's Missionary Band

General Theme: **'The Lifeboat'** - St. John 3:15
National Fasting Service, 16th March 2019
National Ladies Retreat, 25th - 26th May 2019

National Family Camp 2019, 18th - 21st February 2019
National Men's Retreat 2019, 7th - 9th June 2019



National Youth Revival

2nd-4th December 2018



The theme of our National Youth Revival was ***"To whom shall we go?"*** After an introduction and welcome by Brother James Mwila - National VLB Co-ordinator, Brother Justin Clarke led the evening's devotion. Scriptures used were from Psalm 18 and St. John 6:65-68.

The message was delivered by Brother Mwila, using St. John Chapter 6 as the theme Scripture. He stated that we all need to have a vision of the Church for ourselves, and that some members left because they did not understand or stay long enough to gain that understanding. He added that some followed others when they left because they had no vision of their own. He encouraged us to obtain a divine revelation of Christ and His Church; and declared we cannot just depend on our pastors or parents for this.

Brother Mwila said that having a position in the Church or our past works will not protect us. He then referred to Demas, a longtime companion of the Apostle Paul who deserted him in his time of need (2 Timothy 4:10). Demas abandoned eternal life for that which was only temporary.

Brother Mwila also spoke about the Prodigal Son who after leaving his father's home, ended up eating with the swine.

On Monday evening, Sister Oneaka Prince conducted the devotion, using St. John 6:64-68 for the Scripture reading. She encouraged us to continue in the faith and not to be like those who fall away. We were encouraged that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us.

Deacon Stuart Brown delivered the message entitled, ***"Come under the Banner of Love."*** He said that God always called His people under His protection before dispensing judgement and that the wickedness of man is once again in the face of God as was in the days of Sodom. Scriptures used were, 2 Peter 3:8-10, St. Luke 21:36 and St. Matthew 16:26. Brother Stuart then gave an outline of his past life and how the devil on many occasions tried to destroy or capture him. He quoted: *"God's love saved me, His power changed me, His grace blesses me, His church keeps me."*

On Tuesday night, Brother Stuart Brown conducted the devotion using verses 24 and 25 from the book of Jude. The message was delivered by Evangelist Claudine Brown and entitled: ***"The door and the thief."***

Sister Claudine said the thief and the door did not have a good relationship as the door is a barrier to the thief. The thief is after our valuables and has useful tools, like the crowbar. She said the door represented Jesus while the thief represented Satan. She warned the youth especially, that they were a juicy catch for the devil. She said that some homes were particularly vulnerable when they were, (a) isolated, (b) had a dark exterior and (c) had no burglar alarm. She went on to say that the devil uses disguises to gain entry - much like the literal thief. Scriptures used were: St. John 10:7-10, Acts 20:29, 30, 2 Corinthians 11:14, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, Isaiah 41:10, St. Luke 10:19 and James 5:15-16. Sister Claudine explained that the Word of God is our offensive weapon to use against the devil.

At the end of each message, the altar was filled with those who were eager to receive from the Lord. I believe all who were in attendance were indeed revived.

Pastor Philip Bennett – Reporter
Long Lane Church

Special Note:

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