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## Twenty-First Street COG Calls Rev. Mykenley Augustin as Pastor

The members of 21st Street Church of God in Richmond, VA welcome Rev. Mykenley Augustin as our new Pastor. We are grateful to God for the leading of his Holy Spirit for guiding us through the selection process and sending this young man of God as our leader for this time and season. Please join us in welcoming him to the Church of God in Virginia. Rev. Augustin will assume complete pastoral responsibilities on Dec. 17, 2023. (Also, see article entitled "Save the Date" for information regarding Rev. Oliver's retirement from 21<sup>st</sup> CHOG)

Rev. Mykenley Augustin is a dedicated Christian pastor, evangelist, and children's book author who humbly embraces his calling to share the love of God with people of all ages. Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Rev. Augustin's journey to the United States at a young age shaped his life and prepared him to impact through ministry. Currently residing in Greensboro, N.C., he faithfully serves as an assistant pastor at Friendship Community Church of God.



**Rev. Mykenley, Courtney & Ameris Augustin**  
Son Jarius not pictured

Growing up in a loving family, Rev. Augustin cherishes the bonds he shares with his two sisters and one brother. His upbringing in a supportive environment nurtured his faith and sparked a passion for serving others. Following his sense of calling, he pursued theological studies and received ordination as a Christian pastor, equipping him with a deep understanding of God's Word.

As an assistant pastor, he has joyfully supported the spiritual growth and well-being of the congregation at Friendship Community Church of God. In addition, through relationship-building and compassionate prayer, he strives to comfort and encourage those he meets and serves. (Continued on page 5)



**Dr. Bob Neace** COGVA  
State Minister

## Neace's Pieces

In the email text of last months COGVA News, I requested prayer for my coming trip to Pakistan. As this issue of COGVA News finds it's way

into your mailbox, I should be wheels down in Multan Airport in Pakistan. I should have arrived by 4:30 EDT pm on October 31. From there, the ministry team will travel to Jahania, the sites of where we will be able to preach to a yet undetermined number of people.

Some have asked, "Why are you making this trip?" Most have been supportive, even if they have expressed their trepidation concerning this venture. I am grateful for that support and encouragement. THANK YOU!

Many years ago, farther back than I care to imagine, the Lord, for whatever reasons unbeknownst to me, placed a ministerial call on my life. I struggled with that call for a variety of reasons. Some from a sense of unworthiness, and some resulting from physical inability. When I finally got serious about my ministerial call, being challenged by the preaching of Gerald Yates in a camp meeting in central Illinois, a portion of by prayer of submission was that if God had really called me to ministry, He would open the doors He would have me enter and close the ones to where I was not to be. I have used this as a guide for my ministry ever

since and it has served me well. As a result, I find myself many miles from the place I knew as home as I serve the Lord here in Virginia, my current home.

For the last 10 years or so, I have had a relationship with a congregation in Jahania. Pastor and I talk often, and he translates sermons preached via the internet to the same church each Friday morning. They are a small congregation meeting in his home, but other area pastors have been attending as well, and it has been their desire for the mission trip upon which I have embarked to take place. In addition to preaching, I will be fulfilling the request to come and speak with pastors about the need for continued education in any form they can receive it.

This venture is not the first attempt. Pastor and I had made plans and had most funds raised for a missions trip in 2020. Do you remember that year? I do. Not only is it the year COVID struck, it is also the year that the mission now taking place had been cancelled. All funds for travel and site maintenance for our gathering was channeled a different direction so that food and medicine could be provided for our sister church in Jahania. Now, all obstacles seem to have been removed, and doors have opened where I never thought possible, and living up to my commitment, as you read this, I expect to find myself walking through the latest door of ministry that has been swung open seemingly by God Himself and God alone.

How to pray for me? First, let's make sure we understand this trip is not about me, except in the understanding it is an attempt to fulfil the entire call to ministry the Lord placed (Continued on page 6)

## Save the Date – Olivers to Retire



Rev.'s Vernetta & Silas Oliver

There comes a time in life when we all have to say goodbye. Sometimes this is pleasurable and on other occasions it is not. The time has come for us as a church family to say this to our beloved Pastor Reverend Silas Oliver and his dear companion and minister of the gospel, the Reverend Vernetta Oliver.

We invite you to our Sunday 11:00 AM service on December 10, 2023, as we worship God and celebrate the Olivers for eleven years of service to our congregation and the greater Richmond Community. They will be returning to their beloved Florida. This is your opportunity to recognize them with a special love offering, card or some other type of remembrance as we say goodbye to this special couple who were a gift to us from God.

A special meal is planned after service at which there will be a more appropriate

time for personal well wishes. The address is Lakefield Mews Club House,

4300 Lakefield Mews Drive, Henrico, VA 23231.

The following scriptures reminds us that God will continue to richly bless and remain with Pastor Oliver and Reverend Vernetta no matter where they go.

Psalms 92: 12-15 NIV- The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, they will grow like a cedar in Lebanon; (13) planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish in the courts of our God. (14) They will still bear fruit in their old age, they will stay fresh and green, (15) proclaiming, "The Lord is upright, he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."

Philippians 1:6 NIV-Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.

Yours In His Service,

Members of the Advisory Council of  
Twenty-First Street Church of God



## CHOGAFFIRM.COM And What it Means to the Local Congregation

There has been a lot of talk lately about the CHOGaffirm.com website. Their original statement is, “THE AFFIRMATION OF LGBTQ+ PEOPLE, AND THE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE FOR ALL BELIEVERS WITHIN THE CHURCH OF GOD”.

They further state, “There is a strong biblical, theological, and ethical case for affirming same-sex partnerships, transgender identity and existence, and gender non-conformity as being fully compatible with Christian discipleship and the theological and doctrinal distinctives of the Church of God Reformation Movement.”, and, “Ministers and lay people in the Church of God must have the freedom of conscience to affirm gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer Christians in their lives, partnerships, and ministerial callings.”. Their final demand is that, “Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer Christians must be welcomed and recognized as full participants in the life and ministry of the Church of God at all levels.”.

Well, I do partially agree with them when they say, “All people are sacred and beloved, created in the image of God.”. They even have that statement three times on the front page of their website.

Their statement, “There is a strong biblical, theological, and ethical case for

affirming same-sex partnerships, transgender identity and existence, and gender non-conformity as being fully compatible with Christian discipleship and the theological and doctrinal distinctives of the Church of God Reformation Movement.”, can only be true if they have done what I call, “Torn pages out of the Bible”.

Speaking of the Bible, they make all of those claims but do not produce ANY Biblical reference to support any of their claims.

The Church of God in Virginia (COGVA) is very concerned about this group of people and the effect they may have on the people attending Church of God congregations and our National Offices. There are more than 800 signatures included to support their stand. The people who signed in support include 39 people who identifies themselves as “doctors”. What is even more disturbing is there are 49 people who refer to themselves as “Reverend”.

So less than 1,000 signatures are a relatively small number of people compared to the number of people attend Church of God congregations. However, many of the professors at our flagship university, Anderson University, are signatures and they are teaching this philosophy within the classrooms there.

Here at Water’s Edge Church (WEC) in Virginia Beach, we have considered issues like these for years. Right before the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, we were in the process of revising the way we identified the Christians who attended our congregation. Since our congregation was formed nearly fifty years ago,  
(Continued on page 7)

(Twenty First Street Continued)

Along with his pastoral responsibilities, Rev. Augustin is an inspiring evangelist who enjoys spreading the Gospel locally. Driven to see lives transformed, he engages in evangelistic efforts such as workplace ministry, door-to-door evangelism, mission trips, where he shares the Good News and invites others to experience the life-changing love of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Augustin's love for connecting with people of all ages led him to explore children's book authorship. His gentle and faith-filled stories have captured the hearts of young readers, instilling biblical values and igniting their imagination. Through his books, such as "Candy or Ice Cream?" and "Masks and Capes" he encourages children to develop a Christian worldview, emphasizing the importance of truth, love, and service.

Rev. Augustin's family holds a special place in his heart. He is grateful for his marriage and blessed with two beautiful children: a son, Jarius, who is currently 16 years old and a precious baby girl named Ameris who recently joined their family. As a devoted husband and father, he treasures cultivating a strong and loving family, imparting godly values, and nurturing their relationship with God.

Rev. Mykenley Augustin is a humble servant of God, dedicated to sharing the message of salvation, love, and hope. Through ministry, evangelism efforts, and children's books, he humbly touches lives, sows seeds of faith, and inspires others to draw closer to God. With a heart filled with love and a deep passion for the Kingdom of God, Rev. Augustin continues to impact lives, promoting a

legacy of faith, compassion, and unwavering devotion to Christ.

## COGVA Churches Seeking Pastoral Leadership

### Joynes Road Church of God

31 Joynes Road,  
Hampton, VA  
23666

Pulpit Committee Chair:

Dr. John Downing Jr.

[jwdowning@bellsouth.net](mailto:jwdowning@bellsouth.net).

### Anderson Church of God,

1075 Wagner Road,  
Bristol, VA 24201

Pulpit Committee Chair:

Jen Blair 276- 608-1235

### Tibitha Church of God,

991 Fleeton Road, Reedville, VA  
22539 Pulpit Committee Chair:

Roberta Craig

[robertac@fmg.com](mailto:robertac@fmg.com)

804-453-4750

### Groseclose First Church of God

333 Citizens Road,  
Rural Retreat, VA 24368

Pulpit Committee Chair:

Mike Jones 276-920-1073

پس تم جا کر سب قوموں کو شاگرد بناؤ اور ان کو باپ اور بیٹے اور روح القدس کے نام سے بپتسمہ دو۔ (متی 28 باب 19)

**ENGAGE THE NATIONS PAKISTAN**

GOD BLESS PAKISTAN

یک روز

شفائیہ و بشارتی کنونشن

پاسٹر: زارٹ پاسٹر: ندان پولوس

بت: 5:00 بجے

مقام: 126/M دنیاپور

تاریخ: 1 نومبر 2023 بروز بدھ

ڈاکٹر: آشر جاوید

انعام: ڈاکٹر: مریم آشر جاوید

انتظامیہ:

چرچ آف پاکستان 126/M دنیاپور

رابطہ نمبرز: 0300-6895873

پاسٹر: عمران بہادر

(Neace's Pieces continued) on me at a young age and the continuing surrender of my will to His. Certainly, if I could have done so years ago, I'd have followed the advice given me by others who said, "If you could continue to pursue any other career and maintain your relationship with the Lord, then do it". I would probably have found myself owning my own chain of restaurants. So pray for these things in the coming days:

Pray for the salvation experience of those to whom God will open doors for me to share His gospel.

Pray for the leadership team for which I will be tasked to pour into so that solid discipleship can take place once new souls are birthed into the Kingdom.

Pray for a boldness to proclaim the Word, and also for wisdom in proper ways to do the same.

Pray for safety for the entire team. I will be able to leave after 6 days on the ground. Those receiving Christ and those tasked with discipleship will not have that luxury.

Pray for Kathy and Abigail, for their peace of mind, that the enemy will not gain footholds for fear and unnecessary worry.

Pray for the Abingdon congregation as they have supported this mission with prayer and funding.

Pray for that which the Holy Spirit might prompt you to do to help provide Bibles for those who receive the gospel of Jesus.

And for anything else concerning this opportunity the Lord may reveal to you.

I look forward to sharing in next month's Neace's Pieces

(CHOGAFFIRM.COM Continued) we defined “voting members” of our congregation, in a very simple way:

1. They would self-declare that they were a Christian. and
2. If they were at least 16 years old. and
3. If they had attended WEC regularly during the past 6 months. then
4. They would be a voting member of WEC and could legally vote for or against anything within our congregation.

That has now all changed. Our congregation recently voted to change our acceptance criteria. Now the process of becoming a “Voting Member” is as follows:

1. They must attend each of the 4 one-hour classes where the following is discussed:
  - a. Our Statement of Faith
  - b. Our Abiding Together at WEC document
  - c. Why someone should commit to a Local Church
  - d. An Overview of WEC and its history
2. A potential member will then complete an application.
3. A personal interview (or more properly called, a gospel conversation) will be done with a current Elder of WEC.
4. During this conversation, they must describe who Jesus is, they must confess that they are a Christian, they must agree

with our Statement of Faith and Abiding Together documents.

5. A writeup of that interview will be submitted to the other elders for their review.
6. If all goes well, the Elder Board will recommend the person to the congregation.
7. The congregation will have the opportunity to confirm them at the next quarterly Members’ Meeting.

This new procedure prevents those who believe these “alternate lifestyles” are compatible with Christianity from becoming voting members of our congregation.

This is because our Statement of Faith clearly states it is incompatible with standards clearly defined within the Bible.

The reason for our change is because by using our old method, we would have to affirm LGBTQ+ individuals if they are older than 16 years of age, say they are a Christian and have been with us for more than 6 months.

If the Bylaws or Constitution of your congregation allow something similar to what ours previously required, I sincerely ask you to make a safeguarding change to those legal documents. If desired, I will help any congregation perform this transformation.

Larry Ebinger (Old Larry) – Elder –  
Water’s Edge Church

LarryEbinger@gmail.com 757-619-8091



27 September 2023

Rev. Dr. Simeon R. Green III  
Dr. Velma L. Green  
First Church of God  
6517 Walmsley Boulevard  
Richmond VA 23224-4403

Dear Brother and Sister Green and the Congregation at First Church of God Richmond:

On behalf of the General Assembly of the Church of God in the United States and Canada and its offices at Church of God Ministries, I am writing to celebrate with you the opening of a new chapter of ministry, as Simeon and Velma Green are formally welcomed in Richmond, shepherding the Lord's work at First Church of God.

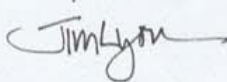
The English word "pastor" is actually the Latin word for "shepherd." If we read Psalm 23 in Latin, we will literally find, "The Lord is my pastor." The sacred calling of serving as a shepherd for God's people is both humbling and honoring, a vocation without peer. To meet its test, a pastor must be wholly consecrated to following Jesus, the possession of the Holy Spirit, and deeply loving the parish entrusted to his care and the city to which he or she has been called.

Every congregation needs a pastor, a shepherd: someone who can lead, protect, love, and call the best out of the flock. Every congregation owes its pastor its love and encouragement, its support—also consecrated to humbly walking with Jesus. Together, a pastor and the congregation are anointed to change the world for Jesus' sake, bringing the Kingdom to life here and now--and to open the door to eternal life for all those who enter, bowing before Jesus. It is sacred and life-giving work. It is the next chapter of the First Church of God in Richmond.

The congregation's testimony and deep roots in the Church of God, from the dawn of the last century, paired with Simeon and Velma Green's faithful witness proved true, also over time, are a wonderful match, poised to break new ground, to inspire, and to see Richmond made better. It is the Lord's doing, this service union of ministry, which promises much good in the days ahead.

We thank God for you, First Church of God and for the Drs. Green, held dear by us; we love you, we will pray for you, and today especially, we celebrate with you. Be encouraged. Be bold. Jesus is the subject. He is able. And He is Lord.

In His name, I am humbled to remain, your brother,



Jim Lyon  
General Director  
Church of God Ministries for the United States and Canada

PO Box 2420, Anderson, IN 46018-2420  
800-848-2464 | [jesusisthesubject.org](http://jesusisthesubject.org)

**JESUS** IS THE SUBJECT



## COGVA Leadership College Continues on Zoom



### Schedule

November 11 – 9:00 am

December 9 – 9:00

January 13 – 9:00 am

February 10 – 9:00 am

March 9 – 9:00 am

April 13 – 9:00 am

May 11 – 9:00 am

June 8 – 9:00 am

Rev. Calvin Peterson will use F.G. Smith's "What the Bible Teaches", while Rev. Silas Oliver will teach from Karl Vater's "Grasshopper Myth"

ZOOM Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82990090129?>

To Dial In: 1.301.715.8592

Meeting Id: 82990090129# Passcode: \*526431#