



*My family and I thank you each and every one for the Christmas offerings we received. Your thoughtfulness, love and kindness was very much appreciated. May God richly bless you for your giving! You are very precious to us! We love you!*

*Sincerely,*

*Bro. Melvin, Sister Vicki and Sister Jodi Lynn Kramer*



A Publication of The Church of God in Florida/Georgia

January/February 2005 Vol. 11. Iss. 1

## Onward Christian Soldiers!

*Melvin Kramer*

Well, we are in the middle of the District Convention season and God is truly blessing thus far. There is an excitement in the air throughout the region of what the Lord is and will be doing in our churches, homes, families, and in our lives as we work for Him. Surely as we are in the last days before the coming of Jesus, it is no surprise that the enemy has unleashed every weapon in his evil arsenal against the great Church of God; but we have the blessed promise that even the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. It is in the heat of the battle that I am reminded of the old song "Onward Christian Soldiers". The first verse says, "Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before. Christ the royal master, leads against the foe, forward into battle, see his banner go." Saints, we have come to the place in time that the battle is raging and there is fierce fighting on the front lines. Many have been wounded, bruised, and battered along the way and even some have been missing in action. But we must hold our position no matter the cost. As Christ the royal master leads against the foe, we must be ready and equipped to be led by him into battle. Let us look at what kind of soldier the Lord needs today to fight the battle.

1: A soldier full of courage. - We need people of God today that are willing to take a stand for what's right and have a backbone of iron as Caleb did in Numbers 13:30, "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it". We need more Calebs today who will not give in to a bad report but will square their shoulders back and say that we are well able to overcome any obstacle or situation that the enemy throws our way.

2: A soldier with a testimony - Every child of God should have a testimony of what the Lord has done for them. Too many people today give the devil too much credit for the

*Note from the Assistant Editor* Happy New Year and Valentines Day! We are already off to a good start this year, with many article and news submissions. Keep up the good work, reporters and auxiliary and department coordinators.

I apologize for any confusion last issue. If there are any subscribers who are not receiving their paper, please contact me by phone (229/482-1071), letter, or e-mail, and we will try to resolve it. Everyone that was on the subscription list from the Florida Tidings should still be getting a paper. If you were formerly a pastor or a auxiliary coordinator, any free subscriptions would be void as only our current leaders and pastors are on the "free list". If you renewed your subscription, and you got/get a "Time To Renew" notice, please contact me or Sister Branscum.

God bless all of you this new year!

Tammy Hart - Assistant Editor

To submit articles or subscribe to *The Shepherd's Voice*, send them to Tammy Hart at:

Rt. 1 Box 63C, Lakeland GA 31635 or [theshepherdsvoice@tcogga.org](mailto:theshepherdsvoice@tcogga.org)

or go to <http://www.tcogga.org> and submit on the Shepherd's Voice page.

Two copies of *The Shepherd's Voice* are sent to each pastor. If you want to be sent extra copies, there will be an annual charge of \$4.00 per extra copy. Of course you may make your own copies, or *The Shepherd's Voice* may be sent directly to a home for an annual subscription rate of \$5.00.

Check out these web-sites:

<http://www.tcogga.org>

<http://www.thechurchofgod.org>

<http://www.thechurchofgodmillen.org>

<http://www.thechurchofgodnorthside.org>

shape they are in. A soldier of the Lord should have a testimony of what God has done, what He is doing, and what he is going to do. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony". Rev. 12:11a.

We must leave this world with a testimony like Paul had in II Tim. 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith".

3: A soldier with a vision - Finally as we look at the last one, yes we need our people to have a vision and a divine revelation of the Church, but also a vision of where we are headed. Sometimes people lose sight of the final destination and begin to retreat, but we cannot afford to let this happen. Our eyes must be fixed upon Jesus to the point that nothing can pull us off course. We must abide in this old gospel ship until it sails safely into port and we hear the master say well done my good and faithful servant.

So let me encourage you to come on, Christian Soldier, let us march forward into battle as we see His banner go.

God Bless You

## Available For Revival

Richard Razi  
P. O. Box 814  
Hazlehurst, GA 31539  
(912) 375-5276

Billy Joe Gaddis  
1174 Coyote Ct.  
Macon, GA 31220  
(478) 475-0923

Vera Vaughn  
3383 Harrison Blue Rd.  
Perry, FL 32347  
(850)584-2347

Mark Branscum  
Rt 1 Box 63C  
Lakeland, GA 31635  
(229)482-3679

Vicky Bly  
444 Forest Hill Rd, Apt. 205  
Macon, GA 31210  
(478) 405-9001

Mary Roe  
Route 2, Box 200  
Lakeland, GA 31635  
(912) 482-2605

Cornelius Butler  
2413 Ella Drive SE  
Cleveland, TN 37311  
(423) 476-6256



## Announcements

Date:	Location	Event:
February 12, 2005	Alma	South Georgia District Convention
February 19, 2005	Trion	North Georgia District Convention
March 5, 2005	Cedar Crossing	Central Georgia District Convention
April 16, 2005	TBA	Ladies Day
April 29 - May 1, 2005	TBA	Youth Convention
May 14-27, 2005	Cleveland, TN	Bible Training Institute
July 15-17, 2005	TBA	Regional Convention w/James Nabors
September 1-4, 2005	Chattanooga, TN	General Assembly

\* TBA - To Be Announced



Dear ABM leaders and members of the great Church of God. Greetings in this beautiful new year that God has showed His mercy to us. I thank God I am able and willing to go for the Lord and His

church.

John 10:16, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also **I must bring**, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

I remember when we were in Oregon visiting my husband's parents. My in-laws had a herd of sheep. Late in the afternoon we would send our baby girl (about 5 or 6 years old) to the other side of the field and she would lead the sheep back to the barn. No wonder Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not."

Oh, He has work for everyone, so let's work- Lets not forget our home revivals. Let's not forget our emergency dollars. Let's not forget to pray and seek God. Let's be a vessel that the Holy Ghost can use. Let's remember if the Holy Ghost can't flow through us, He'll flow around us and someone will obey the Lord. I want my blessing, don't you? Love and prayers for you all and hope to see you real soon.

Vera Vaughn - Regional Coordinator



The glorious Church of God has a special meaning in the hearts of each of Her members. She is a beautiful Bride – the one and only – established by Christ Himself and commissioned to reach the entire world with the spiritual message of Christ and His Church. Each member who has taken the covenant to join Her has a testimony of love and devotion towards Her. Here are a couple testimonies from across the Georgia/Florida Region.

“I am thankful that the Lord chose to add me to the glorious Church of God and give me the revelation knowledge. I want to do everything I can to walk in the light to the best of my knowledge and ability. God is moving by His spirit, and I don’t want to miss out on what is ahead for The Church of God!”

-- Jared Nolen : Member at Millen, GA

“It means unity. There is a special relationship between myself and the Church. I see the Church as one entity, and I feel the responsibility of taking care of Her. I will defend Her as I have in the past because I am a part of Her. She has a job to do, and I know and will be done. She is my future.”

-- Michael D. Steptoe : Member at Cedar Crossing, GA

Please continue to send in your testimonies. We look forward to publishing more testimonies in the next issue of The Shepherd’s Voice.

Grayson B. Kent - Regional CPMA Coordinator

Can you believe that BTI 2005 in Cleveland, Tennessee is only THREE MONTHS away? I encourage each of you to DECIDE now to STRIVE to THRIVE at BTI 2005.

If you've completed all four terms and LPD (Leadership Pastoral Development) term, please help someone else in your family or your local church be able to experience BTI 2005.

Bishop Ard has selected "IN HIS STEPS" as this years theme. There is no better way to improve your stride to better fit the Master's footprints than through the five terms of BTI at Headquarters and studying all the available Correspondence Courses available through the Merchandise Department.

As you, your family, and your church family prepare for BTI 2005, don't forget our mission to "...go ...teach ...preach ... and baptize..."

World Missions and World BTI are avenues we can easily travel to give people in other countries the privilege of learning about The Steps of Jesus and His Church and how they too can have eternal life.

Please join my local church (see Spring Hill, FL report) as we set aside March 19, 2005 as a fund raising event for WORLD MISSIONS/WORLD BTI.

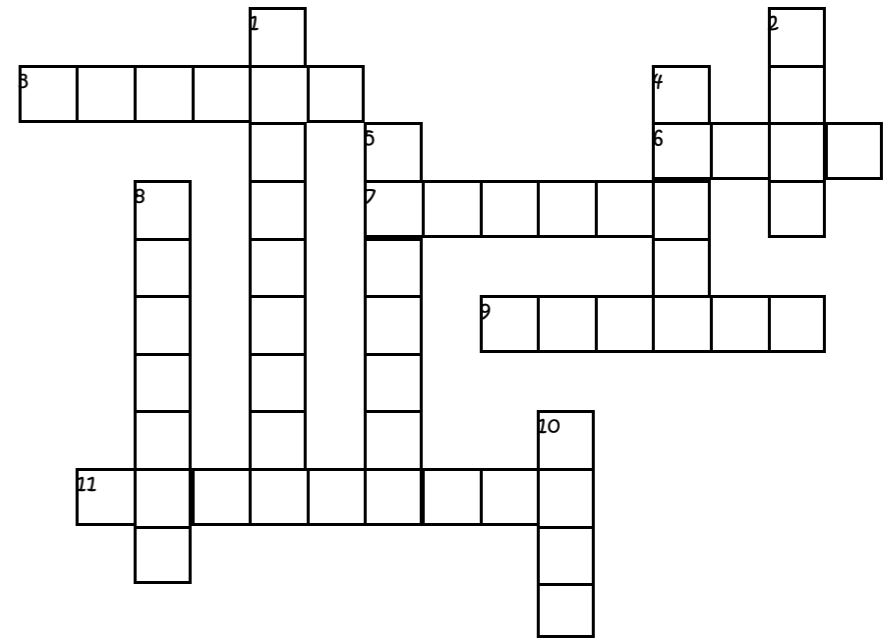


Pastors/BTI leaders, please share the results of your fund-raising efforts with me. (See Spring Hill, FL report for corrected mailing address and phone number.) My new e-mail address is blisenby@tampabay.rr.com.

A good song to be singing as we learn how to better walk "IN HIS STEPS" is "Footprints of Jesus" which is in the blue hymnal.

The Lord truly blessed in both of the District Conventions in Florida. We look forward with great anticipation to what the Lord will do at the District Conventions in Georgia. See you there, God willing. Serving as He leads,

Sister Betty Lisenby - Regional Bible Training Institute Booster



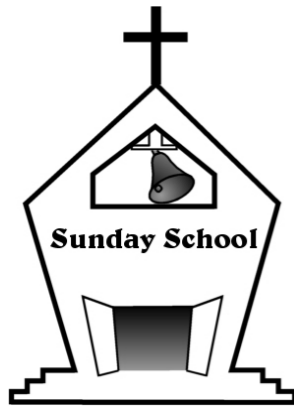
Solve the puzzle by giving the Valentine of the clue.

Across

- 3. Priscilla (Acts 18:2)
- 6. Eve (Genesis 3:20)
- 7. Ahasuerus (Esther 2:16)
- 9. Jacob (Genesis 29:18)
- 11. David (2 Samuel 12:24)

Down

- 1. Zacharias (Luke 1:5)
- 2. Ruth (Ruth 4:13)
- 4. Abraham (Genesis 18:9)
- 5. Isaac (Genesis 24:67)
- 8. Sampson (Judges 16:4)
- 10. Joseph (Matthew 1:16)



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus,

The church year is well underway, and the work still ongoing. The Sunday School department has its own special place within The Church of God and each local church should do its best to supply the needs of the people and not just the reports. The reports are important and have their place, but Sunday School is much more than just numbers. It's the knowledge of God being disbursed among His people. It's where we can share the stories in the bible and show the importance of not just serving God, but truly knowing about Him as well. There are no age limits in Sunday School. We are never too young or old to learn more about God.

Report! Please remember to report. We need to know all the good things God is doing amongst his church. The church did not set up the report system to play "mines better" to show numbers and compare with other organizations. The church set up reporting to monitor and oversee. Reporting is very important!

Teachers, you have a very important role in church. Some may think its only a lesson. "All I have to do is read what's on the page, read the scriptures, and ask the pre-written questions and I have done my job." And why not? Nobody hardly ever reads the lesson anymore anyway it seems. This is the exact attitude we do NOT need in the church. That has laziness and procrastination written all over it! How can work get done if we don't start working. Don't wait for God to move to start working, you start working and watch God move. We need to put prayer and study into the lessons for each Sunday.

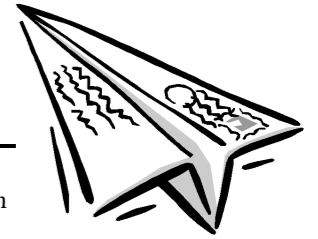
Has anybody ever heard the saying, "Don't teach the lesson, teach the student." I would like to state that I am aware that each new set of Sunday School books is prayed over before leaving headquarters, but if you think just reading off that page is fulfilling your job, your sadly mistaken. You must teach the students. This means you must apply the proper terminology and creativity according to the needs of your group. I suggest reading over the lesson, but when it comes time to teach paraphrase in your own words what the lesson is saying. Mention highlights within the lesson. You can still teach the same lesson, but more accurately supply the needs of the students.

Some may think this is wrong, but we must remember not all people are on the same Level. Get to their level. Remember, teach the students and keep them in mind when preparing for the lesson. Encourage the students to read over the lesson for the next service if possible. Students can learn better in a group discussion where they can apply themselves and not just hear a lecture. These are just some ideas that you may want to consider using, but are by no means mandatory.

I feel confident that if we put forth effort into these lessons, God is going to truly bless. Remember this isn't about getting the highest attendance, but building Christ's Church. We all have a part! Lets go forth armed and ready to work! Praise God!

Michael Steptoe - Regional Sunday School Coordinator

# News from the Fold



*Spring Hill* - Greetings in the name of Jesus and love to each of you from of us here at "Spring Hill" church.

As with a lot of our local churches, accomplishments seem to be slow, but let us all remember that "...some plant, some water, and God gives the increase...".

We continue to gather together in The Lord's House, read and study His word, pray for and visit those around us, and of course work all five auxiliaries to the best of our abilities as well as encourage everyone to be as involved as possible with the department of the Church that equips us for a closer relationship with God, and knowledge of how to better serve in each part of The Church of God as the messages in His Word become more illuminated in our minds. I speak, of course, of Bible Training Institute.

It is with thankful hearts that we advise you that the Lisenbys like the Harrises have a local residence at last. Thank God. Please note that the address and phone number shown in the previous issue of this paper was changing as the paper was being printed. Pastor Raymond and Sister Betty Lisenby can now be reached at phone (727) 863-6291. The new mailing address is: 8908 Kloss Lane, Hudson, Florida 34667.

We invite you to join with us in setting aside Saturday, March 19, 2005 as WORLD MISSIONS/WORLD BTI DAY. A big yard sale is planned to raise funds for these very dear to our hearts causes.

Please continue to pray for the Lord's special guidance to us here in the Spring Hill/Hudson area. Also, know that you and your congregation are in our prayers.

Looking forward to our next gathering,

*Sister Betty Lisenby - Reporter*

*Warner Robins* - Greetings from The Church of God in middle Georgia! We are excited about all God has in store for us! We wanted to praise the Lord for His countless blessings and goodness in general for all our people. We also want to put in a request to anyone who reads this who can speak Spanish fluently that is reliable to interpret. We have several Hispanic prospects and want to be able to teach them. Contact pastor, James R. Cox, 105 W. Imperial Cir., Warner Robins, GA 31093 or coxbunch@bellsouth.net or 478-328-1577. Thank you for your prayers!

*Allie Cox - Reporter*

# Mission Crusade!

The Church of God at Wildwood, Florida is having a Mission Crusade on Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup> from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. Sister Vicky Bly, our Regional WMB Coordinator, will be the guest speaker. Everyone is welcome to join Wildwood for this event!

The church is located at 305 N. Main Street in downtown Wildwood. For more information, contact Pastor Alice Shelor at 352/748-3031 or Betty Burley at 352/326-5815



It has been wonderful to visit with all of you as we were able during the District Convention so far. We look forward to boosting the VLB work in the upcoming District Conventions as well. The new year is well under way and with it some new things are on the horizon for the VLB Department in our region.

The 1st issue of The Voice of Victory, our regional youth paper, was released this past month! We want to encourage you to subscribe and help underwrite this ministry as well as circulate our paper. We also want to encourage you, especially Victory Leaders and young ministers to submit messages, articles for the Teen Spotlight and other featured article sections, reports and announcements, etc. having multiple articles from various participants allows us to have ample resources to draw from in the event that submissions may be slow one issue, etc.

We are seeking interested youth in organizing regional Youth Life Teams (YLT). We are also looking for qualified individuals to serve as YLT Directors. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry please speak with your VLB Director and pastor and contact the regional VLB office for more information.

Also, our 1st ever annual Youth Convention as a region is fast approaching. We will be contacting various Victory Leaders Bands, young ministers, etc. with program information. If for some reason you are unable to attend or fill your slot on program please contact us at your earliest convenience so we may make adjustments. We welcome everyone to come to Youth Convention this year. We are having it at a campground so that as many young people as would like can stay over the weekend with other youth as we fellowship and worship the Lord together. Those that plan to stay overnight need to return a Youth Convention application as soon as possible (one is attached to this article for your convenience or for making copies). Those who are not able to stay overnight are welcomed to come and attend the services just the same. And for those who may not be able to drive back and forth to convention and are not youth but still would like to attend there are ample hotels in the surrounding area. There are hotels near I-75 at the Adel, Hahira, and Valdosta exists. The campground is just outside Hahira, and approx.. 10 miles from Adel and 15 miles from Valdosta.

Now, I am sure everyone is wondering “what does it cost to stay over”. A list of prices is given below. You will notice several prices. This is because, the price of Convention will decrease as more people come and stay overnight! So, get everyone you can to attend and make Youth Conventions memorable and cost effective as possible. The minimum price is based on having at least 40 people stay overnight. This is the minimum number of people we need in order to meet the expenses for having Convention and renting the campground facilities. However, there is room for up to 122 people to stay overnight if needed. So get your application in today and be sure to encourage other Victory Leaders, family and friends to come as well. All are welcome to stay over and help us in meeting our quota so long as space is available regardless of age. So that means parents and older members and ministers are welcome too! Make plans to attend now!

Note- Children 3 years of age and under may come for \$2.00 this fee is for insurance purposes only. Otherwise these children attend at no charge.

Price per person at 40(+) people- \$55.00  
Price per person at 60(+) people- \$45.00  
Price per person at 80(+) people- \$35.00

**Announcing!**

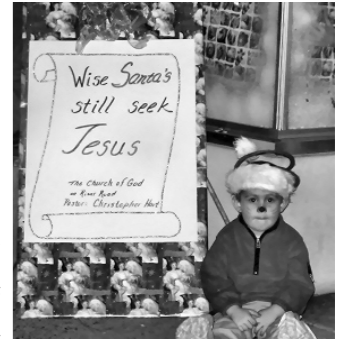
**The Annual Regional  
Youth Convention**

**April 29th - May 1st , 2005**

**At Camp Tygart near  
Hahira, Georgia**

## *Living Windows - The Church of God at Lakeland, Georgia*

We would like to give the Lord praise for everything He has done for The Church of God at Lakeland, Georgia. During the month of December, the Evangelism Department was in the Living Windows on the night of the "Lighting of Lakeland". We displayed a scene in a



department store window. Our theme was, "Wise Santas Still Seek Jesus." Our Lord's birth should be praised all year long, not just one time a year. We, The Church of God, won Second place. Praise be to God!

*Mary Roe - Local Evangelism Department Director*

Youth Convention Application will be here

## **Children's Ministries**

about them.

A new year has begun. Now is the time to begin planning for VBS, summer activities, and even back to school events. As a worker with the children begin mapping out some ideas for the next 6-8 months.

You may already be thinking about what lessons you might do this next year. Here are some lesson ideas: February - topic "Love" - how we should love others, how God loves us; March - topic "The Wind" - teach lessons about the times Jesus calmed the wind and how we cannot see the wind but we know it is there - no one has seen God, but we know He is there. A good website is <http://www.sermons4kids.com>. Start at this website for lesson ideas and then go to the links. There are many good lesson, craft and activity ideas on the internet.

I hope your Christmas was a Merry Christmas. If I can be of any help please contact me at [gayshaw@aol.com](mailto:gayshaw@aol.com) or 706-638-4505.

Gay Shaw - Children's Ministries Director