

Message from the Assistant Editor

I hope that everyone had a great holiday and that the New Year has been going well. I still need everyone to continue sending me articles for the paper with your local church events and news. Thanks to everyone who has been submitting things to place on the Regional Website. We still need many more articles and news submissions to keep the region up-to-date on what is going on. Pastors, please let me know who you have appointed for your local reporter and if you haven't yet, please

appoint someone or a group of people to share the news of your local church. I also need the auxiliary/department coordinators to continue sending me articles and information when available. You all have been doing a GREAT job! Please have your articles submitted to me by the 10th of each month. I will also try to email you a reminder of when I have started on the paper. You can email me the article, mail it to me, or even give me a call if you need to. Whatever is easier for you will work for me. If there are any subscribers who are still not receiving their paper, please contact me by phone (770/383-3416), letter, or e-mail, and I will try to resolve it. Please continue to check out the Regional web site for upcoming events and news. If you would like something to be added, please feel free to call or email me to let me know. I am still needing some pictures of pastors to add to the page. Check it out at <http://www.tcogflga.org> or <http://www.tcogga.com>. God bless all of you and please keep me in your prayers!

Tony Conner—Assistant Editor

To submit articles or subscribe to *The Shepherd's Voice*, send them to Tony Conner at: **41 Greatwood Drive, White, GA 30184** or theshepherdsvoice@tcogflga.org

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, print it from our web site or *The Shepherd's Voice* may be sent directly to a home for an annual subscription rate of \$8.00.

Check out these web sites:

If you would like to see your church web site listed here, please email me and let me know.

<http://www.thechurchofgod.org>
<http://www.thechurchofgodmillen.org>
<http://www.tcogga.com> or [tcogflga.org](http://www.tcogflga.org)



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ENCOURAGEMENT

Melvin Kramer—Regional Overseer

The word “encourage” means to give courage or confidence, or to raise the hopes of. Encouragement is something that is needed more today than ever before. The world that we live in seems to be crumbling down all around us. The news tells us of all the threats from nuclear weapons from places like Iran and North Korea to the bird flu which could wipe out millions across the world. Everything today seems to be going from bad to worse with no hope in sight. Even the Church seems not to be exempt from troubles as we are facing things we've never faced before and crossing waters we have never crossed before. But this is just what the devil would have us to believe -- that there is no hope and that time is running out. Now it may be true that time is running out, but let us be encouraged that there is hope today. In the 30th chapter of I Samuel it is told that as David and his men returned home to Ziklag they found that the Amalekites had stolen everything and burned the city with fire. As David and his men viewed the destruction, they wept till they had no more power to weep. It even got so bad that the men began to speak of even stoning David. What a situation for David to be in, as he looked around and there seemed to be no hope. Sometimes we may find ourselves looking around and thinking that there is no hope. But let me encourage you today that there is hope. In the last part of verse 6 of chapter 30, it says “but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God”. It is good to look to others for encouragement, but sometimes the test comes as we are all alone and it seems that no one cares. It is then we must encourage ourselves, as David did.

We can encourage ourselves through prayer, knowing that God still answers prayer. Psalms 91:15, says “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him”.

We can encourage ourselves by thinking on the good things. Paul said in Philippians 4:8, “Finally, brethren whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”. So let us be encouraged as we live for Christ. As one verse of an old song says “I have good news to bring and that is why I

sing, all my joys with you I'll share. I plan to take a trip in the Good Old Gospel Ship, and go sailing through the air".

God Bless You.

Bro. Melvin Kramer

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1 Corinthians 13



7-Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8-Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9-For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10-But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12-For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13-And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

1-Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2-And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3-And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4-Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5-Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6-Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

MEN'S RETREAT

Dearest Brethren, The coming of our Lord is at hand, and we must be ready. There are times in the heat of the battle that we must retreat and strengthen our weakened hands and become refreshed for the harder battles ahead. In this light, it is my pleasure to let you know that such a time is also soon coming. **March 24th and 25th** will be our first Georgia & Florida Men's Retreat for men ages 16&up (those 16 or 17 must have parental signature on application). It will be held at Coastal Empire Christian Camp. Our guest speaker will be Pastor Byron Difani from Austin, Arkansas. Check-in time is from 3 to 5 p.m. (Arrangements can be made for late-comers.) The total cost of both days and three meals will be \$25. Please get your application and \$5 non-refundable deposit to me by **February 24th**. I am asking that each local church bring/send snacks for the breaks (i.e. a box of Little Debbie's, a bag of chips or two, some home-made goodies, etc.). I am also in need of some kitchen help—no experience required. We will try to reduce the cost of tuition for those that help me in the kitchen. Please get with me as soon as possible if you will be able to help. I spoke with some at Ministers' Convention who will be on program. If I spoke with you and you aren't able to fulfill your part on program, let me know immediately so that I can make other arrangements.



Help us be praying and fasting for our retreat. The enemy is on the warpath, and we must be ready.

Your servant in Christ,
Terry W. Tyler
478-922-8655

Ladies' Retreat

Hello! Florida/Georgia Region. I would like to announce that there will be Ladies' Retreat! I have secured the place and time and price.

We will be having our Ladies' Retreat in McDavid, Florida, @ Bluff Springs Campground on April 21st through 23rd. The price for the Retreat will be \$80.00. Please mail in your application w/\$25.00 deposit by the due date. Your deposit will be put towards your total due @ sign-in. Sign-in will be 4pm on the 21st of April. Our Evangelist will be Sis. Mary Shelton from Hillsborough, TN.

I am looking forward to attending the Ladies' Retreat with you. Please pray that God will have His way. Nothing less is desired. If you need any assistance, please, do not hesitate to call. Sis. Rita Phillips, (850) 584-8804. I'll help any way I can. I'm working hard for you and I want you to attend the Retreat, YOU DESERVE IT!!!!

God Bless, and you will be hearing more from me soon.

In prayer for the Retreat, Sis. Rita Phillips



Greetings, All. We've been blessed with the presence of many of you at our two (thus far) BTI Workshop - Rallies.

Central Georgia's district was kind enough to include us in their Christmas Banquet Fellowship on Dec. 3. Thank you, Brother Morgan, for making that possible. We enjoyed the food and fellowship, but didn't like having to leave immediately after the BTI program. We wanted to stay longer but knew that we must follow the Lord's guidance. We felt very looked out for when He got us home safely in the "wee hours." And yes ma'am, Sister Furlong, we did get to Sunday School on time.

North Florida's BTI Workshop- Rally was Fri. evening, Jan 6 in Palatka preceding the first of our five Florida/Georgia District Conventions.

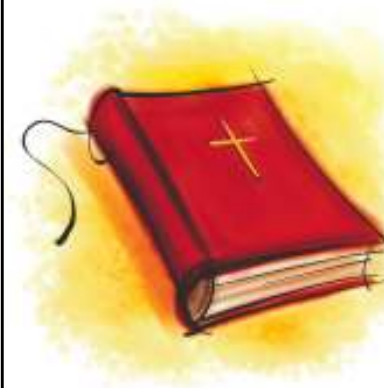
For me, Brother Raulerson, North Florida Overseer made the evening special by singing two songs for us. We were all truly blessed. Then, following the Workshop portion of the program, we received a double portion of blessings. The Lord truly blessed during BTI Correspondence Course testimonies and BTI Cleveland School testimonies. We're assuming the lateness of the hour lulled some folks almost to sleep during the remaining portion of the program. I plan to do some praying and fasting and re-work that part of the program. I'll be mailing copies of the Workshop portion to the pastors of South Florida, and South Georgia districts.

Since two districts are not having BTI Workshop Rallies, let me tell you about the Florida/Georgia Pastor BTI Survey begun just prior to the Ministers' Convention. It became very clear, that while some local churches are very active in BTI Cleveland participation, others are just as active in BTI Correspondence Course participation. Hearing what God is doing and has done through this avenue of Bible/Church training was very inspiring. Some of the testimonies we're hearing go all the way back to BTC. (Do you know what BTC is/was? If not - this is homework. When we next meet tell me about BTC.)

We look forward to being with you at the next BTI Workshop-Rally which will be Friday evening in Trion, Ga. on Feb. 24 preceding the District Convention on Saturday as well as the remaining district conventions.

Our prayer is that God continues to bless each of you. As we continue to Prepare For The Ingathering (Inflow), the struggles and blockades will become more difficult. Just remember that God will give us all the strength we need to stay calm and continue in His work. Also, remember that Jesus suffered just as much for the sheep not yet in the fold as He did for you and me. He accepted each of us with no condemnation, misjudgments, or criticisms when we came to Him. How can we do less for everyone we meet?.

Serving as He leads, Sister Lisenby



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Date:	Location:	Event:	Time:
Feb. 27—March 04, 2006	Warner Robins, GA	Revival	7:00 pm
Evangelist - Bro. E. Roger Ammons			
March 11, 2006	Wildwood, FL	Mission Crusade	10:00 am
Pastor - Sis. Alice Shelor 352-748-3031 or 352-250-3822			

"Be My Valentine." This is a phrase that conjures up a lot of different images associated with the celebration of Valentine's Day. Cards with hearts and little poems on them. Candy and flowers given to someone you love. And images of cupids flying around shooting their arrows of love into unsuspecting youths. Young and old alike expressing their affection for their sweethearts.

What we call Valentine's Day was at one time the Feast of St. Valentine. It was a religious holiday. Cupid was a character from pagan mythology. For Christians in the past this holiday was a day to remember and celebrate the life and death of a Christian martyr.

According to church tradition St. Valentine was a priest near Rome in about the year 270 A.D. At that time the Roman Emperor was imprisoning Christians for not worshipping the Roman Gods. During this persecution St. Valentine was arrested.

During the trial they asked Valentine what he thought of the Roman Gods Jupiter and Mercury. St. Valentine said they were False Gods and that the God that Jesus called Father was the only true God. So the Romans threw him in prison for insulting the gods.

While in prison Valentine continued to minister. He witnessed to the guards. One of the guards was a good man who had adopted a blind girl. He asked Valentine if his God could help his daughter. Valentine prayed and the girl was given her sight. The guard and his whole family, 46 people, believed in Jesus and were baptized. Because these people had come to know Jesus, Valentine praised God right there in his prison cell. When the emperor heard about this he was furious that Valentine was still making converts even in prison, so he had Valentine beheaded.

Valentine knew that he might get caught in his Christian activities. He knew that if he told the court the truth about the Roman Gods that he would be thrown in prison. And he knew that if he continued to witness of Christ in the prison he would make his captors angry. But he continued, because he loved the Lord and his fellow humans. He was willing to risk his life to free the prisoners and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who needed to hear it.

The Bible Says: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) God showed us this love by coming in Christ to die for our sins. And St. Valentine demonstrated this love when he died for his friends. This is the kind of love that Valentine's Day is really about.



Greetings to The Church of God Region. There will be a Training Class for Prison Ministry at Georgia State Prison in February. It is an 8 hour class and you can get certified to get into the prison with me whenever you can be there.

I have Services on First Sunday Night, Second Sunday Morning, Third Sunday Night, and EVERY Tuesday Night I have Sunday School classes for the inmates. You are welcome to come and Preach, Teach or Testify, or sing songs or just come and observe and pray for me as I preach to these men of God. If you are interested in becoming a team worker for God's Prison Ministry Team please call or e-mail me and I will give you all the information you

need to get started. PLEASE, Come join the team if you can, I need Help, Its an awesome task for one person to do. The night, is almost here, work while it is still the day. God Bless The Church of God People.

Bro. Richard Razsi

912-375-5276 or 912-342-4287 cell

Greetings and love to each of you in Jesus name from all of us in The Church of God of Spring Hill. God is very good to us. He continues to bless.

Sister Harris's VLB meetings get better every month. You'd think she is working with hundreds of people. Bro. Harris's CPMA/ABM services are as great as his Sunday School teaching.

Brother Vest is a very able Mission Leader in Tampa. Our prayer warrior members who are home-bound in Tampa, Bro. and Sis. Sarmiento open their home for Thursday night service whenever they are able. Sis. Elsie Rodgers, a very faithful Sunday School member for years graciously opens her home for us on the alternate Thursdays.

Bro. Lisenby and Bro. Vest are working with a new contact in another city. Please pray that this will become another mission/church work for the Lord to take another territory away from Satan. Satan is attacking more and more, but God is able to give us all the strength and abilities we need to withstand these attacks. Do not forget the many promises in His Word, and that "greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world."

In His love and service, Sister Lisenby—**Reporter**

South Florida District Convention—we just closed out of a day with the Lord at Winter Haven, Florida. We had great preaching and a message by the Holy Ghost with interpretation and a sweet, sweet spirit. We had 70 in attendance with 15 / 20 from other churches, to God be the glory.



PRISON MINISTRY

I want to thank all of you who are going into the Prisons, Jails and YDC'S, and writing to people who are behind bars. Some are just getting started, some have been doing it for a while, and some for years. I appreciate your work and labor of Love and I know God does too. If you are still skeptic about going into a Prison or Jail, maybe this e-mail sent to me will help you make up your mind to join "The Prison Ministry Team" too.

I have been to YDC and into the Georgia State Prison with Bro Rick on several occasions and I just wanted to share with you what a blessing it has been to me. People will tell you not to go into these places because you could get hurt or catch diseases or whatever, but we must not listen to people, we must listen to the word of God as it says "I was in prison and ye visited me not"! I don't want to hear the Lord say "One thing thou lackest..." At YDC there are young girls between about 12 and 18 -- no men, so the women have no excuse. When you see these girls, most of them look so tormented. They're miserable because they don't know Christ and they're bound by sin. They'll never know Christ if someone doesn't take the initiative to introduce him to them. We only get to go once a month because it's about a 2 hour drive. I would like to encourage anyone who reads this that is from the Macon area to contact Bro Rick about getting into YDC, I can almost promise you that you will be blessed by it. And anyone else who has a YDC near you, I would like to encourage you to see about getting into it to carry the gospel to lost and dying souls. I look at them and know it's only by the grace of God that I didn't end up where they're at. I remember how Jesus saved me from a life of sin and strife and I want the same for them. Also, I was heavily advised by some not to go into GSP, but I did it anyway. My husband went with me, so I don't see a problem with it. Some people don't want to go because they don't want to go into a place with a bunch of murderers and thieves, etc. But we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is no big or little sin with God. We were all sinners before we got saved, and if we broke one we were guilty of them all. So if you look at it that way, we were all murderers and thieves before we got saved -- but aren't you glad someone came to you and shared the glorious gospel of truth with you? What if they had had the attitude that they didn't want to deal with such scum of the earth. You would still be in darkness. That sheds a different light on it doesn't it? Until you have been into the prison on God's business, you could not imagine how it is. The scripture says "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty". Well, you will see that scripture come to life inside that prison. I have heard several preachers say that they can preach better inside that prison than they can anywhere else because those people are just eating it up. Sure, they get preached to almost everyday of the week if they attend, but everyone that goes in there to preach is not carrying the truth. We have the TRUTH, we have the GREAT COMMISSION to carry that TRUTH to EVERY LIVING CREATURE. I would say that includes those in prison too. I have never had a bad experience in the prison. They act like they could just sit there all day and listen to you sing or preach or testify or whatever. When my mom died, those men sent some cards to me that actually made me cry. They said the kindest things to me. I know there may be some in the services that aren't there for

God, but isn't that true at most of our churches too? Can anyone honestly say that every single person that has ever entered the doors of your church was a sincere Christian and was there only for God's service? I don't think so. But I feel like if you go into the prison with a pure heart before God to accomplish his work that he won't let something bad happen to you. True, at GSP it is an all male institution -- so I would really like to encourage the men of the church to do this, but I certainly don't discourage women from going into the prison either. There are all women prisons that we can get into too. Our local church has a ministry at the local county jail also. This is a good ministry too. If you go into your local jail to carry the gospel, then you are speaking to local people and there is a possibility that they may attend your church when they get out.



So, I would really like to encourage you to pray about it and see what you can do about starting a prison ministry or jail ministry or YDC or whatever is available in your area. I must say that Bro Rick is very faithful in what he does. He never misses a service at the prison unless something extremely important comes up and he almost always has someone to fill in for him if he does have to be somewhere else on a service night. I have watched him practically beg church people to help him with this ministry to no avail. I don't know what it's going to take to wake us up, church. We've got lost souls just waiting to be reached. I know Bro Rick is faithful in this ministry, but this is only one prison in the state that's being reached. He can't do it alone. He writes letters and sends church literature to these men, has service about three times a week with them and then goes to YDC every third Saturday to minister to these young girls and when they give their address sends them things also. This is a lot of work when you also have a secular job to hold down too. I couldn't tell you how many jails and prisons and detention centers we have in this state, but I can tell you that I believe Bro Rick is stretched to the limit with what he already has going, so I would really like to encourage anyone else that will try to see what you can do about getting this ministry going in your local church. I'm sure if you need help getting started, Bro Rick would be glad to assist you. I hope I haven't offended anybody, but this is just what was on my heart. It has been a great blessing to me every time I've went into GSP. It's an experience I wish everyone could have at least once. If just one soul is saved by our efforts then it's worth it.

God Bless You all—Sis. Denise Clements

AS MUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YOU HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME,AND LO, I'LL BE WITH YOU EVEN UNTO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD. LET US WORK, WHILE IT IS STILL LIGHT. AMEN?

The Church of God Prison Ministry Team of Georgia and Florida.

Regional Director; Richard Razsi

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